

## *The Kings and Their Hawks*



ROBIN S. OGGINS

*The Kings and Their Hawks*

FALCONRY IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

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Frontispiece: Owner, falconer, and groom, Flemish, end of fifteenth century, Hours; Add. MS 35315, fol. 4; London: British Library. By permission of the British Library.

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To Ginny and Jimmy



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## *Introduction*

This work began as a doctoral dissertation under the late James Lea Cate at the University of Chicago. About a week before my preliminary orals I met with Mr. Cate and he asked me, “Well, boy” (I was thirty), “have you picked a dissertation topic yet?” I answered, “No sir, but I’d like to do something on twelfth- or thirteenth-century England.” “Well,” he said, “about twenty years ago I started to do work on English royal falconry, but there was too much to do for an article, so I’ve been saving it as a dissertation topic for some student with an imagination.” I left his office stunned. I had only the vaguest ideas about falconry at the time and couldn’t tell a falcon from a hawk or, for that matter, a hawk from a handsaw.

Time has shown just how good a topic I had been given. I began by focusing on the birds and the sport but soon found that the men who flew and cared for the kings’ birds were also important and interesting. From there the topic expanded to include social attitudes, religious symbolism, and artistic imagery. In a way the study of falconry has provided me with a series of windows into the medieval world.

The main subjects of this book are the sports of falconry and hawking and the men who kept, trained, carried, and (often) flew the royal falcons and hawks. The kings enter into the picture because our main sources are royal records and because the personal tastes in sport of individual kings were

manifested in royal expenditure. This is not a book about hunting except insofar as falconry and hawking are considered branches of hunting. In falconry and hawking, the training of the bird is an essential feature of the sport. Hunting dogs also have to be trained, but a successful hunt can occur with imperfectly trained dogs; a successful falcon hunt, at least to the expert eye, requires a well-trained bird. In hunting the hunter often kills the prey; in falconry and hawking, the bird does. Contemporaries were certainly aware of the differences, as can be seen from a number of literary debates between falconers and hawkers as to which was the nobler sport. On the other hand medieval kings probably did not reflect much on the differences. When they felt like hunting, and the season and conditions were right, they hunted; when they felt like hawking, they hawked. There was even some overlap between members of the hunting and falconry establishments. However, to try to sort out the similarities and differences would require an altogether different kind of book. My own feeling is that falconry and hunting were based on the same human desires and instincts, followed roughly similar patterns of development, and were manifested in generally comparable ways. But, like all other human activities, each developed its own techniques and rituals; and to lump falconry and hunting together is to obscure some of the essential characteristics of each.

The dissertation was based on printed sources, but a year working at the Public Record Office (PRO) and the British Library made me realize how rich the surviving manuscript sources were. The section on royal falconry effectively ends with the reign of Edward I. While I was working at the PRO there was no completed itinerary for Edward II, and hence many records of the latter's reign were undated. I did look at the dated records, however, and found that the essential aspects of English royal falconry were fully developed under Edward I and that later material added little to the overall picture.



## *The Sources*

Primary sources for the history of medieval English falconry fall into two main categories: literature devoted to falconry and governmental records. Falconry literature provides information on the birds used and their training, while governmental records supply material on actual practice. A wide range of additional sources supplement English records and the literature of falconry and supply fuller information on the role the sport played in medieval life. Such auxiliary material includes literary works, works of art, and ecclesiastical records — sources too varied to be reviewed in a systematic way.

In this chapter I shall discuss contemporary treatises on falconry and English governmental records in which material on falconry can be found. Other sources of information will be noted in the course of subsequent chapters.

### *The Literature of Falconry*

No tradition of writings on falconry existed in the ancient Western world because falconry as such was unknown in antiquity.<sup>1</sup> This lack of a literary tradition may well explain why early writings on falconry are practical, concerned largely with treatments for ailments of hawks. The earliest manuscript identified so far, the “Anonymous of Vercelli,” dates from the mid-tenth century. A second eleventh-century text, Grimaldus’s *Liber accipitrum*, probably

harks back to a Carolingian original. The number of extant works from the twelfth century increases substantially. Baudouin Van den Abeele suggests this increase is due to greater contact with the Islamic world. He lists eight surviving texts of the time connected with falconry. Two are by men identified as falconers, Guillelmus Falconarius and Gerardus Falconarius; two are attributed to doctors, Grisofus Medicus and Alexander Medicus, and another was credited to Hippocrates. Of the remaining works, one was supposedly written by a legendary King Dancus of Armenia; a second took the form of an apocryphal letter written by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion to a King Ptolemy of Egypt; and the last was by the only author in the group identifiable historically, the Englishman Adelard of Bath.<sup>2</sup>

