

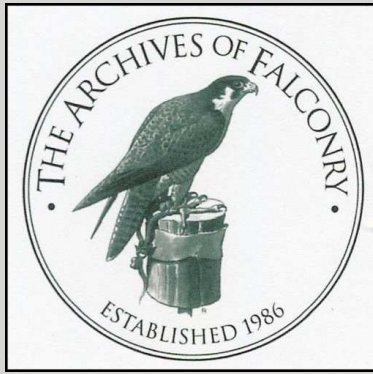
**The Dead Falconers Tours  
2002 and 2004  
20th Anniversary 2022**



**The Dead Falconers Tours Participants  
Archives of Falconry Associates  
Peter Devers-Natalie Nicholson-Vicki Swift-John Swift**







**TAF Logo 1986-2021**



**TAF Logo 2022**

Photography for this work was done by the members of the Dead Falconers Tour- Vicki Swift, Peter Devers, Natalie Nicholson, unless otherwise noted.

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**Natalie Nicholson appraising books for an Archives of Falconry book auction**

**Dedicated to**  
**Natalie Nicholson**

**In Appreciation of  
Her Continued Support and Enthusiasm  
In Remembering  
Our Falconry Friends**





**The  
Dead  
Falconers  
Tours**

**20th  
Anniversary**

**2002 to 2022**

## The Dead Falconers Tours

The need for falconer grave restoration becomes evident in 1999 when Peter Devers discovers William Brodrick's damaged grave



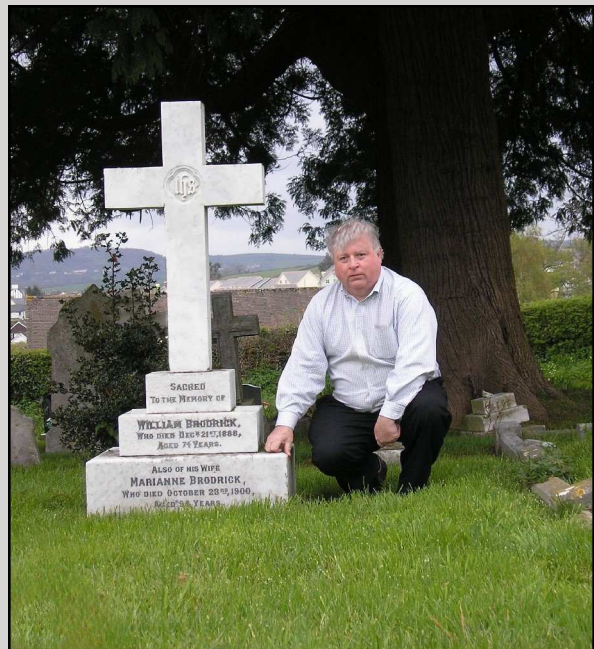
William Brodrick's grave in disrepair



The lettering is unreadable



A newly restored grave marker



Peter Devers at the gravesite



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Tour Begins

# Dead Falconers Tour 2002

Archives of American Falconry: John R. Swift-Curator Books and Manuscripts, Peter Barry Devers-Eastern Research Associate, Natalie Nicholson-Western Research Associate, Vicki Swift-Travel Agent and Photographer

In 1999, Peter Barry Devers, a falconer and research associate of the *Archives of American Falconry*, was driving through southwestern England in the County of Devon. He saw a road sign for the village of Chudleigh and it registered that he knew the name. He remembered that this was once the home of William Brodrick, the famous 19th Century falconer, painter, and author. Could he also be buried there? Peter set out to locate his grave. Upon arriving at the cemetery he saw a Kestrel hovering at the far end of the enclosure, and so went in that direction. Almost immediately, he found the burial plot. (Grave locating was only one of Peter's fortes, as I would later find out.) The grave marker had been vandalized, so Peter set about raising funds to refurbish the headstone. This restoration was completed and the story was documented in *Hawk Chalk* and the *Falconer's Magazine*.

The story stimulated a conversation between falconry bookseller Natalie Nicholson, also a researcher for the Archives, Peter and myself. We wondered what had happened to the other falconers and authors of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Presumably, all were as dead as Brodrick, but had anyone verified this by finding their actual burial spots? Could more be learned about them, their families, and their communities by actually visiting their gravesites? We had all heard about literary cemetery tours to see the likes of Shakespeare and Tolstoy, and of the hordes of people visiting graveyards where movie stars are buried, but nev-

er, we believed, had anyone made a trip to see falconers' headstones.

All modern falconers are fortunate that Roger Upton documented many of these authors and falconers in *A Bird in the Hand* (1980) and *O for a Falconers Voice* (1987). Tom Gossard, an American falconer and bookseller, also profiled several additional author's lives in his 1997 *NAFA Journal* article entitled *Favorite Falconers: 1850 to 1900*. All of these articles provided significant biographical information on several important falconry authorities, but was there more that could be gathered? Questions still remained unanswered: about their families, what else had they done besides falconry, whether there were family connections between the different falconers, where they had lived, and where they were buried. We determined that there was more information we might be able to obtain so we started planning a trip to Great Britain and the continent to see what we could discover.

Our feeling was that our adventure would be more enjoyable if we also attended the British Falconry Fair to see some live falconers at the same time. It took three years of planning to get all four of us (Peter Devers, Natalie Nicholson, John and Vicki Swift) together at the same time and to locate where most of the individuals we were looking for had lived and were presumably buried. Since our time would be limited, we decided to try and visit additional places, which would also have some falconry-related interest, either in art, museums, palaces,

castles, or exhibitions. In both England and continental Europe that was not hard to accomplish as falconry had been a significant daily activity for hundreds of years. In fact, we were surprised to find some falconry related art, museum or famous house almost everywhere we went. Peter and Natalie would arrive in England a couple of days before Vicki and I, in order to do some early research while we finished a week of travels in France and the Low Countries.

When we discussed our trip with other falconers and related that we would be spending most of our time in cemeteries, there were some very strange expressions from our friends. It was during one of these discussions that we arrived at a name for our venture. It would be called the DEAD FALCONERS TOUR, hoping it sounded more like a rock concert than a graveyard search. The tour proved very enlightening and more information has been learned about each of the individuals researched. It would seem inappropriate to say that these people seemed to come alive, but they certainly have become more real to each of us. The TOUR is presented in a diary form as it helps us recall all of the events and perhaps makes for more enjoyable reading. Perhaps someone else in the future will want to take the Dead Falconers Tour.

**Wednesday - Friday, April 24th - 26th, 2002, Paris, France**

It was surprising to learn how much French falconry there was as I had been studying only British falcon-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Versailles Palace and the Bayeux Tapestry



Versailles -- palace of Louis XIV - site of hawking parties.

ry, which effectively ended with the reign of Charles I (He lost his head so didn't practice the sport much afterwards), though Oliver Cromwell was reputedly an excellent falconer, and Charles II, also, had a few professional falconers in his retinue. In France, falconry was part of the royal family's life and lasted until 1793 when Louis XVI lost his head (is there a theme here?) during the French revolution.

After visiting the Eiffel tower (along with every kid in France on Spring Break), Vicki and I went to Versailles, the famous palace built by Louis XIV. The grounds and gardens are large enough to hold their own hawking parties and most likely they did. The palace is magnificent but unfortunately was stripped of most of its furnishings after the revolution. Fortunately, many of the paintings ended up in the Musée de Louvre. A proper visit there would have taken several days, but in our afternoon's viewing we saw several paintings by Philip Wouwermans depicting falconry, and when in the section of artists who painted during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries there was always a scene or two depicting hawking. We, also, visited the Bibliothèque Nationale, the national library of France, hoping some of

their national literary treasures, which include falconry, might be on display. As with most libraries, however, the books are shelved and only available upon request. Libraries are generally reserved for research and not just viewing; disappointing but likely worth a trip back. Our most pleasant surprise was a visit to the Cluny Museum,

which was built on the site of some 3<sup>rd</sup> Century Roman Baths. It was rebuilt from 1485 - 1800 and currently houses numerous artifacts, some of which depict falconry. The most famous of these is the 16th Century *Lady and the Unicorn Tapestries*, still one of the most popular themes in needlepoint today. There are six tapestries, which cover an entire room, with falconry depicted in most scenes. The tapestries are designed to depict the five senses Taste, Smell, Touch, Sight and Hearing with the sixth unknown. There are additional tapestries in other rooms, which also depict falconry. Paris was a pleasant surprise as we had expected very little on falconry, thinking that it was just another large city. It was time to leave the city and head to the Normandy Beaches.

### Saturday and Sunday, April 27th - 28th - Bayeux Tapestry

The Normandy Beaches have historical significance for two major history altering events. Recent history remembers the allied invasion of June 6, 1944, which altered the course of European and world history and is the last successful invasion of Europe. The other event is the last successful invasion of Britain, by William the Con-

queror in 1066, that began the Norman rule in Britain. The entire story of William and his conquest is depicted in one of the oldest surviving pictorial descriptions from medieval times, The Bayeux Tapestry, which is displayed in the town of Bayeux only six miles from the Normandy beaches. Since *The Longest Day* is one of



Bayeux Tapestry.

my favorite movies and William the Conqueror was an avid hunter and falconer, Normandy was a must.

On the way to Arromanches, Vicki and I detoured south to visit the famous monastery of Mont.-St-Michael, which is situated on a large rock in the middle of an estuary. It is an impregnable fortress first founded in 708 AD as a chapel with later additions completing the castle and making it an imposing silhouette on the horizon. It was absolutely beautiful and one of the highlights of the entire trip. There was little falconry material other than some tapestry souvenirs; however, Mont. St. Michele is featured as part of the Bayeux tapestry. We drove north



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Mary of Burgundy and WWII American Cemetery in Holland

to our hotel in Arromanches, arriving in time to visit the beach (Gold) where the British had come ashore on D-Day. The actual footage of the British on D-Day shows some buildings that are still there today. Arromanches served as the primary unloading point for all allied military supplies from D-Day until the port at Cherbourg was captured in July, 1944. The British had developed an artificial harbor called a Mulberry Harbor that was waiting offshore for installation as soon as the town had been secured. Remains of this important structure are still visible offshore. Upon arriving at our hotel, I was startled to see a European Kestrel in the kitchen of our B & B. The bird was just a pet but was in keeping with our tour emphasis.

Sunday was our trip to Bayeux for the tapestry museum and then on to Utah Beach and Ste. Mere-Eglise. The town of Bayeux is just six miles from Gold Beach but was spared allied bombing, so its important cathedral survived. The tapestry museum is in the middle of the town and can only be reached on foot, as the streets are narrow. The Bayeux Tapestry is the first strip cartoon, which depicts the entire story of William's conquest of England. It is actually embroidery on seven pieces of linen cloth; it measures 20 inches tall by 230 feet long. It tells the story of the events leading up to and including the Battle of Hastings on Oct 14, 1066. The tapestry was commissioned by William's half brother, Bishop Odo, and was finished in 1077. It has survived over 900 years and narrowly missed destruction on D-Day but was moved to the Louvre for safe storage. William was an avid hunter and falconer as were his nobles who traveled with him, so there are numerous falconry and hunting scenes along the border as well as the main story of the defeat of Harold at the Battle of Hastings. It is one of the

earliest depictions of falcons and falconers to have survived to modern times. It is truly a wonder to see this early work depicting falconry. We drove up the coast to Utah Beach, where the Germans practiced falconry during the war, using their Goshawks to kill rabbits that were tunneling under their earthworks. I actually expected to see more of the remnants of the invasion but nature always quickly begins to repair her scars. There were a few concrete bunkers left, but in general it was a very quiet scene with a few rusting amphibious assault vehicles nearby. The American Cemetery is a different story with beautifully maintained grounds as the final resting-place for over 8,000 men. The struggle quickly takes on perspective with row after row of white crosses with the names of those who died and this is only the American Cemetery. Just a short visit away is the town of Ste. Mere-Eglise, which was made famous as the place where an American soldier from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne parachuted in and got hung up on a church tower during a fire. There is still a depiction of this event in the Town Square along with a nearby museum. All these museums and memorials are especially sobering in the light of the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001.

### Monday, April 29th, Mary of Burgundy

We drove to Brugge, Belgium and were surprised at this beautiful ancient medieval city surrounded by canals that once served as the trading center for Belgium. On a van tour of the city, the driver indicated that Brugge was the final resting-place for Mary of Burgundy, wife of Emperor Maximilian. I had not expected to encounter any falconry related exhibits on this part of the trip, but I recognized the name from my bibliographical re-

search. Mary of Burgundy was married to Emperor Maximilian of Austria. She died at age 25, after falling off her horse while out flying her falcon. Her husband was, also, an avid hunter and falconer and is often depicted in tapestry reproductions in hunting scenes. Mary of Burgundy's name is often associated with a man who illuminated a Book of Hours for her and is known as The Master of Mary of Burgundy. This Book of Hours is considered his greatest work and the illuminations are considered some of the finest ever produced in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. The Master of Mary of Burgundy, also, illuminated a book of hours for Englebert of Nassau that is preserved in the Bodeleian Library at Oxford which was reproduced in facsimile in 1970. Rachel Hands provides a description of the falconry scenes that are found on folios 41-58. A falconer in Brugge was more than I could have expected. We were, also, surprised at the number of falconry tapestries available in the various shops, but Belgium is famous for its weaving skills.

### Tuesday and Wednesday, April 30th - May 1st

We drove to Margraten, Netherlands to the American Cemetery to visit the grave of my father's childhood friend for whom I am named. He had survived the Battle of the Bulge with Patton's third army only to die three weeks before the end of the war on May 8, 1945. The park superintendent providing our tour said that on Memorial Day over 7,000 Dutch citizens come to the cemetery to pay their respect to the American's who had freed them from the Nazi's. The American sacrifice is still appreciated.

### Thursday and Friday, May 2nd - 3rd, Valkenswaard, Holland

We headed to Valkenswaard in the



## **The Dead Falconers Tours**

### **Effigy of Mary of Burgundy in Bruges, Belgium**



Mary of Burgundy was married to Emperor Maximilian and died at age 25 from a fall while out hunting with her falcons at age 25.