While some of these twelfth-century treatises contain valuable material on falconry in general, others are largely veterinary in content. Some of the cures recommended in these compilations border on the fanciful. Adelard of Bath, for example, proposes as a cure for rheum feeding a hawk meat soaked in the excrement of an unweaned boy, and for mites, the powdered tooth of a hanged man. Daude de Pradas, writing in the next century, suggests feeding a weak hawk the flesh of a blind puppy, sprinkling it with baked lizard dust to speed up moulting, and, to stop a hawk's shrieking, feeding it a bat stuffed with pepper.<sup>3</sup> Gerardus Falconarius favors spells to keep the bird safe: "When the bird's first feathers appear, the falconer is to say, 'The birds are under Thy feet.' When the falconer lifts the bird from the perch in the morning he says, 'The evil man binds; the Lord, by his coming, loosens.' To ward off eagles one says, 'The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, conquers; Hallelujah.'"<sup>4</sup> Even when remedies seem straightforward — herbs, spices, the flesh of various animals — their application was sometimes determined by the then current philosophy of humors: Dancus Rex, for example, suggests different remedies for black falcons, which are melancholic, white falcons, which are phlegmatic and dry, and red falcons, which are sanguine. This is not to criticize medieval veterinary medicine as a whole — or even the works in which the more extreme nostrums appear. At their worst, contemporary remedies have been characterized by Hans Epstein as "obviously nonsensical abracadabra methods of exquisite torture and blatant quackery."<sup>5</sup> But some of the proposed remedies are still being used by modern falconers, and, as Van den Abeele observes, "very little research has been made on the effectiveness of the plants and therapeutical substances prescribed."<sup>6</sup> In any case, it is impossible to determine whether remedies suggested in the treatises were actually used by English royal falconers, though a few of the recommended substances, bought presumably to treat sick birds, do appear in governmental accounts.

A number of significant developments in the literature of falconry occur

in the thirteenth century. The first surviving vernacular work on falconry — Daude de Pradas's *Dels auzels cassadors* — is written at that time, and several earlier Latin works on falconry are translated into the vernacular. These include an anonymous Anglo-Norman poem that is a partial translation of Adelard's "De avibus tractatus."<sup>7</sup> The first recorded translations were made of Arabic works on falconry — those attributed to "the Arab Moamin" and "the Persian Ghatriif." The thirteenth-century encyclopedists Alexander Neckam, Bartholomaeus Anglicus, Thomas of Cantimpré, Vincent of Beauvais, Albertus Magnus, and Brunetto Latini included sections on falcons in their works. Last, the emperor Frederick II wrote his monumental *De arte venandi cum avibus* — "The Art of Hunting with Birds."<sup>8</sup>

The encyclopedists put falconry into a broader perspective than earlier writers — generally as part of a larger section on birds. Thomas of Cantimpré, Vincent of Beauvais, Albertus Magnus, and Brunetto Latini all drew on material from the twelfth-century treatises, particularly the letter of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion that contained a section on various kinds ("genera") of hawks and falcons.<sup>9</sup> Some birds mentioned by thirteenth-century authors clearly correspond to modern varieties; others are more difficult to identify. Several of the authors also included information on the training and diet of hawks and on the skills needed by the falconer.

Early in the fourteenth century the Bolognese jurist Pietro Crescenzi wrote about falconry in a narrower context, including a book on hunting and fishing in his treatise on agriculture *Ruralium commodorum libri XII*.<sup>10</sup> In general during the later Middle Ages works on falconry were oriented practically — representing aspects of what Hugh of St. Victor called the mechanical sciences rather than the liberal arts.<sup>11</sup> The number of works on falconry written in vernacular languages increased greatly, together with a broadening of the audience for such works. Several works on falconry were written by or credited to nobles, for example, the *Libro de la caza* of Prince Juan Manuel and "Prince Edward's Book of Hawking." But in the same period (ca. 1394) a prosperous middle-class Parisian writing a book of instruction for his recently married young bride included within it a section on hawking.<sup>12</sup>

In this chapter I shall discuss mainly those pre-fourteenth-century authors whose works have been particularly helpful, either because their works have some connection with England — as in the cases of Adelard of Bath, Alexander Neckam, Bartholomaeus Anglicus, and Daude de Pradas — or because the works represent attempts based on observation rather than authority to describe the hawks and falcons of Europe or the art of falconry as practiced throughout the West. In this second category fall Frederick II's *De arte venandi* and the section on falcons in Albertus Magnus's *De animalibus*.