### **Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten, Holland**



Over 8500 Americans are buried here and each Memorial Day the Dutch decorate the graves.  
John Resler Swift visited the grave of his namesake Lt John Thomas Resler  
who died on April 17, 1945



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Valkenswaard in the Netherlands

south of Holland, only about an hour by road, and arrived in the middle of the country fair. In the center of town-square, we spied the bronze statue of a falconer, a good sign. Jac van Gerwen, curator of the Valkenswaard falconry museum, and his wife Nolta hosted Vicki and me for lunch and a



*John S. with the Falconer of Valkenswaard.*

quick tour of his mews with his Goshawks. Only Goshawks and Peregrines are flown in Holland, and they cannot be native birds. This is a significant change for a country that was once the leading supplier of falconers, equipment and Peregrines for Great Britain and the rest of Europe. Jac estimates that over 10,000 Peregrines were supplied over the centuries with the last Peregrine trapped in 1926. Valkenswaard is in the south central region of Holland, and falconry once provided significant income for the residents, as the land was too poor to cultivate. Villagers learned their trade from other prominent falconers and worked for the various monarchies throughout Europe. Jac was instru-

mental in developing the museum, which has several excellent large dioramas depicting falconers and falconry, as they would have looked during the days of the Loo Hawking Club in the mid-19th Century. I wanted to see the local cemetery, especially the graves of the prominent falconer family of Mollen, but the gate was locked. If ever a falconer could feel at home it would have been in Valkenswaard during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Falconry in Holland may be prohibited in the coming years due to changing attitudes, but Valkenswaard will always hold a special place in falconry legends and lore.

We left for Amsterdam, arriving late in the afternoon, and took the rest of the day off having driven some 1600 miles in the last week. I made contact with Harrie Knol, a falconer and fellow book collector, and arranged for dinner the following evening. Friday was to be our last day on the continent and we had a choice between visiting the Hague to see the paintings by the Dutch masters, including the famous portrait of Robert Cheseman by Hans Holbein [Bibliotheca Accipitraria p. 8], or attending the once every decade flower show- The Floriade. Vicki said Cheseman would always be there so off to the flower show we went. I must admit they were beautiful. Friday evening, we took the train to Amersfoort to have dinner with Harrie Knol and his wife Agnita. It is always a little unnerving to ride trains, as they are so unfamiliar to Americans but in Europe it is a way of life. The primary form of transportation in Holland is the bicycle and there are separate bike paths along most of the high-



*Diorama at Valkenswaard Museum.*

ways. It was interesting to see hundreds of bicycles at the train station parked without security for the entire day. Harrie flies a Goshawk and only has to travel a few miles to hunt her. Harrie is, also, well known for his "Falconry Portal" on the Internet. As a fellow book collector, I had a great time looking at his collection and found a few titles I had not previously seen. We had a wonderful dinner at an Indonesian restaurant, which we were surprised to find in Holland. Harrie reminded us that Holland had once been a colonial power and many of the people from these colonies moved to the Netherlands, so it was not that unusual after all.

### Thursday and Friday, May 2nd - 3rd, England

While Vicki and I were in Valkenswaard, Peter and Natalie were landing in Britain. Peter beat Natalie by a day, but then he was coming from the East Coast and so had a head start over Natalie coming from California. Those New Yorkers always seem to find an advantage somewhere. For him it was to be the first visit to a dead falconer of Britain, Sir Thomas Sherley of Wiston in Sussex.

While sleuthing out falconry ma-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sir Thomas Sherley and Ann Boleyn's Hever Castle



*Authors Peter D. and Natalie N. at B&B in England.*

terial at Yale University, Peter fell upon a small nondescript falconry book by an anonymous author that no falconer had ever heard of before. His detective work (he read the thing) revealed that Sir Thomas (1542-1612) was the author. As he is re-printing Sherley's 1603 work this year he thought it incumbent to obtain a few pictures of Sherley's house and grave, if still in existence. Both are. The home is a magnificent Elizabethan manor set in a thousand acres of parkland, still with the Great Hall in which Sherley lived and kept his hawks. Adjacent is the medieval dovecote where his lure

the church. After paying his respects to the ghost of Sherley, Peter went on to visit Arundel Castle, seat of the Dukes of Norfolk, to whom falconry was an integral part of their lives up through to the 17th Century. The castle is one of those storybook places that is not to be missed.

On Friday, Peter found his way to Gatwick to pick up Natalie. He had arranged for rooms for them in an enchanting 15th Century

thatched roof cottage, which had fireplaces, massive oak beams and an enchanting old English garden with Rambler Roses & Espalier trees. Though Peter asked for two rooms, the proprietress evidently thought she was booking rooms for young lovers, and so they ended up with a suite. In the morning, Jo, the owner, asked them how they slept and Peter just gave her

a knowing glance. Following breakfast, Peter and Natalie went on a jaunt to Hever Castle, home of Anne Boleyn, a wife of Henry VIII. The castle was restored by the Astor family and is now open to the public. In the Long Gallery upstairs, Peter spotted a lovely painting of "Hawking at Hever" depicting the sport as practiced there in the 16th Century. Even though he was an American, the owners of the castle wouldn't sell him the artwork.

**Saturday, May 4th, Capt. Francis Salvin, James E. Harting and Major Charles H. Fisher**



*Hever Castle, home of Anne Boleyn, 2nd wife of Henry VIII*

After a short one-hour flight to Gatwick, we met Peter and Natalie and had our first look at the rental car with the steering wheel on the wrong side. Peter was the designated driver as I was still nervous about driving on the left side of the road. I always tell Peter that he leaned a little to the left while I prefer the right. No one I asked could ever tell me why they still drive on the left in Great Britain. Falconer Jack Mavrogordato explains in his *Behind the Scenes* that when people formerly traveled by horse they would pass on the left to keep their sword hand free in case they were attacked. Someone needs to tell them that we don't ride horses anymore and cer-



*Effigies of Sir Thomas Sherley and his wife.*



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Captain Francis Henry Salvin's Grave and Mews at Sutton Park



*Grave of Captain Salvin.*

tainly don't carry swords. Oh well, when in Rome! Vicki and Natalie preferred to sit in the back seat and tell us what we did wrong, which they did frequently.

Our first stop was to visit Captain Francis Henry Salvin's home and



*Former mews of Captain Salvin.*

grave site just a few miles away in Guildford. Peter and I had made contact with Father Taylor at St. Edwards Catholic Church and arranged to meet him after Saturday mass. "Let me know what time you are coming," he said, "or if I'm not home leave a message with my wife." Hmmm... a married Catholic priest? It turns out, he was a convert from the Church of En-

gland and the Pope generously allowed him to bring his wife along. Father Taylor gave us a tour of the church and showed us Salvin's grave. It is a very simple but handsome one of gray stained stone, with a cross sculpted on it that looks very much like a Crusader's sword: a fitting last image for a sportsman who also clearly saw the romantic side of the art. Father Taylor is researching a

new history of the church, built by the Salvin family, and so had some interesting historical information to give us. We were anxious to learn as much about Salvin as possible so we asked for the location of his primary residence from which he wrote his books

and many articles for *The Field*. The former Whitmoor House is now known as Whitmoor Lodge and four families currently reside in the various buildings. We were fortunate that one of the residents took the time to escort us around the property. Nicholas and Geraldine Butterworth were as interested in

Capt. Salvin as we were, so we were able to supply each other with additional information. Captain Salvin's house still displays two weathervanes with an "S" and one with a "W" for his mother's family, the Webb-Westons. His former hawking mews are still present but a family lives in them now. The entire visit was enjoyable as we were able to gather addi-

tional biographical information and this is what we learned:

Captain Francis Henry Salvin was born at Croxdale Hall, April 4, 1817, the fifth and youngest son of the 13 children of William Thomas Salvin of Croxdale Hall, Durham and Anna Maria Webb-Weston, daughter of John Webb-Weston of Sutton Place, Surrey. Salvin was educated at Ampleforth College in Yorkshire before joining the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the York and Lancaster Regiment in 1839; he retired with the rank of Captain in 1864. He became acquainted with John Tong, assistant falconer to Colonel Thornton, a friendship that began a lifelong love of falconry during which Salvin often kept falcons while on military duty in various parts of Ireland. He made a sporting tour of the North of England in 1843 with professional falconer John Pells who was at that time in the service of the Duke of St. Albans, Hereditary Grand Falconer of England. Salvin traveled in the manner of Colonel Thornton and enjoyed excellent sport with Mr. Riddell of Leyburn and Mr. Marmaduke Salvin (his brother) of Burn Hall, on Edmondbyer Moors, and with Mr. Silvertop at Minsteracres. Salvin also traveled with Mr. Pells to Linton with tiercel Peregrines and his notable setter "Rake" for partridge hawking. When stationed with his regiment in remote places he took up hawking to pass the time, pursuing Rooks and Magpies if no other game were available. A member of the Old Hawking Club, he was often seen on the Wiltshire Downs galloping after Rooks and Magpies with some of the best-trained hawks in the country. In one four month period during 1857, his falcons took 87 Rooks and Magpies. His association with William Brodrick of Chudleigh, eventually led to the publication of *Falconry in the British Isles* in 1855, one of the most valuable, beautifully illustrated books

# The Dead Falconers Tours

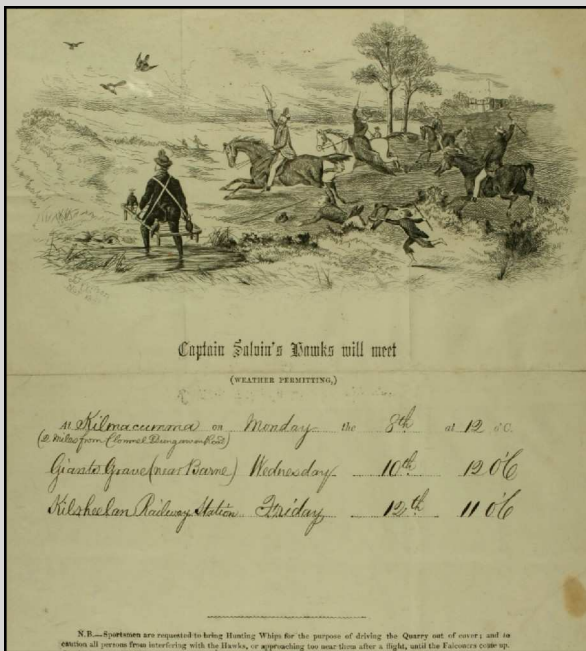
## Captain Francis Henry Salvin



**Captain Francis Henry Salvin**



**Captain Francis Henry Salvin**



**Salvin's Invitation to Hawking Meet**

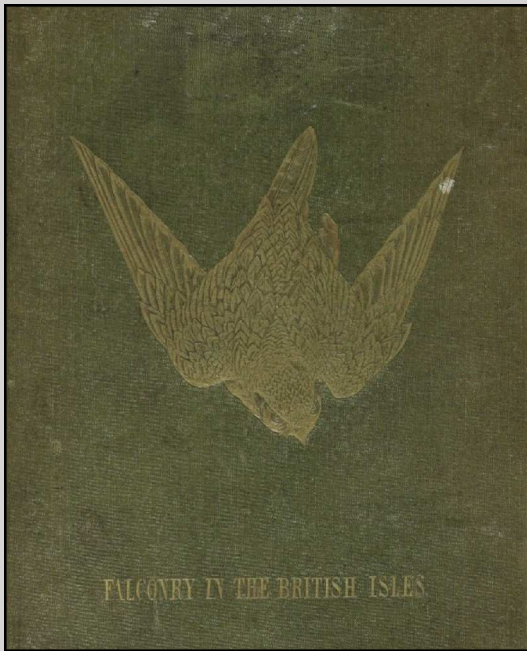


**Captain Salvin's Weather Vane**

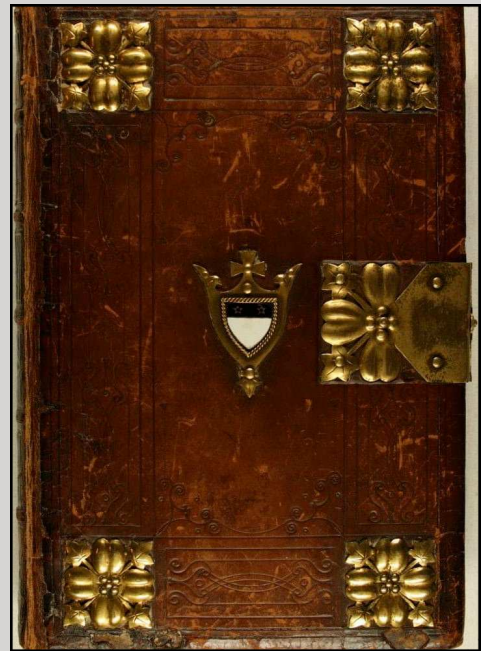


# The Dead Falconers Tours

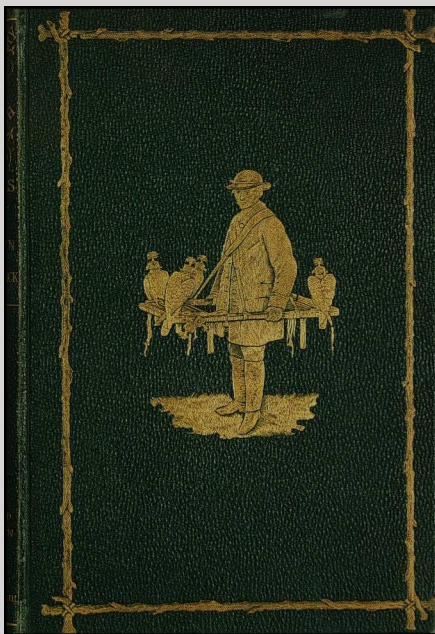
## Captain Salvin's *Falconry in the British Isles*



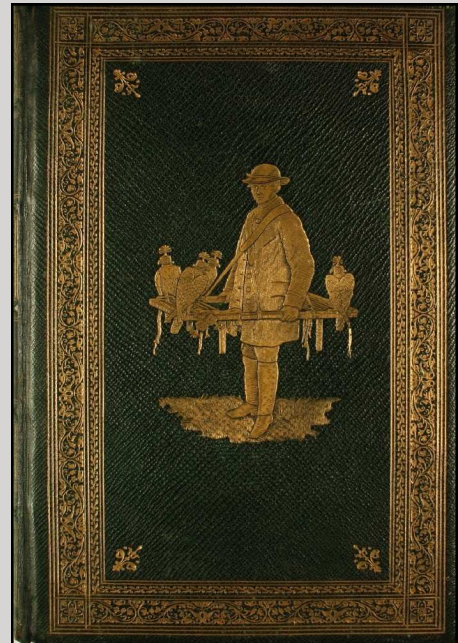
**Falconry in the British Isles-1855  
Original Cover**



**Falconry in the British Isles-1855  
Captain Salvin's Personal Copy**



**Falconry in the British Isles -1873  
Original Binding**



**Falconry in the British Isles -1873  
Special Presentation Copy**



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Captain Salvin's Manor Lodge



Former house of Capt. Salvin. Manor House, now Manor Lodge.

on the sport ever published. William Brodrick's illustrations have been favorably compared with those of the famous bird painter Joseph Wolf. Salvin, also, assisted his friend, the notable falconer the Reverend Gage Earl Freeman—known as "Peregrine" to readers of *The Field*—by contributing a section to Freeman's book *Falconry: Its Claims, History and Practice* on training the otter and cormorant, two sports in which he was proficient. He was renowned for traveling the countryside carrying his cormorants in a Chinese palanquin to participate in "Meets." In 1849, he took 1200 large fish over 28 days with four cormorants at Drifffield, Kilney and other places in the north of England. Overall, Capt. Salvin's skill and reputation in training animals was well known and numerous anecdotes survive to the present day. He once trained a monkey named Jumbo to ride a retriever around the countryside in a red coat, holding onto the dog's collar even while it jumped fences. Another of Salvin's constant companions was a wild boar wearing a bell that accompanied him on his daily walks and would come when called and fed with wild acorns. Unfortunately, the boar came to an untimely

end when he continued to eat the local farmer's crops and was shot while on one of these forays.

Capt. Salvin loved the countryside and enjoyed the sporting life well into his seventies. It was said his good humor and enthusiasm was contagious and it was impossible to accompany him on one of his daily treks without discovering something that you had not previously known. In the last years of his life, he moved to a room in a property he owned and let to his tenant Monica Sibeth, just a short distance away from Whitmoor House. He died unmarried on October 2, 1904 at the age of 87 and was buried nearby at St. Edwards Church Cemetery on the Sutton Park Estate. He is buried on the south side of the church away from his family members on the East Side but next to the grave of Monica Sibeth. The inscription on his grave marker reads "Pray for the repose of the soul of Francis Henry Salvin of Sutton Place who died October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1904."

In addition to his life as a sportsman, Capt. Salvin's name will forever be linked with Sutton Place, a large estate that he inherited from his uncle (the brother of his mother, Thomas Monnington Webbe-Weston) in 1857, and which he owned until his death. Sutton Place is one of the most beautiful Tudor mansions in the south of England. The male line of Webbe-Weston became extinct in 1857 with the death of Thomas Monnington Webbe-Weston and the estate passed to his nephew Capt. Salvin. Apparently, he attempted to live in the manor house but found it too large and ex-

pensive for a bachelor and moved into Whitmoor House with his sisters where he remained for most of his life. Upon Capt. Salvin's death, Sutton Park passed to Phillip and Louisa Witham and remained within the family until it was sold in 1918 to the Duke of Sutherland who owned it until 1959. The American oilman, J. Paul Getty, purchased the estate and ran his 3 billion-dollar empire from Sutton Place where he remained until his death in 1976. Sutton Place was purchased from Getty Oil in 1980 by another American art collector, Stanley Seeger, and was sold to the current owner Frederick Koch in 1986. In 1986, the house was fully restored as a home for Koch's art collection and for a scholarly foundation, the Sutton Place Foundation. Today Sutton Place is again for sale, comprising some 775 acres with some twenty other houses and cottages. The market price is £25 million and several plans for its use have been proposed including a hotel and golf course.

It was just a short drive from Captain Salvin's home to Weybridge where James Edmund Harting had spent most of his life. Peter had confirmed Harting's burial in the town cemetery, and we found it very quickly; the cemetery caretaker had sent Peter a treasure map with X marks the spot. The grave is located near the brick wall, with a handsome carved headstone. Evidently, gravespace is costly in Britain as Harting's wife and daughter are both buried with him, one on top of the other. Peter was using 400-speed film in his camera, and when the film was developed he found he had photographed Harting's ghost along with myself admiring his stone. My wife Vicki's camera only held 200-speed film, so she didn't pick up Harting's image clearly, just a blur.

James Edmund Harting was important to all modern falconers be-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## James Edmund Harting

cause of his cataloguing of all falconry works published prior to 1891. In



John S. at the grave of James Edmund Harting.

addition, he published numerous falconry works on his own. Here is the information we gathered on Harting while in England and at the office of *The Field*:

James Edmund Harting was born in London on April 29, 1841, the eldest son of James Vincent Harting and Alexine Milne Fotheringham. He was educated at Downside Abbey and London University and spent much of his youth traveling extensively on the Continent, including time spent at the museums in Paris and Leyden. Passing all the exams for a solicitor except for criminal law, he worked diligently at his profession from 1868 to 1878 but eventually turned to natural history and writing. He wrote his first article for *The Field* on March 13, 1869 and remained on the staff for fifty years, becoming editor of the Naturalist Department in 1871 and later editor of the Shooting Department in addition to his other regular duties. By 1920, he had contributed 2,326 articles as well as 124 obituary notices to *The Field*, quite apart from the innumerable "Answers to Correspondents" which he wrote so conscientiously on

Natural History, falconry, angling, the Country House, shooting, antiquarian and legal issues. His personal library was replete with books of reference and legal authorities. It was said there was nothing—either printed or manuscript—which he could not lay his hand on when needed.

Harting's abilities as a naturalist were well known. He would have accompa-

nied the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) to India as official naturalist if he had not felt it impossible just then to leave his wife and family. Harting edited *The Zoologist* from 1877 to 1896 and was probably the best living authority on British birds at that time. He was the Assistant Secretary and Librarian to the Linnaean Society at Burlington House, London, and received numerous awards and recognitions during his lifetime. As well as being an Elected Fellow of the Linnaean Society, he was a Life Member of the Zoological Society, Member of The British Ornithological Society, and a Corresponding Member of the American Ornithological Union. In 1880, he was awarded a Silver Medal by The Acclimatisation Society of France "for publications." His work was renowned at the Zoological Society and at the Natural History Museum.

It was late in the 1870's that Harting, already an accomplished falconer, found his opportunity for starting a *New Hawking Club* with the objective of giving Londoners the opportunity to closely observe the practice of

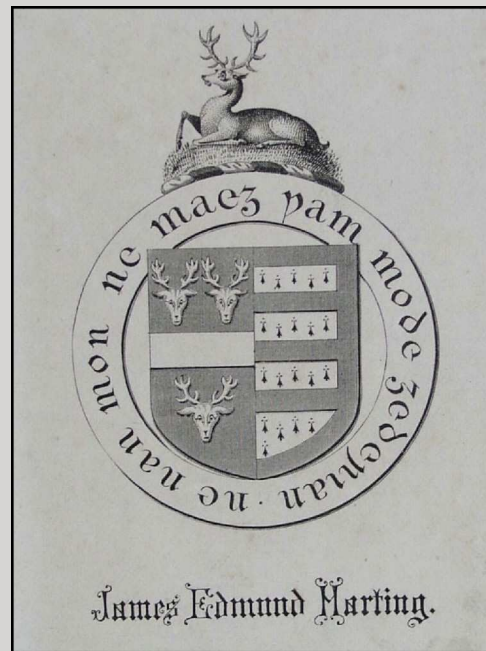
falconry. Salisbury Plain was of sufficient distance as to make it difficult for busy Londoners to afford the time to travel the distance necessary to observe the spring hawking of Rooks and Magpies. He had been a member of the well conducted but rather exclusive *Old Hawking Club* and felt that his *New Hawking Club* would attract new devotees and sponsors. He was able to purchase several fine Peregrines and Gyrfalcons from John Barr who had been in the service of Capt. Sandys Dugmore as a professional falconer while attempting to establish a hawking club at Alexandra Park from 1874-1877. Harting, also, secured Barr's services as a professional falconer and obtained permission from Lord Rosebery to use Epsom Downs for their hawking grounds. He built his mews near the Grandstand of the racecourse and had a fine season in the fall of 1878—but the winter proved difficult and all the birds succumbed to the croaks, ending this venture.

James Edmund Harting had over a half-century experience with numerous hawks and his acquaintance with falconers was unique. He was a close friend of Reverend Gage Earle Freeman who wrote for the field as "Peregrine" and of course, Major C. Hawkins Fisher, and was always a welcome guest at either residence. As a teller of hawking stories, he had no equal, and in his estimate of a hawk's capabilities he was seldom mistaken. However, it was his acquaintance with the literature of falconry that he outstripped all rivals. The compilation of the *Bibliotheca Accipitraria* involved a Herculean effort over many years and this alone would secure a place at the forefront of falconers even if it had not been supplemented by the vast quantity of useful information supplied beginners and experts through the columns of *The Field*, and his books pertaining to the sport. He was one of the



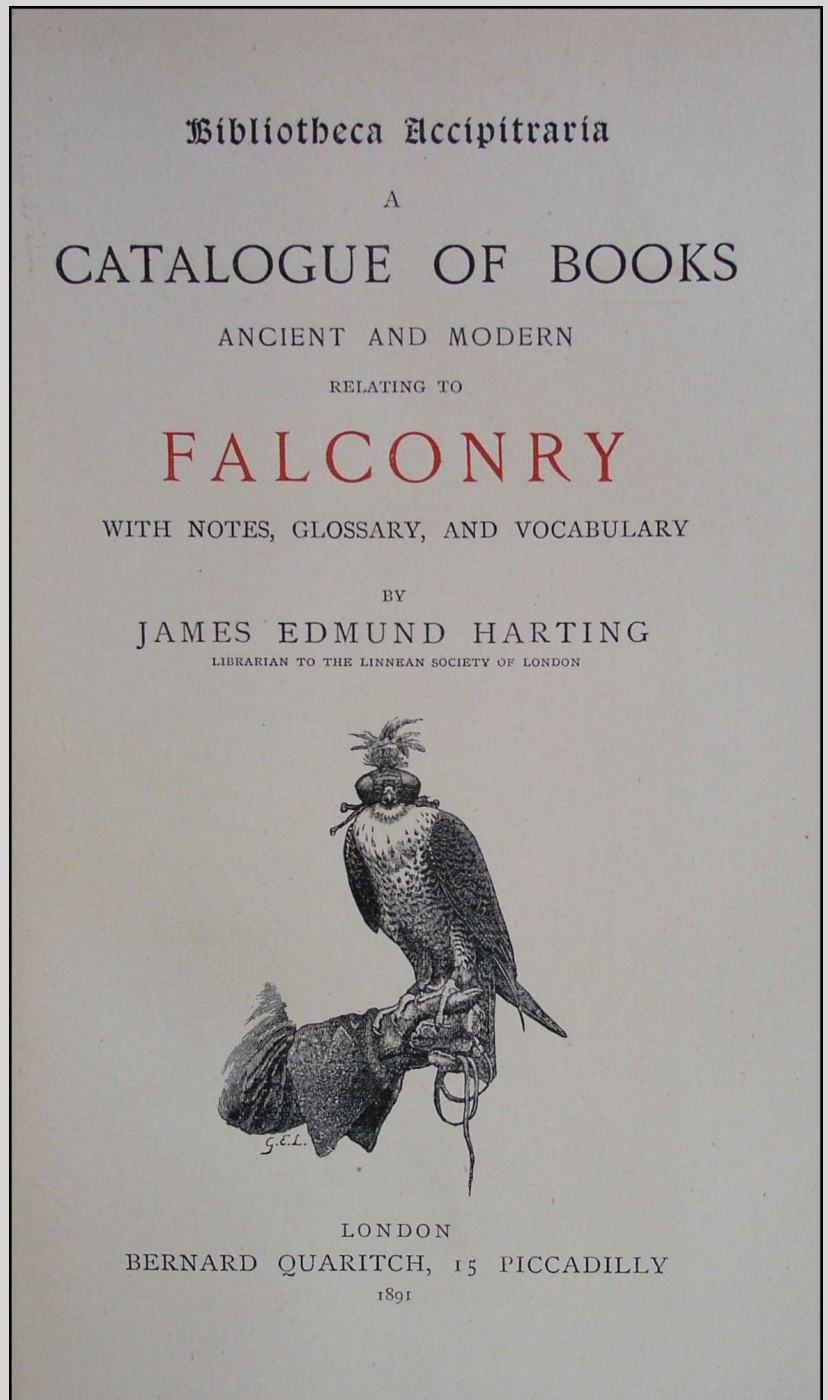
# The Dead Falconers Tours

## James Edmund Harting



# The Dead Falconers Tours

James Edmund Harting's *Bibliotheca Accipitraria*





# The Dead Falconers Tours

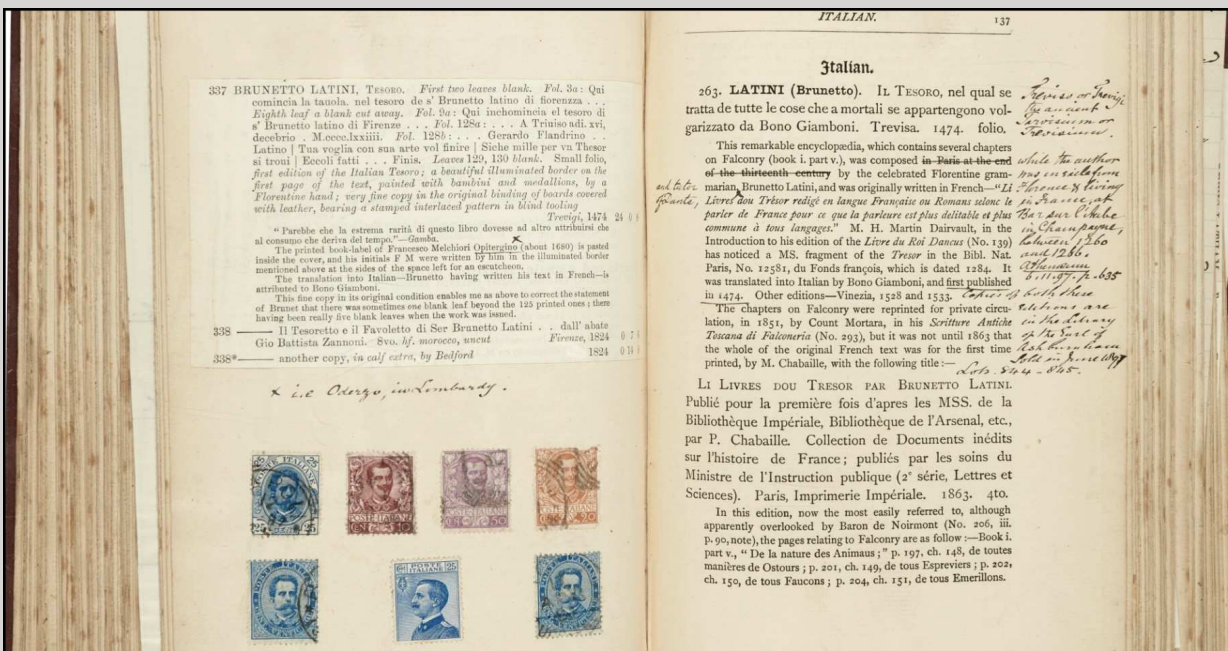
## James Edmund Harting's Books At Downside Abbey



Downside Abbey



Peter John and Natalie with Harting's Personal Library.