Adelard of Bath (*b.* ca. 1080) traveled in Spain, North Africa, and the Norman Kingdom of Sicily before he settled in England and wrote his work on falconry. Among his other works were treatises on the abacus and the astrolabe; a translation of Euclid from the Arabic; and the “*Quaestiones naturales*,” a dialogue between Adelard and his nephew in seventy-six chapters, each of which treats a scientific question, the whole purporting to expound Arabic knowledge on these questions. Adelard’s treatise on falconry is in the same dialogue form as the “*Quaestiones*.” It is short and in the main is concerned with diseases of goshawks and their cures. It contains a description of the proper characteristics of the falconer; mentions in passing the perch, mews, and hawk’s glove; and tells how a hawk should be taken from the perch. Adelard cites as one of his sources “the books of King Harold,” raising the possibility of a still earlier English falconry treatise.<sup>13</sup>

Other twelfth-century treatises on falconry include the works of Dancus Rex, Guillelmus Falconarius, and Gerardus Falconarius, all of whom may have been associated with the Norman court in Sicily. Like Adelard’s work, all three treatises deal mainly with diseases of falcons and hawks. Dancus and Guillelmus also list different “kinds” of falcons and include material on contemporary falconry, not all of it practical. Guillelmus, for example, describes how to train lanners to hunt cranes, a procedure involving keeping four lanners in a ditch, letting them see light only when they feed, bathing them in wine, and flying them before daybreak.<sup>14</sup> The works according to Epstein constitute a possible bridge between Adelard and Frederick II: “It seems probable, therefore, that all three treatises belong to an Anglo-Norman tradition of falconry (exemplified by Adelard of Bath’s work . . . ), which in turn harks back to a more primitive, indigenous Germanic hawking tradition as illustrated by some of the early Germanic laws. In Sicily this earlier Norman tradition, gradually infused by Arabian and Persian influences, then led to the unique flowering of the art of falconry under Frederick II.”<sup>15</sup>

By far the most important work written on falconry in the Middle Ages was the *De arte venandi cum avibus* of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen. Frederick II (1194–1250) was emperor of Germany and king of the Norman kingdom of Sicily: he conducted the first successful crusade since the First Crusade, achieving his aims by negotiation rather than by conquest. He was an excellent administrator, lawgiver, soldier, and diplomat, a major patron of learning and the arts, an early practitioner of the experimental method, and, as can be seen in the *De arte venandi*, a first-rate naturalist. It is no wonder that contemporaries called him “*stupor mundi*” — “the wonder of the world.”<sup>16</sup> Frederick states that he had considered writing a work on falconry for thirty years, “to correct the many errors made by our predecessors who, when writing on the

subject, degraded the noble art of falconry by slavishly copying the misleading and often insufficient statements to be found in the works of certain hackneyed authors.”<sup>17</sup> Because of the length of time in its preparation, the *De arte venandi* is assigned to the last part of Frederick’s life (ca. 1244–48). In writing his work Frederick consulted the standard classical authorities, had the works of several Arabic falconers translated for his use, and (in his own words), “at great expense, summoned from the four quarters of the earth masters in the practice of the art of falconry. We entertained these experts in our own domains, meantime seeking their opinions, weighing the importance of their knowledge, and endeavoring to retain in memory the more valuable of their words and deeds.” But despite this extensive use of both literary and practical sources, the *De arte venandi* was primarily based on Frederick’s own observations and experiments: “We have investigated and studied with the greatest solicitude and in minute detail all that relates to this art [falconry], exercising both mind and body so that we might eventually be qualified to describe and interpret the fruits of knowledge acquired from our own experiences or gleaned from others. . . . We discovered by hard-won experience that the deductions of Aristotle . . . were not entirely to be relied upon, more particularly in his descriptions of the characters of certain birds.”<sup>18</sup>

The Arab falconers whom Frederick invited to Sicily brought with them the falcon’s hood. Frederick not only adopted it, but improved it. Other customs, such as the use of live birds for luring, he did not adopt; but in the *De arte venandi* he describes such customs and gives his reasons for not using them. In Haskins’s words, his work “is a book of the open air, not of the closet.”<sup>19</sup>