James Edmund Harting's personal annotated copy of *Bibliotheca Accipitraria*  
Downside Abbey was investigated for sexual abuse and as a result sold J.E. Harting's library in 2021  
This copy of his *Bibliotheca Accipitraria* is depicted in front of John Swift in the above photograph



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The British Falconry Fair

few men who, like E.B. Michell, was seen in London with a hawk on his fist.

James Edmund Harting died at age 85 on January 16, 1928 in Weybridge, Surrey, where he had lived most of his life and is buried in the Town Cemetery just off Brooklands Road. The inscription on his headstone reads "Pray for the Soul of Elizabeth Maria wife of James Edmund Harting of Weybridge, in the Co.[unty] of Surrey, who departed this life 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 1907. Also of James Edmund Harting Died 16<sup>th</sup>, January 1928 Aged 85 Years. Also Etheldreda Mary Harting Died 23<sup>rd</sup>, Jan 1942 Aged 71." *The Field* obituary sums up his personality as follows: 'J.E. Harting was modest and unassuming but he knew the value of knowledge, and never hesitated to use the authority of his long experience. By never presuming to know too much, he impressed the merit of his writing upon many a man of greater fame. He made very little money, for he worked for what he loved, because he loved it first as a sportsman and a gentleman, and he expected fair treatment, which he invariably extended to others'. Harting's magnificent personal library was dispersed at his death at a sale by Hodgson & Co. on April 26, 1928 and the remainder was given to Downside Abbey in 1934 by his surviving daughter, Etheldreda. Harting's son, Hugh, also attended Downside in 1880 followed by his great-great grandson James Harting Courtnay in 1977.

Having had such great success in the first day of our tour, Peter decided that we should press on to Stroud and look for the grave of Major C. Hawkins Fisher who for his entire life resided at a spacious three story mansion known as "The Castle." We arrived late in the day but that posed little problem as it was still light until 10 PM each evening. However, we had expected to find one or two cemeter-

ies but actually found several. Since it was Saturday, no public record office was open so we could not narrow our search. We eventually made our way to the public cemetery and attempted to divide it into sections for a systematic search. Things started well until Vicki read the posted sign indicating the presence of adders, the only poisonous snake in Britain. This presented a problem. Since the town of Stroud evidently did not want to spend money maintaining the old fully occupied section of the burial ground, they declared it a "nature preserve" and let the grass and briars grow high, wild and handsome. Adders lurked in the weeds, so Vicki avoided them, cutting down our search team to three. She did, however, strike up a conversation with some dog walkers who she conned into helping us look. Natalie found some Hawkins and Peter found some Fishers, but none came up with any Hawkins-Fishers. Also, complicating the search was the poor quality of the gravestones. Many cemeteries require the use of native sandstone, which deteriorates rapidly due to freezing and thawing: stones just 50 years old were barely legible. We searched for over an hour with no success. Fishers grave could have been there but overlooked due to an unmarked gravestone. We felt that a man of his stature would be recorded somewhere and vowed to return when the county record office next opened. After our defeat we drove on to Newport, site of the British Falconry Fair, northwest of Birmingham, arriving late in the evening.

### Sunday, May 5th, British Falconry Fair

We got up early enough so that we could arrive in time to be some of the first in the exhibitor's booths as many of the special items, particularly books, go quickly. Peter and I are always in competition with each other

so I bring Vicki along to help even the odds. Vicki is usually the better sleuth, so Peter tries to see which way she's heading and attempts to get in front of her. His strategy doesn't work - Vicki usually wins.

The British Falconers Fair is entirely different from its American counterpart in that this event is a non-hunting one used to promote falconry by flying demonstrations, exhibits of all forms of equipment, art, books, and birds. There are constant speakers in the middle of the flying grounds promoting falconry and all country sports. There is a conscious effort by opponents of field sports, called greenies, to eliminate the sport of falconry and this event is an attempt to positively influence public opinion as well as bring falconers together. For me personally, this is one of the best public presentations of falconry (without the hunting) I have ever seen. The amount of equipment, art and related material is overwhelming and people come early to get their pick of the best. It is, also, a chance to meet fellow falconers from around the world whose books you have read or falconers you have read about. I met Bob Dalton, Diana Durman-Walters, Nicholas Hammond, and had a short catch up visit with Jemima Parry-Jones. Jemima stated that she was more concerned about the future of falconry rather than its past. Andrew Ellis, Mark Upton and David Digby are artists I had met previously and always look forward to seeing and visiting with again. John and Laila Green were operating the NAFA booth and registering new, as well as renewing members. Over 10,000 people attended on Saturday. Peter managed to pick up a couple of good items, but so did I. I find it humorous that I bought a Pineo vest and Velarde bells, made in the USA, and hauled them back to the States. The day was beautiful and mild so all the



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The British Falconry Fair



**Explaining Falconry**



**Beagle Pack**



**The Weathering Yard**



**A Hawk and A Falcon**



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **The British Falconry Fair**



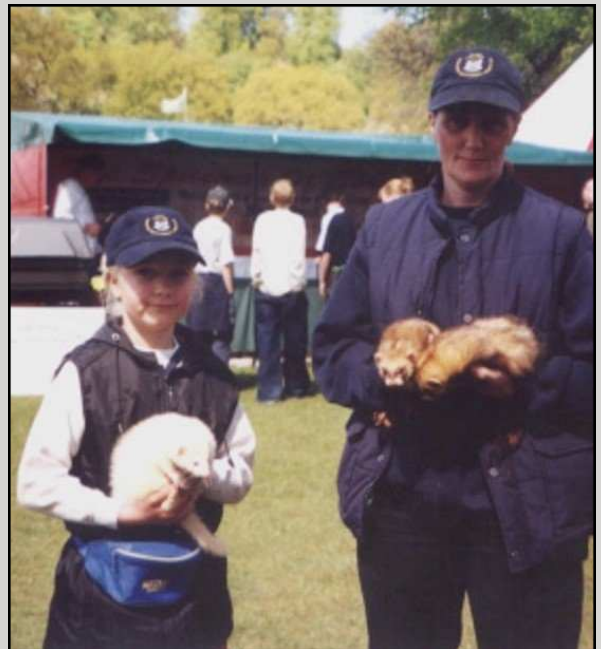
**Peter Devers, Harrie Knol, John Swift  
David Digby, Mark Upton**



**Ken Gibson, John Swift, Peter Devers,  
Harrie Knol, Vicki Swift**



**Jemima Parry Jones and John Swift**



**Ferrets**

# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **The British Falconry Fair**



**Paul Morgan Bookseller**



**Beautiful Artwork**



**Relano Bronzes**



**Ricardo Velarde Knives**



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Rev Gage Earle Freeman's Grave

planned activities were held. We met up with our Dutch friend Harrie Knol, Kenyon Gibson a fellow collector of falconry books, and Mike Dupuy a Maryland falconer. We went to dinner with them at a fine British pub, telling them numerous exaggerations about our hawking exploits, and impressing them with our visits to dead falconers.

### Monday, May 6th, British Falconry Fair

A totally different day with overcast skies and cool. We decided to try for some good deals on items we had seen yesterday. Vicki and I picked up a large Relano bronze of a hooded Peregrine, though dreading having to haul it all the way home. I was sure security would make me unwrap it! Natalie Nicholson secured a signed copy of Fisher's *Reminiscences* from under my nose from Paul Morgan of Coch-Y-Bonddu books. Peter bought a small book from Paul that was quite expensive as I inadvertently made Paul pay through the nose for it by saying how rare it was when Paul was talking about it with someone else. I thought Paul was trying to sell it, but he was actually trying to buy it. Peter, also, bought a nice Relano bronze of a falconer, and a painting by Asaad Raoof of a Harris Hawk. Natalie and Peter wanted to visit a 15th Century Tudor manor house called Little Moreton Hall, so we left the Falconry Fair about noon and headed north. Along the way, Peter managed to kill two doves that were going at it in the road, oblivious to the traffic. He started to slow the car down to pick them up to feed his hawks, but then remembered he wasn't in New York anymore. On the way back to our B & B, we took the wrong road and ended up at Isaac Walton's cottage. He wrote the first comprehensive work on fishing and held a debate in the book as to which

sport was better, hunting, hawking or fishing. A lucky discovery considering we were not even looking for him.

### Tuesday, May 7th, Rev Gage Earl Freeman

We left early to go to the Forest Chapel in Macclesfield Forest. It didn't look very far on the map but it was over many small country roads. The drive was very beautiful through lush countryside and farmland. The number and length of the stone fences was amazing, but as someone said, what else were they to do with the rocks. On our way, we passed through the village (about six houses) of Wildboar Clough where Freeman had lived most of his life while vicar at the Forest Chapel.

The church itself is perched atop a hill and looks across a valley of farmland. The Forest Chapel was originally built in 1673 to serve the local farmers who could not travel to the main parish church. The entire area was once a Norman hunting preserve but today is primarily a farming community with large tracts of rolling pasture land enclosed with numerous stone fences. The Forest Chapel is part of St. Stephen's Church of the Diocese of Chester and continues to serve the local population. It is very remote and only reachable on single lane roads. The cemetery and church grounds are truly beautiful and rich in their variety of flowers and grasses.

The cemetery was small, so locating the grave wasn't difficult. In keeping with tradition, Peter located it first, somewhat startled that it was exactly the same design as Brodrick's. Did falconers get a group deal on them? The stone was quite dirty and lichen encrusted. Peter had two cans of Coke which I viciously pried away to use as a cleanser, and I frightened a young woman from a neighboring house into loaning me her scrub brush. As we



John at Freeman's Grave

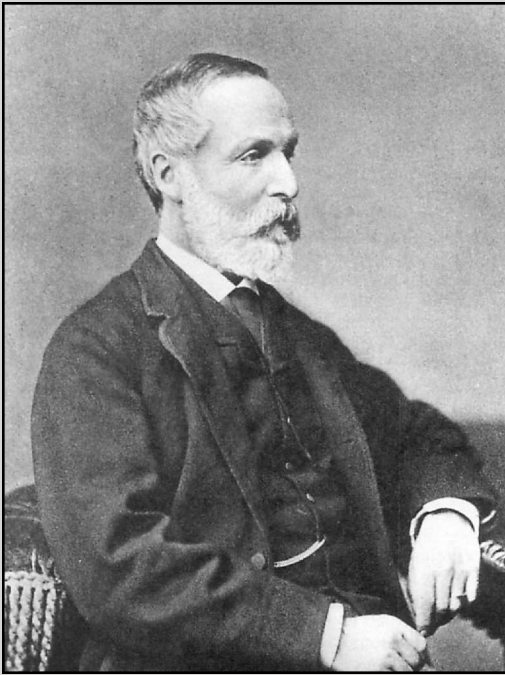
were cleaning the front of the marker, two ducks flew in and landed next to us and stayed for the rest of our visit. Was this another sign of something? While I cleaned the marker, Natalie and Peter explored the interior of the chapel, and Peter got an opportunity to stand in Freeman's pulpit and give a reading from the book of *Practical Falconry*. Here is what we learned about Rev. Freeman:

Reverend Gage Earle Freeman was born June 3, 1820, at Tamworth, Staffordshire; the son of Captain Charles Earle Freeman of the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment. He was educated privately and graduated with a B.A. (1845) and M. S. (1850) from St. John's College, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1847 and held several curate positions, becoming Vicar of the Forest Chapel near Macclesfield in 1856 and serving there for 33 years until 1889. He resided in the nearby community of Wildboar Clough and it was while living here that he gained his reputation



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Rev. Gage Earle Freeman



Rev Gage Earle Freeman



Rev Freeman with Goshawk



Forest Chapel

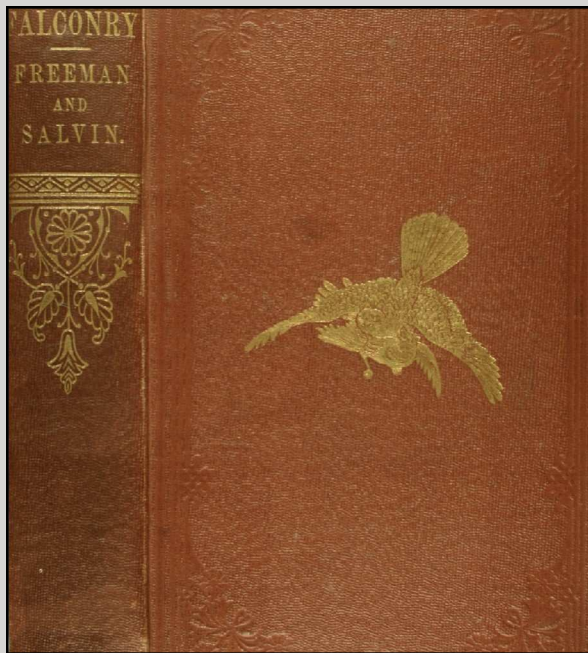


The List of Vicars

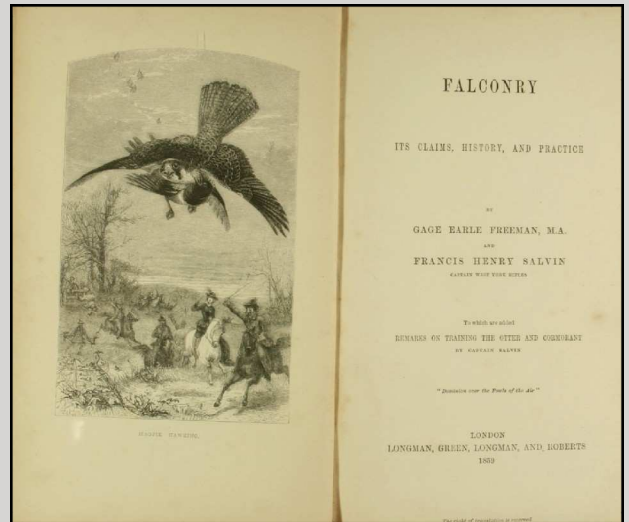


# The Dead Falconers Tours

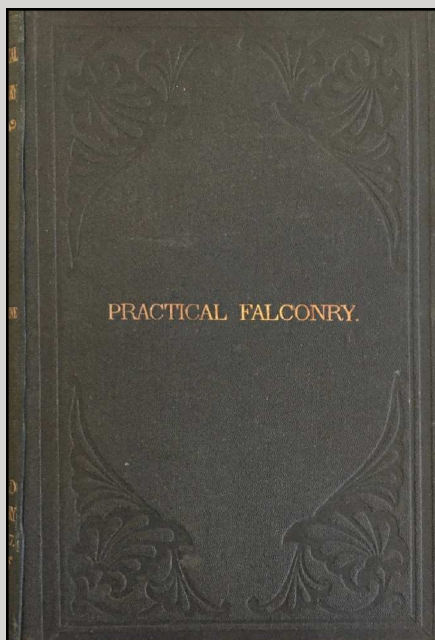
## Rev Gage Earle Freeman's Literature



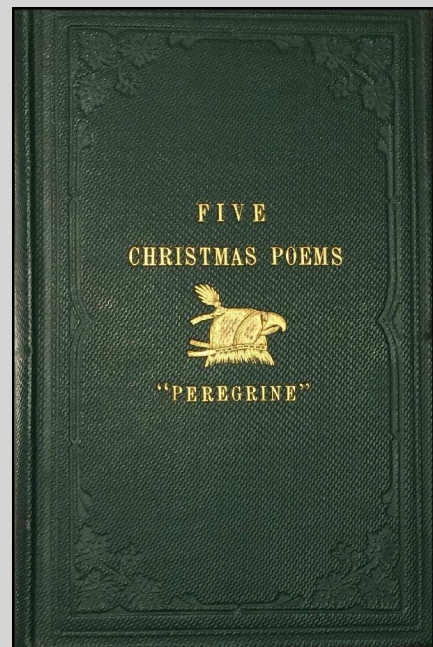
Falconry It's Claims and Practice



Title Page



Practical Falconry



Five Christmas Poems



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Chatsworth Home of Duke Duchess of Devonshire

as a falconer and author. He was able to obtain permission to hunt his falcons on a neighboring grouse moor and did so with great success, as many witnesses would attest. Eventually, he lost the use of the hunting area and turned to other flights with Merlins and Goshawks. Rev. Freeman became a regular contributor to *The Field* and could be found writing under the pen name of "Peregrine." He was able to convey to the reader, his enthusiasm and love of the sport by his descriptions of various flights, but was also able to describe the technical aspects of training hawks and falcons with clarity and precision. In 1859, he wrote *Falconry, Its Claims, History and Practice* with Captain Francis Henry Salvin. Their combined experiences provide insight into the use of Peregrines, Merlins, Hobbies, Goshawks, Sparrowhawks, and Gyrfalcons. The chapter on Heron Hawking was communicated to the authors by Edward Clough Newcome, one of the last falconers to keep Heron Hawks in England. Seven engravings provided by G. E. Lodge add to value of the work. This work has become a classic in falconry literature and is one of the most difficult to obtain today.

Readers of *The Field* often wrote asking for his advice and instruction to which he responded in a series of articles. These articles would serve as the chapters for a new work published in 1869, *Practical Falconry: To which is added how I became a falconer*. Rev. Freeman's literary skills were not restricted to falconry literature as on four occasions he won the Seatonian prize offered in 1738 by the Rev. Thomas Seaton, of Clare College, Cambridge. The prize was "to that Master of Arts who shall write the best English poem on a sacred subject." His prize poems were "The Transfiguration," 1882; "Jericho," 1888; "Damascus," 1893; and the last in 1894. In

addition to these, he published a volume of Christmas poems, one having a falconry motif, and *Mount Carmel, a Story of Modern English Life*. He was appointed Chaplain to the Earl of Lonsdale, a famous sportsman, and in 1889 became Vicar of Askim, in the diocese of Carlisle. He died there on December 15, 1903 and was returned to Macclesfield Forest Chapel to be buried alongside his wife, mother, and two children who had all predeceased him. Reverend Gage Earl Freeman's grave marker is a three-tiered marble monument with a cross on top. The inscription reads (top tier) "By the side of Gage Earle Freeman Rests his Mother, (middle tier) Christianna Freeman wife of the Rev'd Gage Earl Freeman who died Nov 14th, 1886, aged 62 Whatsoever Thy Hand Findeth To Do, Do It with Thy Might Requiescat in Pace, (bottom tier) Also Gage Earl Freeman, Her Husband, vicar of this parish from 1856 to 1889 who died at Askham, Westmoreland on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 1903, aged 83, And Sleep Together at the Foot." His two sons Gage Earle Jr. and Edward James, who both died very young, are buried immediately to the right with a cross marker. All have a wonderful view of the countryside.

Afterwards, we drove to Haddon Hall near Bakewell in Derbyshire in the Peak District. The site on which Haddon Hall is located has been occupied since Norman times but did not take its present form until the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. The hall has been used for

numerous movies and television locations including the recent film *Elizabeth*. The beautiful terraced rose gardens help soften the harshness of the medieval stone house. Falconry was a major activity at Haddon, which was often frequented by Henry VIII's brother. The hall was depicted in a popular painting by Frederick Tayler entitled "Morning of the Chase- Haddon Hall in Days of Yore." This large painting, of which there is a print, shows a hawking party about to depart for the hunt. The dwarf in the picture has a Robert De Niro look about him. There is one large tapestry in one



Vicki at Chatsworth, home to the Duke & Duchess of Devonshire.

of the upper rooms that depicts a falconry scene. The hall is truly a beautiful setting but cannot compare to our next stop at nearby Chatsworth, home to the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. This is one of the grandest "stately homes" in all of Britain. The gardens and surrounding park are breath-taking and a little overwhelming. The tour took over an hour but was worth every minute. I had already seen some of it's most beautiful falconry related art, however, in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, on a previous trip: The Devonshire



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Edward Blair Michell

Hunting Tapestries. These tapestries, once housed at Chatsworth, are worth a trip just to see them as they reflect the dress and activities of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. From Chatsworth, we journeyed on to the ancient Roman walled city of Chester. We got into Chester late and had little time to tour but it seems well worth a return to see it all.

### Wednesday, May 7th, Fisher again, Downside Abbey and E. B. Michell

Peter Devers never gives up on a hot lead, so it was back to Stroud to see if we could locate Major Fisher. Peter brilliantly concluded that Fisher must still be laying in the same place where buried, as it is hard for dead falconers to move about, especially in crowded Britain. We were able to get to the county offices but they could not find any indication of his burial place in the city records. They helpfully called a local falconer and veterinarian, Neil Forbes. He related that he did not know where the Major was buried, but said that the local county museum might be able to help. We drove to the county park to view the displays and chat with the museum curator. He was not able provide any additional information, but did show us the exhibit on sports in which Major Fisher's picture was prominently displayed. Peter was excited to see some of Fisher's hoods in the case, but later was deflated when Roger Upton said they were just a "couple of old Mollens" he had donated to the county. We decided to search another cemetery but discovered nothing. As we had an appointment at Downside Abbey, we decided to drive by Fisher's residence, The Castle. I took several photographs of this famous prominent Stroud residence that is still used today while Peter stewed in the car, frustrated at not finding the Captain himself.

From Stroud, we headed south for Downside Abbey where James Edmund Harting attended school and to which he left his personal collection of books and papers. We were met by former headmaster Father Jebb, a Jesuit whose charge is now the library. He took us to the stack and gave us the freedom to look at anything we wanted. There were numerous copies of the books, which Harting authored, but the two most intriguing works were an annotated copy of his *Bibliotheca Accipitraria* and numerous personal letters. Three years ago, Peter had spent several days reviewing the materials but it was intriguing for me to read letters written by the prominent falconers of the time. Reputedly, a trunk containing his personal journals and correspondence was to have been given to Downside, but no one can locate it.

After reviewing as much of the material as time would allow, we left for Wyke Champflower to look for the grave of E. B. Michell. The community is near Bruton and consists of just a few houses along with the manor house and the attached church. Peter drove around in circles trying to find the hamlet until Vicki said "ask somebody." Natalie nodded her head in total agreement. Women always have good advice in times like this. Our first victim gave us a sketchy description on how to get there, and after driving down several lanes barely wide enough for our car, we chanced upon it. We thought locating Michell would be a snap, as there only appeared to be about 50 people residing permanently in the walled churchyard. We were



*Cemetery of Edward Blair Michell.*

unable to locate his grave and the local historical society was unable to provide any clues as to his burial site. We left with the knowledge that more research was needed. (Note: In the following weeks we have uncovered more corroboration that he was buried at Wyke Champflower, but we are still pursuing further leads as to the exact location. Perhaps he was cremated and his ashes spread in the fields he hawked over there.) An excellent obituary of Michell was provided in *The Field* on November 18, 1926 and reprinted in the 1963 *NAFA Journal* so it is not reprinted here. We then drove back north to the city of Bath, one of our favorite cities. Bath is very ancient, once occupied by the Romans and famous for its naturally heated Roman Baths. Our Bed & Breakfast rooms were in a house built in 1574, one year before George Turberville wrote his book, *Faulconry*. On a table in the upper landing was a statue of a young boy with a hawk on the fist. Peter said, "I have one of those."

### Wednesday, May 8th, Gerald Lascelles

Peter and I left to travel south to the New Forest to find the grave of Gerald Lascelles, one of the most re-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Gerald William Lascelles

spected and influential falconers of 19th Century Britain. The ladies, wanting a respite from falconry, cabbied into Bath to look for treasures. The drive through the New Forest is beautiful with large trees overhanging the road giving a canopy effect in some places and in others barren stretches of ruddy heath land. Wild ponies roam

New Forest today attracts a large number of tourists who look for relief from the city life. One of the more recent changes is the virtual elimination of all hunting with hounds in the New Forest. Shooting for the culling of deer is only practiced by the Deputy Surveyor and his staff. Two small groups are allowed to practice falconry within the borders, in part in homage to Lascelles.

Gerald Lascelles was for many years the Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest. The title is somewhat misleading in that he was really the top man in charge of the forest and all its activities. The "Surveyor," his boss, was actually Queen Victoria herself. Lascelles lived in a handsome village manor house variously

known as *the Queens House* (after Victoria) and later *the Kings House* (after Edward) and was the last to occupy the building as a residence. It is now the offices of the Deputy Surveyor and his staff. The building was originally used as the hawk mews for the *Old Hawking Club* is still in use today as an office for the Forestry Commission.

Peter had been in correspondence with Father Murphy from the local church who was happy to show us the location of the

Lascelles' grave. The grave is located at "Bishops Bench," a part of the parkland a short walk from the town center. Fortunately, Father Murphy had the cemetery groundskeeper mark the grave for us, as it would have been hard to find. The cemetery is a large one, isn't mowed until the wild bluebell flowers die off, and Lascelles' gravestone has fallen apart. The condition of the grave of this famous falconer is deplorable. A once handsome Greek column has toppled over and lies buried in the grasses alongside the plot. Four stone borders ring the stump where the column once stood, inscribed with names and verses. The inscription on the grave marker reads as follows: *The Honorable Gerald William Lascelles, CB, 3<sup>rd</sup> son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Harewood, For Thirty Five Years Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest, Born Oct 26, 1849, Died Feb 11, 1928 Above the Tempest wild I hear Him say Beyond the darkness lies the perfect day: In every path of thine I lead the way; Constance, Wife of the Honorable Gerald Lascelles,*

at will all over, even in the villages. Lyndhurst is the primary town in the New Forest and a local museum is located near the Town Square. There we saw a tapestry created in the fashion of the Bayeux tapestry depicting New Forest history and life - and one of the figures illustrated is Gerald Lascelles with a falcon on his fist.

William the Conqueror originally established the New Forest as the Nova Foresta in 1070, a hunting preserve for deer. The land is not suitable for farming so its primary crop was the large number of red oaks used for shipbuilding. The challenge for the Deputy Surveyor was to create a balance between the preservation of the forest and those commoners who wanted to use the land for their own farming or ranching. It is similar in that respect to a National Park or BLM lands here in the United States. The

*Lawnside of Queens House.*



*John S. & Fr. Murphy examine Gerald Lascelles' grave marker*

*CB Died November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1934, Eternal rest be theirs on that high shore and light divine shine on them ev-*



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Gerald William Lascelles



Close-up view of grave marker of Gerald Lascelles.

*ermore; Memory of John Beilby Lascelles Born at the Kings House, Lyndhurst February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1883, Died November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1907, Very pleasant has thou been unto Me. Only Goodnight, beloved, not farewell Until the shadows from the earth are past, Until he gathers in his sheaves at last, Until the twilight gloom is over fast: Goodnight.*

One of our learning experiences was that headstones would need to be cleaned in order to take clear pictures as various mosses and years of grime cover the surfaces. After the trauma of cleaning Freeman's grave, Peter vowed he would not sacrifice any more Cokes to the project and made me buy a gravestone cleaning kit - detergents, brushes, and cloths. At the cemetery, I needed water to sponge off Lascelles' inscriptions, so Peter was delegated the task of bringing me water in the only container he could find, a red orange funeral traffic cone. This is what we learned about Gerald Lascelles:

Gerald William Lascelles was one of the better known practicing falconers in the latter part of the 19th Century. He was somewhat unusual in that he actually flew and trained his own birds rather than hiring a professional falconer, as did many of the celebrat-

ed falconers of this period. He was born at Goldsborough in Yorkshire on October 25, 1859, the 3<sup>rd</sup> son of Henry Thynne Lascelles, the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Harewood and his first wife who would have six-children. The Earl remarried in 1904 and had an additional eight children who would

all grow up on the magnificent Harewood Estate. Gerald Lascelles developed a keen interest in field sports at an early age and was "blooded" in fox-hunting at the age of six. He was educated at Eton and Magdalene College, Cambridge and was seldom without a ferret or a dog. After leaving Cambridge, he worked briefly for Lloyds in London, married Constance Augusta Mary Fitzclarence Philipson in 1875, and joined a manufacturing firm in Leeds. Working indoors did not suit Lascelles, and he began to study to become a land agent. In 1880, he was appointed the Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest and the other Crown forests in Hampshire, a post he would hold for 35 years until 1914. The New Forest is comprised of 92,000 acres of which 27,000 are privately owned. Gerald Lascelles was responsible for overseeing and maintaining order between all the parties involved. The changes brought about in the forest are briefly detailed in Chafin's *Anecdotes on Cranborne Chase*. The conflict between the rights of the Crown and landowners with regards to the use of the land were generally resolved before Lascelles became Deputy Surveyor. Most of the deer had been removed years earlier but old conflicts die-hard

and Lascelles was called on to represent the Crown.

Gerald Lascelles began his falconry career with a Sparrowhawk under the tutelage of Sir Charles Slingsby of Scriven. As early as age 7 (1866), he would spend his Easter holidays on Salisbury Plain at the invitation of Mr. Cecil Duncombe. The hawks were managed by Edward Clough Newcome with Robert Barr as the professional falconer. The quarry most often hunted was Rook and the hawks were of the highest quality. After leaving for Cambridge, Lascelles would visit the hawks at Mr. Newcome's and took to training Merlins. During the war between France and Germany, the hawks of the Champagne Hawking Club were brought to the residence of Maharajah Dhuleep Singh at Elveden Hall near Thetford. During this time, the Maharajah had sent John Barr to Iceland to obtain Gyr-falcons (1869). He returned with over thirty and when combined with those of the French club it formed a magnificent hawking establishment.