Frederick was clearly familiar with English falconry practices. One of his falconers was named Walter Anglicus; another, Master Lambert, was in England in 1228; and when Frederick married the sister of Henry III of England, two of Henry’s falconers took falcons to Frederick. In one section of the *De arte venandi* Frederick notes a peculiarly English way of recalling falcons to the lure. One can only regret that he did not live to finish his work.<sup>20</sup>

Frederick’s contemporary Daude de Pradas was a Provençal poet and churchman who wrote a long treatise on falconry in the form of a poem. While much of Daude’s work was based on works of others, some sections, particularly those on hawks, merlins, and kestrels, contain material not found elsewhere. Daude mentions using a book “of King Henry of England who loved hawks and dogs more than any other Christian did.” Haskins suggested that Daude’s Henry might have been Henry II; and this appears reasonable both chronologically and in terms of Henry’s character — particularly since the book may have belonged to Henry rather than have been written by him.<sup>21</sup>

The last authors to be considered here are the encyclopedists Alexander

Neckam, Bartholomaeus Anglicus, and Albertus Magnus. Alexander Neckam (1157?–1217) was born in England, studied at Paris, returned to England in the 1180s, taught at Dunstable and St. Albans, was associated with Oxford, and late in life became abbot of Cirencester. His works include an encyclopedia, the *De naturis rerum*, in which the section on falcons contains allusions to Isidore of Seville, Hector, Ajax, and Alexander the Great and is of almost no value. However, his treatise *De utensilibus* includes information on the keeping of birds of prey on a perch in a bedroom and therefore is worthy of note.<sup>22</sup>

Bartholomaeus Anglicus (fl. 1230–50) was a Franciscan friar who was born in England and lived at Oxford, Paris, and Magdeburg. Much of Bartholomaeus's work is said to be out of date by thirteenth-century standards. He himself described his *De proprietatibus rerum* as “a simple and rude compilation” written for “young scholars and the general reader.” Some of the treatise, however, was based on his own observation. This is evident in Bartholomaeus's short chapter on the hawk, which is part of a book on the creatures of the air. The chapter is concise and accurate and contains information on the natural behavior and training of hawks and on the social aspects of hawking; it concludes with a wry but appropriate comment: “All the while they are alive and are strong and mighty to take their prey, they are beloved of their lords, and borne on hands, and set on perches, and stroked on the breast and on the tail, and made plain and smooth, and are nourished with great business and diligence. But when they are dead, all men hold them unprofitable and nothing worth, and be not eaten, but rather thrown out on dunghills.”<sup>23</sup>

Albertus Magnus (1193?–1280) was a Dominican whose scholarly objective was to write commentaries on all of Aristotle's works and to write works of his own on a number of subjects Aristotle did not cover. The result was a tremendous outpouring of work, filling thirty-eight volumes in the Borgnet edition. Albertus's discussion of falcons makes up roughly half of a book describing birds. Much of the material on falconry is drawn from other authors, particularly Symmachus, Dancus Rex, and Gerardus Falconarius. As a result, Albertus's work tends to be underrated: Harting, for example, calls it a “crude compilation” that “shows the author to have been but imperfectly acquainted with the subject.” While this may be true of Albertus's sections on hawk medicine, it is not true of his descriptions of falcons, which are far more detailed than those in the works he cites and appear to be based largely on Albertus's own observations. Rather than a “crude compilation,” therefore, his descriptions constitute an important account of the birds used in falconry in thirteenth-century Europe.<sup>24</sup>

### Governmental Records

The governmental records of England (the “public records”) that relate to falconry include such diverse materials as Anglo-Saxon charters, laws, *Domesday Book*, and Edward I’s letters to one of his falconers. These records go back to around the beginning of the seventh century, though the first surviving records to provide a year-by-year account of English royal administration — the Pipe Rolls — appear only in the twelfth century.

The Pipe Rolls were the records of the Exchequer, one of three royal financial organizations in the twelfth century, along with the Treasury and the Camera Curie. The Exchequer’s main business was to audit accounts of royal financial agents. The most important of these agents were the sheriffs, but others included bailiffs, stewards, and men in charge of vacant bishoprics or lands that had reverted to the crown. But while a good deal of royal income was audited at the Exchequer, by no means all was; and an even smaller proportion of total expenditure was paid out by those who accounted. If, for example, a sheriff was ordered to pay wages to royal falconers, the amount appeared in that year’s Pipe Roll, but if the falconers were paid out of the king’s household accounts (the Camera Curie), the payment would not have been recorded in any source that has survived.<sup>25</sup>

The earliest surviving Pipe Roll is that of 31 Henry I, covering the period from Michaelmas (September 29) 1129 to Michaelmas 1130. The next roll we have is that of 2 Henry II (1155–56); after which, with one or two gaps, the Pipe Rolls continue down to the nineteenth century. The Pipe Rolls are virtually our only sources of information for royal expenditure on falconry for the reigns of Henry II and Richard.