In 1869, Mr. Newcome died and the *Old Hawking Club* was broken up and the hawks divided up amongst the members with one going to Lascelles courtesy of Cecil Duncombe. He spent the spring of 1870 Rook hawking on Salisbury Plain. The *Old Hawking Club* was reconstituted in 1872 with the sponsorship of Lord Lilford and Gerald Lascelles became the Manager and Honorary Secretary, a post that he held for 44 years.

After Lascelles moved to The Queen's House in Lyndhurst as Deputy Surveyor, he moved the hawks with him to provide appropriate supervision. Although rarely hunted there, the hawks provided amusement for local residents when young falcons were flown at hack. They were often observed pursuing game throughout the surrounding area. During his ten-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Gerald William Lascelles

ure at Lyndhurst, spring Rook hawking became an annual event on Salisbury Plain with many club members enjoying the gathering at a small cottage in Shrewton. In the fall, the hawks were sent to Langwell to entertain the guests of the Duke of Portland. In addition, Mr. St. Quintin and Colonel Brooksbank would lease a moor and fly grouse often taking more than 100 brace of grouse. Lascelles felt that the period between 1886-1896 was the strongest and showed the best sport. Hawking on Salisbury began a decline when the military began to appropriate large tracts of land for training exercises, a condition which still exists. Lascelles laments the changing times in his last paragraph in *Thirty-five years in the New Forest*. "However I do not doubt that many another keen falconer of earlier generations has died in the firm conviction that the sport he loved was dying with him; so I hope that as to my certain knowledge that these veterans were in error, and that it has fallen to my lot to maintain this time-honoured sport for nigh upon fifty years after they had passed away, so may I be mistaken in my gloomy prognostication, and better and younger men will carry on what has been described as 'the noblest sport in which man has ever indulged,' for the benefit of many future generations after I have ceased to take part in it." One would have to believe that Gerald Lascelles would be pleased with the state of falconry today.

Gerald Lascelles and his wife Constance (1849-1934) had the following children: Gerald Hubert Lascelles (1876), John Beilby Lascelles (1884-1907), Cynthia Rachael Lascelles (Lady Poltimore) (1885-1961), Richard Lascelles (died in infancy 1887). Gerald Lascelles, his wife Constance and his son John are all buried together at the Bishops Bench Cemetery. Lascelles had kept the *Old Hawk-*

*ing Club* going as its secretary from its new beginnings in 1872 until after World War I when his health began to fail. In fact, he had been able to bridge the centuries until the new British Falconers Club was officially organized by Gilbert Blaine in 1927 which continues today some 75 years later. Although falconry had never completely died out in Britain, it is unlikely that the sport would have had the success it enjoyed without Gerald Lascelles leadership as the club secretary of the *Old Hawking Club*.

After leaving Bishops Bench, Father Murphy took us to see the grave of Alice Liddell Hargreaves, the real Alice in Wonderland of Lewis Carroll fame. She was not a falconer, but we had a pleasant visit nonetheless. Then it was off to the Queen's House (after Elizabeth) to meet the current Deputy Surveyor, Mr. David Thompson. We expected to meet a desk jockey in a suit and tie, but up strode a chap who looked-the-part of a man who loves the land, dressed in country attire, with a hiking staff and all. We were impressed - it was as if Gerald Lascelles himself had stepped out of the pages of time. We toured the Verderer's Courtroom where Fr. Murphy showed us how it operated by acting out all the parts of judge, prosecution, and defense. Aside from some arcane language, it principally operates like our Supreme Court. The details of the court are fully explained in Lascelles *Thirty-Five Years in the New Forest*. We left the New Forest with a much greater understanding and appreciation for Gerald Lascelles.

From Lyndhurst, we headed north to Marlborough for late afternoon tea with Roger Upton, a living falconer for a change, who needs no introduction. As usual, the discussion centered on history and everyone learned some

new bits and pieces of our British legacy. We, also, learned that Roger has a twin brother, Peter, who is a much renowned photographer. Roger showed us a picture of them together and we could not identify which was Roger. Peter and I returned to Bath to see what Natalie and Vicki had found. There is a shop that makes miniature lead figures, which sometimes has one of a falconer on display. Vicki bought



John S., Deputy Surveyor, Mr. David Thompson and Peter D. (left to right).

the only one "on sale" much to Peter's chagrin.

### Friday, May 9th, Sir John Saunders-Sebright

We headed northeast towards Cambridge to meet up with Helen Macdonald whom I had met when she was doing research at the Archives of American Falconry in Boise. She is a falconer who is doing her Ph.D. research on the differences in raptor conservation between the United Kingdom and the United States. We decided to make a couple of tourist stops along the way so we stopped by to see the grave of Sir Winston Churchill (not a falconer but famous for other things)



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Simon Latham

and drove a few miles further to Blenheim Palace, his birthplace, to see the home of the Duke of Marlborough. The name Blenheim derives from a decisive battle that took place on the 13th August 1704 where John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, won a decisive battle against the French force of Louis XIV thus saving Europe from French domination. As a reward for his services he was awarded the property and funds upon which he built this estate. There was little falconry art but the Palace itself is worth the trip, it is incredible.

Prior to our leaving the States, Peter had used the Internet to gather information on the falconers we were searching for and discovered that Sir John Saunders-Sebright had resided at Flamstead in Hertfordshire. We decided to pause at Flamstead on the way to Cambridge to see if we could locate the grave of the author of *Observations on Hawking*, one of the scarcest 19th Century falconry books. We arrived in the middle of the afternoon at St. Leonard's, but the church was locked as most churches are during the week. A search of the cemetery by everyone did not yield one Sebright buried there. Peter climbed up to a window and noticed a memorial to the Saunders family but could not ascertain any specific details. We decided to call the vicar in the St. Alban's Diocese to see if he could help, but he wasn't in. On the way out of town, Vicki spotted a sign about the Saunders-Sebright family's former home Beechwood. The sign didn't say where it was, so Vicki said once again "Ask someone." Good advice again as a visitor to the local pub gave us directions and off we went down some very narrow country roads. We emerged at the entrance to a beautiful country estate that was now a school called Beechwood Park School, a prep school for boys and girls ages 4 to 13. The stu-

dents were leaving for the weekend but we found the Deputy Headmaster Mr. Jaime Packer who showed us the remaining items left by the Saunders-Sebright family. The oak fireplace and the chapel were all that remained of the furniture but the main building retained the Saunders-Sebright crest and the Beechwood trees for which the estate was named were incredible. We left Flamstead vowing to return on Sunday to find some members of the church and the minister in hopes of gathering additional information.

### Saturday, May 10th

Since all of us are book collectors, we had to make a call on Greg Way, one of Britain's leading sporting booksellers, who lives in a wonderful old home near Newmarket. Newmarket is one of the premier horseracing sites in the UK, on the Suffolk downs, with the racecourse and gallops running through the countryside. Greg Way specializes in horse racing books but also sells other works on field sports, including falconry. Everyone had a great visit, bought a few books, and enjoyed looking at all the sporting works in his house.

Our next Dead Falconer Tour site was the parish of Elstow, Bedford, which was the birthplace of Lewis Latham and presumably also that of his brother Simon, both of whom were falconers. Simon, of course, was the author of a pair of famous 17th Century falconry books. Elstow derived its name from Helen-Stow or Ellen-Stow drawn from the Benedictine nunnery of St. Helena. The Nunnery was founded in 1078 by Judith, a niece of William the Conqueror. The church is next to an old Abbey that had been destroyed and many of the grave markers were unreadable. We

found no graves dating before the 18th Century, though presumably there must have been many at one time. There was no indication inside the church as to the Latham family. It appeared that this would be our first complete washout. Elstow was, also, the birthplace of John Bunyan (1628-1688) writer of *Pilgrims Progress*. Bunyan attended church here for many years and was likely attending services with the Lathams. There is a beautiful stained glass window depicting an interpretation of life of the Pilgrim. A worthwhile visit, but disappointing in that there was no visible sign of the Latham family. However, Francis, the daughter of Lewis Latham immigrated to Rhode Island in the colonies and one of her direct descendants was Eleanor Elkins of Philadelphia. She married into another prominent family, the Wideners and her brother-in-law would be the great-grandfather of American falconer Pete Widener of Wyoming. I have written the complete description of



Elstow Church, Grave of Lathams.

this connection in the August 2002 *Hawk Chalk*, so I will not recount that story again here.

From Elstow, we drove to Cambridge to meet Helen Macdonald for a tour of this old city and famed college. We had no idea that we would be vis-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Simon Latham's Grave



*Is this Latham's grave? John S. and Peter D.*

iting on graduation day so the city was crammed with students and their proud and relieved parents. Helen took us to Kings College and there was Henry VIII, a falconer, looking over the college he founded. In many ways, it was a typical college town with its shops, restaurants and pubs, but there is, also, a wonderful feeling of tradition with these ancient buildings still occupied with students. Of course, there was a bookstore and we had to spend some time looking for rare jewels on falconry. A neat place.

### **Sunday, May 11th, Sir John Saunders-Sebright again, Sir Ralph Sadleir, Sir Richard Francis Burton**

This was to be our last day on the road, so we had high hopes that we would gather some new information about these three famous falconers. We arrived early in Flamstead before church services concluded in order to catch some of the parishioners before they adjourned. As we entered the church, we introduced ourselves to Father Green and in turn were introduced to Claire Bates, a leader in the church. Everywhere we looked there were memorials to the Saunders-Sebright family as they were the primary benefac-

tors for St. Leonard's. There was a pulpit with two "S"s intertwined, several plaques, a large memorial to five Saunders children, a stained glass window, and perhaps the most interesting of all, the remnants of a painting on the church wall from the 1400's depicting a falconer. All that remains is a red shadow, but the falcon is quite distinct. Clearly falconry was a significant part of dai-

ly life. Father Green told us that Sir John, and most of his family, are buried in the family vaults beneath the church. That is why we found no grave markers in the cemetery. We hoped to go down into the crypt for a look but were told that years ago foul odors were escaping from below and there was some question as to the stability of the church, built in the 13th and 14th centuries. As a precautionary measure the church foundations were buttressed and the whole crypt filled in with gravel. Father Green told us not to worry, that Sir John was safe and sound down below and would be there whenever we wanted to drop by for a visit.

For many of us Sir John Saunders-Sebright was just a name. While we learned a bit more from Father Green, we learned the most about Sir John from a book given to us by Clare. It is *A New History of Flamstead* by Eric Edwards and has an entire chapter dedicated to the Saunders-Sebrights. Here is what we learned about Sir John from that work:

The Saunders-Sebright family had been important and influential members of the Parish of Flamstead, St. Alban's, Hertfordshire since the purchase of the Beechwood estate by Thomas Saunders (d.1668) in 1628.

However, it was Thomas Saunders' father, John Saunders, who established the family's fortune with his marriage to a wealthy heiress, Mary, daughter of Sir Henry Conningsley. Sir Henry's wife was a sister to Sir Henry Boteler whose great-great-grandson would be John Churchill, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Marlborough. Thomas Saunders' (d.1668) eldest son, Thomas Saunders (d.1694), would marry Ellen, a daughter of Robert Sadleir of Sopwell, likely a descendent of avid falconer Sir Robert Sadleir. Her great-grandfather was Sir Richard Lee who obtained the Sopwell priory at St. Alban's when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries. It was at this priory that Dame Juliana Berners would pen the 1<sup>st</sup> English sporting book, *The Book of St. Alban's*, in 1486. Ann Saunders, the



*The Falconer at St. Leonard's -- Flamstead.*

daughter of Thomas and Ellen would marry Sir Edward Sebright, 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet of Besford. Their son, Thomas Saunders-Sebright (1692-1736),



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sir John Saunders Sebright-Beechwood House

would first link the two family names as a stipulation of the will of his paternal grandfather that only those who carried his name (Saunders) could inherit. The Saunders-Sebright's would serve as Lords of the Beechwood Manor for the next 250 years.

Sir John Saunders-Sebright, 7<sup>th</sup> Baronet, was born on May 23, 1767 at Sackville Street, Westminster and was educated at Westminster School. He was the eldest son of Sir John Saunders-Sebright, 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet, and a Lieutenant General in the Army and



Beechwood House of John Saunders-Sebright.

Member for Bath. Like his father, he served a short time in the army, but afterwards became a Member of Parliament for Hertfordshire, but was not very active in politics. He would found the Plait School on London Road/Old Watling Street and thus indirectly the Sebright School in Cheverells Green. He would, also, develop new almshouses (poor houses) in Flamstead. He married Helen Crofts, only daughter and heiress of Richard Crofts of West Harling, Norfolk and would have one son and eight daughters. He was considered a literary man and a naturalist. He demonstrated his expertise in animal husbandry by developing a new breed of chickens, the Sebright

Bantams, the only breed to carry the developer's name, which are still popular today. He is, also, credited with developing the Pygmy Pouter breed of show pigeon. In fact, Sir John Sebright is referred to in Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* during a discussion on selection under the domestication of animals with special reference to show pigeons. He shows how the breeder can select the desired characteristics. Darwin quotes the skilled breeder Sir John Sebright as saying that, "he would produce any given feather in three years, but it would take him six years to obtain a head or a beak." He would write, *The Art of Improving the Breeds of Domestic Animals* in 1809, *Observations upon Hawking* in 1826, and *Observations Upon the Instinct of Animals* in 1836.

Sir John was said to be famous for his eccentricities, his bevy of plain daughters, his performing dogs, and his expertise in hawking. A story is told of Sir John accepting a challenge from Lord Erskine as to whose dog could learn the cleverest trick in 12 months. Lord Erskine's dog took a roasted oyster out of the fire without injuring himself, but Sir John's dog carried a glass of wine without spilling a drop to any gentleman in the room pointed out to him. He was, also, known for his horticulture, and Arthur Young reported on his estate parkland in 1804: "I have rarely seen finer trees than at Sir John Sebright's at Beechwood...the cedars are immense; the oak very large; the ash straight and beautiful; the larch, spruce, and Scotch fir equally fine; but the beech uncommon." Capability

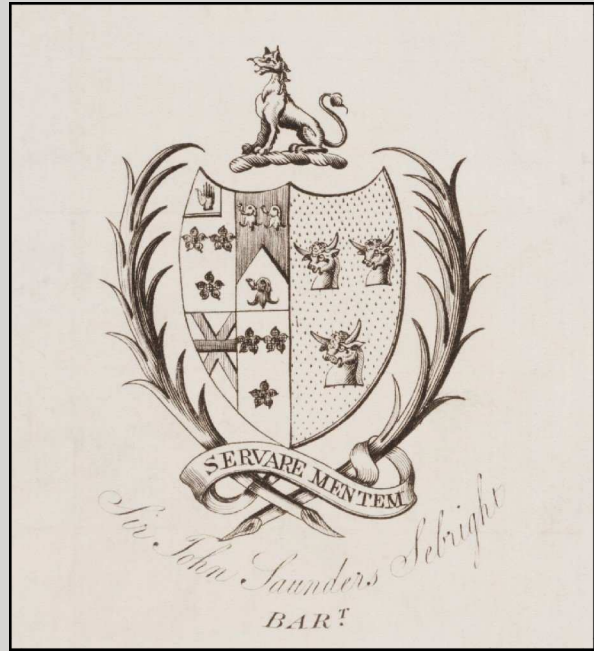
Brown designed the gardens at Beechwood, one of the most famous English gardeners, whose other works include Blenheim Palace and Warwick Castle. Sir John was, also, a generous benefactor to the Flamstead church, St. Leonard's, where most of the preceding generations and following generations of Saunders-Sebright would be interred. He, also, was the primary benefactor for the West Herts Infirmary at Hemel Hempstead proving for its construction and a perpetual endowment for a surgeon. Sir John was preceded in death by his wife who died in 1826 and followed by Sir John on April 15, 1846. Sir John left most of his estate to his only son, Sir Thomas Gage Saunders-Sebright (1802- 1864), and provided for his two remaining daughters as well as providing an endowment for the poor of Flamstead. The Saunders-Sebright families last occupied the Beechwood estate in 1870 due to the excesses of Sir John Gage Saunders-Sebright, the 9<sup>th</sup> Baronet. Beechwood was often rented to provide extra income for the family. At the family's bankruptcy proceeding in 1886, the Fourth Earl of Harewood, Gerald Lascelles' father, who was the grandson of Henrietta Sebright (John Saunders-Sebright's sister) came to the rescue and paid off the estate debts. However, the Saunders-Sebright family rarely occupied the Beechwood house again. Sir Hugo Giles Edmund Sebright 1931-1985 was the 14<sup>th</sup> Baronet and the first to sever the Saunders name, the last of the Lords of the Manor of Beechwood and the last major landowner of his family in the area. Sir Peter Giles Vivian Sebright is currently the 15<sup>th</sup> Baronet but lives abroad in Australia. We were all excited about what we had learned about Sir John Saunders-Sebright as none of us had ever seen any significant information published before.

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sir John Saunders Sebright



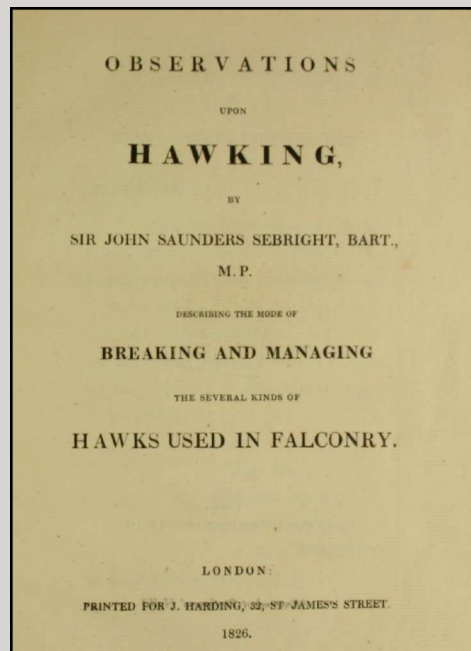
Sir John Saunders Sebright



Sebright Bookplate



Sebright Memorial



Observations Upon Hawking-1826



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sir Ralph Sadleir's Tomb

The next stop on the Dead Falconers Tour was the church at Standon, the burial site of Sir Ralph Sadleir, falconer to Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth. Fortunately, Humphrey Drummond, aka Humphrey ap Evans had published a biography on Sir Ralph entitled *Our Man in Scotland*, so we had a lot of information about this famous man who is, also, depicted in color as the frontispiece in *Bibliotheca Accipitraria*. The dramatic memorials of Sir Ralph Sadleir and his oldest son, Thomas with his wife occupy the most prominent places in the altar placed on each side. There are magnificent life size marble effigies of all three individuals with their children praying below their parents. Clearly, they were significant and important people in the Parish of Standon as well as England. Here is the additional information learned about the Sadleir's from our visit.

Sir Ralph Sadleir served four regents: Henry VIII, Mary I, Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth. He was born in

service he entered in 1519. Sadleir became Clerk of Hanaper and one of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber. He was sent three times to the Court of James V of Scotland in 1537, 1539 and 1541. In 1543, he was sent to Court again to negotiate the marriage of Henry's son, Edward, to James' daughter, Mary Queen of Scots. He was honored for his military and diplomatic efforts in Scotland by Henry VIII who bestowed the Manor of Standon upon Sir Ralph. During Edward VI's reign, he was Treasurer of the Army, and present at the Battle of Pinkie-Cleugh near Musselburgh on September 10, 1547. Pinkie Cleugh was the last formal battle to be fought between England and a Scottish national army; subsequent engagements involved armies of Scots rising up in rebellion to oust their English occupiers. Sir Ralph was said to have captured the banner and pole, which stand near his tomb in Standon Church. On Elizabeth's accession, he was called to the Privy Chamber and made Knight

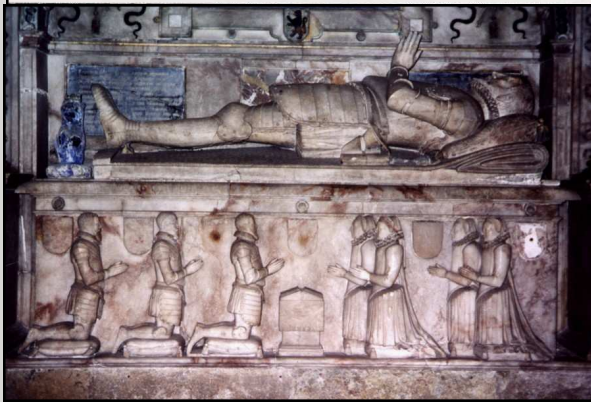
of the Shire of the County. He married Margaret Mitchell, a laundress who had been in the service of his first patron Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex. They had three sons, Thomas, Edward of Temple Dinsley, Henry of Everley, near Hungerford, in Wiltshire, and four daughters: Anne, married to Sir George Horsey of Digswell, Herts; Mary, married to Thomas-Bolle of Wall-

ington, Herts; Jane, married to Edward Baesh of Stanstead-Bury, and Dorothy, married to Edward Elrington of Burstall in Buckinghamshire. Henry Sadleir was mentioned by Simon

Latham in his *Epistle to the Reader* in his *New and Second Booke of Falconry*, an acknowledgment to his "first and loving master Henry Sadler of Everley, from whom he had his art," and "who taught him the way to live." All of Sir Ralph's seven children are depicted praying at Sir Ralph and Margaret's tomb in Standon Church. Their oldest son Thomas succeeded Sir Ralph and he married twice but only his second wife Gertrude, daughter of Robert Markham and sister of Gervase Markham (also a writer on falconry) bore children. These children were Ralph and Gertrude who are, also, depicted praying at their parent's side on their tomb across the altar from Sir Ralph and Margaret. Ralph Sadleir was especially fond of hunting and hawking and was mentioned by Sir Isaac Walton in his *Complete Angler*, "To-morrow morning, we shall meet a pack of otter dogs of noble Mr. Sadler's upon Amwell Hill, who be there so early, that they intend to prevent the sun rising." Ralph Sadleir succeeded his father, Sir Thomas, upon his death in 1606, but he died on February 12, 1660 without children, and the Manor of Standon passed through his sister Gertrude to her son, Lord Aston, ending the name of Sadleir in Standon.

The Sadleir memorials were the most elaborate and beautiful of all the tombs that we saw on the Tour, but our next stop, the tomb of Sir Richard Francis Burton, would prove be the most unusual.

Sir Richard Francis Burton, author of *Falconry In The Valley Of The Indus*, was one of the most colorful and flamboyant men of his time. It is appropriate that he would be entombed in the same way. He is buried in St. Margaret's churchyard in Mortlake, the creepy name of a suburb of London. The cemetery was difficult to find as the church is completely surround-



Memorial of Sir Ralph Sadleir with his seven children.

Hackney in Middlesex in 1507 where his family had lived for sometime. His first patron was Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, through whom he became known to Henry VIII into whose



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sir Richard Francis Burton



*in S. at tomb of Sir Richard Francis Burton.*

shape of an Arabian tent. Vicki discovered a window in the roof, reached via an iron ladder, enabling the viewer to see the coffins, lanterns, camel bells and paintings inside in the tomb. Inside, on Burton's ornate coffin, you can still see the camel bells, which used to be connected to an electrical actuator and would tinkle by themselves, to gladden the ears of the resting couple. So much has been written about Sir Richard Burton that there is no reason to elaborate here.

It was time to bring the trip to a close even though we had a couple of days remaining. One day would involve my trip to the office of *The Field* to copy articles written by some of the falconers we had just visited. The visit revealed that there is a significant quantity of information that is not readily available and needs to be copied for use by falconry historians. Peter, in the meantime, paid several visits to the new British Library and the Public Records Office looking up obituaries, trying to find any reference to

ed by houses and factories with narrow one way streets. Peter ended up driving all through Richmond Park and the surrounding streets looking for it until Natalie politely coughed and asked Vicki if she had any ideas. "Ask someone," said Vicki, and once again I did so. We successfully followed some strange directions and found the church. The graveyard was really wild. It is one of the few almost completely covered by trees, very dark, with the ground so uneven it's like the dead were trying to get out before Judgment Day. Burton's stunning mausoleum is in the



*Vicki S. peering into tomb of Sir Richard Francis Burton.*

Captain Fisher whom he is, ummm, dying to find.

The Dead Falconers Tour yielded much more information than we had anticipated and proved that a visit to these gravesites was a worthwhile effort. We did not locate the graves of Major Fisher or E.B. Michell but have since learned enough information to make another trip worthwhile. In addition, we have learned about some other falconer's burial locations where we might learn more biographical information. If one has a genuine interest in falconry history, taking a Dead Falconers Tour would be an interesting learning experience. It certainly was for us and provided a wonderful tour of the English and Continental European countryside. Traveling 1500 miles in a car made us all better friends with enough humorous stories to last a lifetime even though most people still think we are a little strange.



*Headstone of Sir Richard Francis Burton and Isabel.*





# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **Epilogue**

After several weeks were spent travelling around the country searching for dead falconers wherever they might be hiding. The goal set had been to find the last resting places of Salvin and Brodrick, Harting, Freeman, Sebright, Burton, Sherley, Lascelles, Michell, Fisher and others. Many of the graves found were well tended and in good repair and respects were paid to these falconers of the past whose books and writings are enjoyed to this day. Two graves however, left them shocked and dismayed.

The last resting place of Gerald Lascelles, in Boltons Bench Cemetery at Lyndhurst, Hampshire was a wreck. The marble palings of his plot had all but sunk out of sight, the marble column was broken and had fallen to one side of the grave and was so covered in tall grasses that it was almost missed. Mould and algae obscured most of the inscriptions, and in many cases the leading in the letters was gone. What had once been white marble was now the colour of the darkest black gyr. For his grave to look so abandoned was heartbreaking. Research found that the direct descendants of Lascelles are now many generations removed and quite possibly none of the family has visited the grave since he was interred. It was realized that if the memorial was to be cleaned and restored it would have to be carried out by Lascelles 'falconry descendants' and it was decided to form a joint UK/US committee to do just that. Paul Beecroft in Great Britain and Peter Devers in America became chairmen of the restoration effort.

With the assistance of Reverend Peter Murphy in Lyndhurst, the firm of Hoare Banks Stonemasons in Lymington were engaged to undertake the restoration of Lascelles' grave. The generous donations from falconers in Great Britain and America succeeded in restoring dignity to the last resting place of our famous 19th century "ancestor".

The grave of Edward Blair Michell, reputedly in Wyke Champflower, Somerset, was not found to be in terrible condition – it was not found at all. Shortly after the Dead Falconers Tour party departed, their search fruitless, Brian Bird, a falconer local to Wyke Champflower, arrived on the same quest. He too failed in his search to locate the missing falconer. And so began a joint UK & US project to pinpoint the last resting place of E.B. Michell and honour his memory with an appropriate memorial. Brian Bird of the BFC and John Swift of NAFA became joint chairman for this endeavour.

Parish records were consulted but could not definitively place Michell in the churchyard at Wyke Champflower. It was not until Brian had the insight to consult the local newspaper that Michell was finally located. The newspaper wrote of his interment in the Wyke cemetery in no uncertain terms and was quite exhaustive in detailing the service, the mourners, and the tributes. With there now being no doubt of his burial there, the Wyke Champflower churchyard was graced with a memorial tablet designed by Brian to commemorate the life of this great falconer.

Another Dead Falconer's Tour in 2004 would celebrate their grave restorations.





# **Dead Falconers Farewell Tour**

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Between the Tours

### Dead Falconers "Farewell" Tour

Archives of American Falconry: John R. Swift-Curator Books and Manuscripts, Peter Barry Devers-Eastern Research Associate, Natalie Nicholson-Western Research Associate, Vicki Swift-Travel Agent and Photographer

All good things must come to an end, and this year's tour appears to be our last. Natalie Nicholson was not able to travel with us this year due to some health issues, and we, also, feel that the gravesites of the important individuals involved in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century falconry have been located and visited. It has been suggested that we go looking for some of the professional falconers like John Frost or John Barr, but they really do not hold much interest for me, as they did not chronicle their experiences. We leave that search to another younger group of falconers! The primary purpose of the original tour in 2002 was to locate the better known 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century falconry au-



answered questions and unfinished business from the original 2002 Dead Falconers Tour, and with witnessing the culmination of our projects to restore the graves of two important falconers.

#### BETWEEN TOURS 2002 & 2003

During the 2002 Dead Falconers tour, it was discovered that the monument for Gerald Lascelles was in poor condition, and that there was no monument at all for E. B. Michell. In fact, there was no actual proof to be found in church records of

where Michell was actually buried. The London Times mentioned his funeral service had been held at Wyke Champflower in Somerset, but no marker was found there. All of us were dismayed by what we found and did not find as both Lascelles and Michell are major figures in the history of the sport of falconry.

I knew Peter would not leave this alone, as he had personally renovated the grave monument of William Brodrick in 1998 when he located it broken and filthy in Chudleigh, Devon. He immediately began an investigation into the cost of restoring the Lascelles monument and providing one for Michell. Estimates as high as \$5000 were received! I thought that would surely kill the project, but Peter said we would just have to get more people involved, and he enlisted both Natalie's and my commitment to help. The Archives of American Falconry would serve as project coordinator.