Corresponding to the English Exchequer was a Norman Exchequer that issued its own Pipe Rolls. Henry II and Richard I both spent a good deal of time in France, and substantial falconry expenses were recorded on the Norman Pipe Rolls. Unfortunately few of these rolls have survived.<sup>26</sup>

At the beginning of John’s reign a major development in royal record keeping occurred. As far back as Anglo-Saxon times English kings had issued written commands and charters, but the royal chancery made no systematic effort to keep records of the “writs” it sent out. “In the twelfth century it became necessary to make duplicate copies of many of these writs called *contra brevia*, which were kept on files. Finally, in the first year of King John, by a change which was in effect a revolution, the occasional procedure of making *contra brevia* was superseded by the making of systematic copies of all out-letters of importance.”<sup>27</sup> Such copies were preserved in several different

series. The Charter Rolls contained royal grants of lands and privileges and confirmations of previous grants. The Patent Rolls contained copies of royal letters patent — formal letters (though less formal than royal charters) issued unfolded with a wax impression of the royal seal pendant from the document. These letters included some grants, royal letters of protection, and other documents that might have to be shown to officials and others: for example, the man who summoned keepers of royal hawks was issued a letter patent. The Close Rolls were enrollments of copies of letters close — letters folded and “closed” by the Great Seal: in Galbraith’s words, “the routine orders of the central government to local officials.”<sup>28</sup> The Liberate Rolls contained royal orders to the Treasurer involving expenditure issued under the Great Seal: they included orders to make payments, such as wages to falconers, and orders to allow for payments made by royal officials, such as payments by sheriffs for birds bought for the king. The Fine or Oblata Rolls recorded payments tendered to the king in the hope of receiving privileges or grants. Such payments might include offerings of hawks and falcons. Finally, two other types of record give important information about the royal household during John’s reign. The Misae Rolls provide almost a day-to-day record of household expenditure for periods for which they are extant, while the Praestita Rolls record payments made to various royal servants.

Both Exchequer and Chancery were originally administrative branches of the king’s household that gradually developed into separate departments. While this expansion was going on, the Household developed new branches to handle its own work. The most important of these during the thirteenth century was the Wardrobe, which Tout has called “the chief administrative, directive, financial, secretarial and sealing department of the household.”<sup>29</sup> The Wardrobe received payments from the Exchequer, collected some revenues, and negotiated loans. It was responsible for payments of household expenses and hence for most payments made for royal falconry. As in the case of other departments, the Wardrobe produced its own records. From early in the reign of Henry III (with some gaps), totals of Wardrobe expenditure for household departments were kept in accounts enrolled in various records — generally Pipe Rolls or Chancellor’s Rolls. During Henry’s reign the number of original Household and Wardrobe records increases, and there is a virtual explosion of such records in the reign of Edward I. Surviving Household and Wardrobe records increase from 3 in John’s reign, to around 125 for Henry III, and to over 3,000 for Edward. These records include orders for payment, journals of expenditure, and yearly accounts for various departments, including expenses for falconry and hunting. By the last decade of Edward I’s reign, the Wardrobe was typically producing an annual volume for accounting at the Exchequer



that reported in detail its expenditures during the regnal year. The main impetus for the increase in number of surviving records was no doubt a desire for more accurate accounting procedures, but a new form of record — the book, in addition to the roll — also was a factor, as was the general financial confusion of Edward's last years. In those years Edward was fighting an expensive war in Scotland and was deeply in debt. In some years the record-keeping process was unfinished, and consequently many intermediate internal documents, some marked with cancellation lines, have survived. Many of these documents are fragmentary, some have not been dated, and gaps exist. Nevertheless, the surviving records provide the fullest records of royal falconry for the reign of any medieval English king.<sup>30</sup>

The most important sources of information about the landholdings and obligations of royal hawkers<sup>31</sup> and falconers are the various inquests taken by English kings. These include *Domesday Book* and the *Book of Fees*, which contains inquests, dating from 1198 to 1293, into fees and serjeanties held of the king. Another inquest with useful information on falconry serjeanties is the *Rotuli de dominabus* (1185), a survey of assets of widows and wards in Henry II's hands. The *Hundred Rolls* provide a fourth source of information: they derive from an inquest taken in 1274–75 “concerning certain rights, liberties, and other matters affecting us and our estates” in the course of which information was compiled about the holdings and duties of a number of royal hawkers and falconers. From the reign of Henry III on, inquests called *Inquisitiones post mortem* were made into the holdings of the king's deceased tenants-in-chief. These tenants included falconers and hawkers holding land by serjeanty tenure, and the inquests not only provide essential information about the holdings and relationships of royal falconers and hawkers but contain material on the practice of falconry and the organization of the royal falconry establishment.

So much for the major sources on which the following chapters will be based. Let us now turn to the sport of falconry itself.

## *The Birds, Their Training, and the Sport of Falconry*

Many kinds of birds of prey have been trained and used in sport, but relatively few of these were used by English kings. The main varieties used before 1307 were the gyrfalcon, peregrine, lanner, goshawk, and sparrowhawk; the saker, hobby, and merlin were used far less frequently.

The birds flown fell into two groups, falcons and hawks—a distinction fundamental among raptors. As Frederick II wrote, “Every bird utilized by the falconer in hunting should be classified as either a falcon or a hawk.”<sup>1</sup> The differentiation was based on three interrelated sets of factors: physical differences, particularly the length and shape of wings; differences in normal styles of flight; and differences in how falcons and hawks capture prey.<sup>2</sup> These differences were reflected in the kinds of sport the birds provided, in training methods, and in differences in the care of birds.

The basic physical difference between falcons and hawks lies in the length and shape of their wings and tails. Falcons have narrow pointed wings and narrow tapering tails. The wing-beats of the falcon are moderately rapid and regular—the French call falcons *ramiers*, or rowers, because of the resemblance of their flight to sculling. The hawks used in medieval Europe—goshawks and sparrowhawks—have shorter, rounder wings than falcons, and a relatively longer tail. They have a gliding flight broken at intervals by three or

four wing beats, and they frequently soar with wings spread and tail fanned out — hence their French name of *voiliers*, or sailors.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of these physical differences, the hunting styles of falcons and hawks vary considerably. Falcons typically attack by diving or “stooping” from a considerable height. If the stoop is successful, the falcon hits its prey with tremendous speed: in the case of the peregrine, this may reach over two hundred miles per hour. The prey is struck with a blow from the talons and the first blow alone is often fatal. As Albertus Magnus wrote:

The characteristic act of a falcon among raptorial birds is to fall with force on its prey. . . . When it wishes to take game, it is in the nature of the falcon to ascend with a swift flight and with its talons held close to its breast, to fall with force on the bird with so powerful an effort that in descending it sounds like a raging wind, and it makes this attack not by descending directly or perpendicularly, but at an angle: because striking after such a descent it inflicts a long wound with its claws so that sometimes a bird falls split from head to tail, and sometimes it is found with its whole head torn off.

Hawks, on the other hand, usually approach their quarry at a low altitude and fly it down with a quick burst of speed. “In fact, the hawk is called *accipiter*, and also *astur* from its natural adroitness [*astus*], because it almost always stays hidden and flies close to the ground, contrary to the manner of falcons, and when it takes a bird, it seizes it [*accipit*] from below as if whirling around on itself.”<sup>4</sup> Rather than hitting the prey and returning to pick it up, as falcons do, hawks grab or clutch their prey, usually killing by driving their talons into the victim’s body and holding on until the creature is dead, though they may also kill with a stroke of the beak. While both falcons and hawks have strong feet, the feet of hawks are particularly well developed for holding and killing. As Fuertes noted, “The feet of the goshawk are veritable engines of death, with enormous talons and great strength. Whereas a falcon’s foot is more like a fist to deliver a terrible blow, the short-wing’s feet are like great ice-tongs with semicircular claws nearly an inch long, which enter the very vitals of the quarry and kill as tough a creature as a rat or hare in a few seconds and take the life of any bird almost instantly.”<sup>5</sup>

The differences between falcons and hawks in structure and mode of attack lead to differences in the types of sport they provide. Because of their style of attack, falcons hunt most effectively in open country. Hawks, on the other hand, can be flown in brush or wooded country where falcons cannot, since the broad wings and long tails of hawks allow them to cruise at low altitudes and maneuver quickly.<sup>6</sup>