About the same time, I received a letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Winkley who lives immediately adjacent to the Church at Wyke Champflower. She indicated that Brian and Karen Bird had recently visited, also looking for the grave of E. B. Michell. They had brought a Merlin with them, hoping to pay tribute to Michell who was famous for his han-



L - R: Original tour members - John Swift, Vicki Swift, Natalie Nicholson, and Peter Devers.

thors, and that appears to have been accomplished. This year's tour was primarily concerned with un-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## E. B. Michell's Gravesite

dling of this small falcon but were saddened when, they too could not find his marker. She inquired whether I might be interested in getting in touch with them. I did contact Brian, and he expressed interest in pursuing what had happened to E. B. Michell and installing a grave maker to commemorate his passing. Brian and Karen took the lead and continued to press on to find his grave. He worked with the church committee to design a marker that met with their approval, hoping to place it somewhere in the churchyard. Peter Devers is an active participant on several Internet falconry bulletin boards and through them came in contact with Paul Beecroft, then Chairman of the British Hawking Association, in 2000. Paul helped put him in contact with Luis Relano, a Spanish sculptor of falcons and falconers, and invited him to the BHA tent at the Falconers Fair that year. Their acquaintance was renewed in 2002 when they found themselves bidding competitors on Ebay for – what else – falconry books! Paul shares a similar interest in the history of falconry and the need to preserve its legacy. Peter voiced his concern for what had happened to Gerald Lascelles's monument, and they agreed to meet in Lyndhurst in 2003 to see about raising funds for its restoration. Peter, also, arranged a meeting with Stephanie Croxon, a representative of Hoare Banks Stonemasons, to discuss the restoration of the monument.

### DEAD FALCONERS TOUR - ONE and a HALF, 2003

Natalie Nicholson named this tour as it only had half of its original participants, she and Peter. The trip was not really about finding new gravesites but exploring information gathered after the last tour. The restoration of the monuments was of primary concern, but both Peter and Natalie were intrigued by some information discovered on the 2002 trip: Captain Francis Henry Salvin had kept a hawking journal, heretofore unknown to falconers, and it was reputedly somewhere in County Durham. These two book fanatics could not leave this hint unexplored and set about locating them. Peter had, also, been hard at work sleuthing out the final resting place of Major Charles Hawkins Fisher who had successfully eluded our investigation in 2002.

#### Lyndhurst-Gerald Lascelles Grave site

Peter arrived early in May, prior to the Falconers Fair, to meet with Stephanie Croxon from Hoare

Banks Stonemasons, the firm who was recommended to us by Father Murphy, rector of the church in Lyndhurst. He, also, invited falconer Paul Beecroft to meet with him and to discuss the possible combined restoration efforts between the British Falconers Club and the falconers of North America. During the examination of the monument, they discovered permanent palings surrounding the gravesite that had sunk so far into the sod that we hadn't noticed them the year before. Everything was Italian marble and would be beautiful when restored. Much discussion was held about how much to restore and at what price. All agreed to go ahead with the restoration in preparation for a rededication preceding the British Falconers Fair in 2004. Paul agreed to head up the UK fund-raising efforts and coordinate the actual rededication ceremony. Peter would head up the US efforts and coordinate with the Archives of American Falconry who would act as recipient of contributions from American falconers. It was decided to appeal only to interested falconers and not ask NAFA for direct funds, as it was an overseas project. NAFA agreed to help by donating several field meet prints to be auctioned as they do for all local clubs. Several hundred dollars were raised this way utilizing eBay, which would allow falconers worldwide to participate. The plan would be put into place over the next year and work was begun on the monument restoration almost immediately.

#### Wyke Champflower-E. B. Michell's Church

Brian and Karen Bird invited Peter to stay at their home near Wyke Champflower while they continued the search for E. B. Michell's gravesite. Brian and Peter searched several churchyards in nearby Bruton and Pitcombe with no success. Peter recommended that Brian search the local newspaper for an obituary as a similar search had turned up the exact location of Major Fisher's tomb that we missed finding last year. He did so and found a complete description of the funeral service and the people attending, and the clear unequivocal statement that Michell was buried in the churchyard. It seems E. B. Michell had gone to London to attend the annual Falconers Feast on St. Martin's Day and had died the evening of the event. His body was returned for burial at Wyke Champflower in the churchyard across from his home at Pomeroy Farm. The actual location of his specific grave can never be determined but it was decided, with church



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Finding Major Fisher and Croxdale Hall home of Captain Salvin

approval, to place a memorial headstone in the churchyard. Brian and Karen Bird would work with the Parish committee to determine the appropriate style, wording and placement of the memorial. Brian would guarantee half the funding while John Swift provided the other half. This arrangement would allow the project to proceed with the anticipation of receiving funding from the efforts the next fall.

### Stroud-Searching for Major Fisher

As I indicated in the 2002 Tour report, we searched three of the four churches in Stroud looking for the grave of Major Fisher. We walked up and down the hills but could not discover the location of his grave. So many headstones, even of recent vintage, had so badly deteriorated that we began to feel our quest to find Fisher hopeless. The local historical society could not provide much help and actually misdirected our search with the erroneous information all burial grounds but one was closed in 1901. So, with time pressing upon us, we gave up the search. I knew Peter would not let it go, however.

Upon his return home in 2002, Peter wrote the Gloucestershire Family Records Centre to ask if they might have any information about Fisher's burial place. To his surprise, he received a response from a man named Syd Mathews, the Major's first cousin four times removed. Mathews too had been searching for the Major with no luck. He then contacted the local newspaper begging them for an obituary, should there be one. Not only was there an obituary but it ran on for several columns, one of the most complete descriptions of a funeral service we have ever come across. Major Fisher was bur-

ied at Trinity Church; two blocks from his old home, The Castle.

After leaving Wyke Champflower, Peter headed for Stroud to check out the graveyard at Holy Trinity Church. He found the Major in seconds, buried there with seven other family members in a very large well-marked family crypt. So large was it in fact that Peter had to climb a tree to get a good picture of the inscriptions. My wife Vicki is quick to remind me that she wanted to "go to that church over there," but we had said no. Major C. Hawkins Fisher's final resting place was a mystery no more, so Peter was now off to the pick up Natalie for the 2003 Falconry Fair to see old friends and hopefully purchase some valuable items.

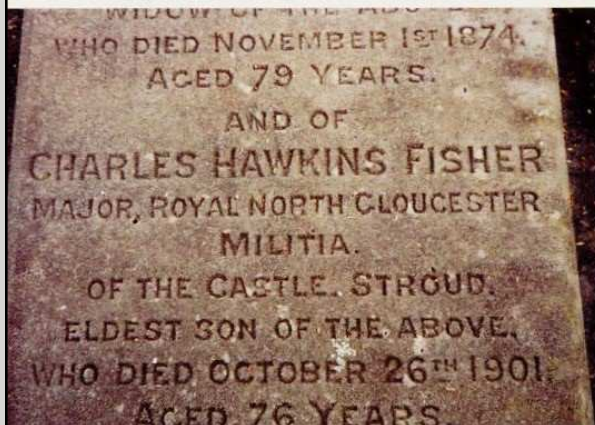


*Croxdale Hall - Capt. Salvin's family home in Yorkshire*

### Croxdale Hall

After the fair, Peter and Natalie headed north to visit Croxdale Hall in County Durham, the boyhood home of Captain Francis Henry Salvin. The Salvins acquired the property in 1402, and it remains their family home, yet. It is a fine straightforward Georgian mansion built around an earlier Tudor era home. Croxdale has elegant interior spaces, some with Rococo ceilings, a private chapel and fine gardens.

Captain F. H. Salvin spent most of his early life in the northern part of England in Durham and Yorkshire. He was born the fifth and last son of a Catholic family of 13 children, and therefore, was not due any direct inheritance. However, it appears he was a favorite of his mother as he was given the Webb-Weston family estate of Sutton Park in Southern England upon the death of her brother, his uncle. He inherited the estate when he was forty years



*Major C. H. Fisher - family crypt.*



# The Dead Falconers Tours

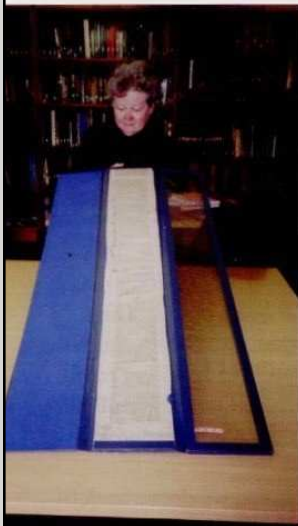
## Durham Treatise of Falconry

old and resided there for 47 years in Whitmoor House, a manor on the estate grounds. When he died childless, many of his personal papers and diaries went back north to Croxdale Hall. When Peter heard this, his eyes lit up at the prospect of discovering something new about the slightly eccentric and dedicated old falconer.

Captain Gerard Salvin and his daughter, Caroline Broadfoot, the current Croxdale residents, could not have been more welcoming to Natalie and Peter. Prior to their arrival, Caroline had discovered that many of Captain Salvin's diaries had been sent to the Public Records Office in Durham for archival reasons. Following the house tour, she gave them directions to Durham and an afternoon was spent reading (and copying) some of the personal logs kept by the Captain. Another falconry treasure was, also, examined.

### Durham

While at the Beinecke Library at Yale University, Peter had discovered a work by Bror Danielson on the Durham Treatise of Falconry. The Durham Treatise is a cut off part of a parchment roll, written in English and beautifully decorated. It has been dated to the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century making it one of the earliest works on falconry in English. Perhaps only the *Percy Poem on Falconry* at Yale is earlier. The work is housed in the same records office as the Salvin diaries. With some trepidation, Natalie requested permission to see the treatise, and it was brought out very quickly. The librarians even permitted Peter and Natalie to be



Natalie with the Durham Treatise of Falconry.

photographed with the work, something few librarians would have been generous enough to allow. The *Durham Treatise* bears a strong resemblance to the later "Book of Hawking" in *The Boke of Saint Albans* and to *The Booke of Hawkyng* after Prince Edward, Kyng of Englande. It was a rare treat for both of them to hold a manuscript over 500 years

old! After their visit, Peter and Natalie went separate ways with hopes that the next full tour would finally bring to a close all the discovered issues raised in the previous tours.

## DEAD FALCONERS TOUR - 2004

**Tuesday-Wednesday, April 27-28<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

Vicki and I left Tucson at 6 AM on Tuesday and arrived at Heathrow Airport at 7 AM on Wednesday. We waited at the car rental for Peter to arrive at 9 AM but fate was against us. There was a message informing us that his plane had developed engine problems and returned to New York. He would not arrive until 9 PM, so Vicki and I caught up on some much-needed sleep. Peter finally put in an appearance at 9 PM, and we set off for Steyning in southern England. I still get very nervous driving on the left side of the road and doing it at night only makes it worse, but off we went in high spirits. We were scheduled to meet up with Kent Carnie and Kelly Cosho Thursday evening and receive a tour of Steyning and the home of Sir Thomas Sherley, Wiston House, the following day. Janet Pennington, a local historian with a special interest in the Sherley family, had graciously offered her services as guide.

### Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> - Arundel & Hever Castle

With a whole day free, while we waited for Kent and Kelly to appear, we decided to explore two famous castles with falconry connections. Arundel Castle is the seat of the Dukes of Norfolk who practiced the sport of falconry for generations until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The day was rainy as it would be for much of this trip, but there was just too much to see so we hardly noticed the damp. There is nearly 1,000 years of history at this great castle, situated in magnificent grounds overlooking the River Arun in West Sussex. Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Arundel, built it at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest feature is the motte, an artificial mound over 100 feet high surrounded by a protective ditch. On top of it was the original castle, probably first made of wood. It was constructed in 1068, followed by the building of its gatehouse in 1070. Arundel Castle has descended directly from 1138 to the present day through the same family. It has been the seat of the Dukes of Norfolk and their ancestors for over 850 years.

Among the famous members of the Howard



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Arundel Castle and Hever Castle-Home of Anne Boleyn



Peter and Vicki at Arundel Castle.

family are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Norfolk (1443-1524), the victor of Flodden; Lord Howard of Effingham, who with Sir Francis Drake repelled the Armada in 1588; the Earl of Surrey, the Tudor poet and courtier; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Norfolk (1473-1554), uncle of Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, both of whom became wives of King Henry VIII (1491-1547). These were politically dangerous

times: the 'Poet' Earl was executed in 1547; his father, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Norfolk only escaped the death penalty because King Henry VIII died the night before the execution was due and the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke (1536-72) was beheaded for plotting to marry Mary, Queen of Scots, herself a devotee of hawking. There have been two cardinals and a saint in the Howard family: St. Philip Howard, 13<sup>th</sup> Earl of Arundel (1557-95) died in the Tower of London for his faith. The results of all this history are concentrated at the Castle, which houses a fascinating collection of fine furniture dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, tapestries, clocks, and portraits by Van Dyck, Gainsborough, Mytens, Lawrence, Reynolds, etc. The Cuenot Triptych, personal possessions of Mary, Queen of Scots, and a selection of historical, religious and heraldic items from the Duke of Norfolk's collection are, also, on display. Arundel Castle is now the home of the 18<sup>th</sup> Duke and Duchess of Norfolk and their children.

It was a fascinating trip to this wonderfully preserved castle from Norman times. We all walked up the 131 steps to the top of the keep, built on top of the aforementioned motte, to view the river and the countryside. The castle was originally built to guard the entrance to the Arun River, but so much

silt has come down the river that the actual entrance is now over a mile away. It is not hard to visualize the pageantry of the noble hawking parties as they set forth from this great home over centuries long gone. The countryside around the castle was rife with partridge, hare, rabbits, and waterfowl and the dukes and their retainers must have fattened themselves for centuries on the game their hawks captured.

After this wonderful castle, we just had to see another. Peter suggested Hever Castle, home of Anne Boleyn, the second wife of Henry VIII and the mother of Queen Elizabeth. It was much smaller in size but very beautiful and possessed a great sense of antiquity. The earliest part dates to 1270, and its rooms are furnished with ancient treasures



"I like your outfit."

gathered by the Astor family who owned it for many years and John Guthrie who owns it now. The falconry picture described in the 2002 NAFA Journal was well worth seeing. It depicts a hawking party leaving the castle in the era of Queen Elizabeth. We are going to try to obtain a photograph of this for the Archives.

Following our tour of Hever, we drove back to Steyning to meet with Kent, Kelly, Janet, and Marytn Pennington for dinner at a local pub. The George & Dragon at Dragon's Green was built in the early 1600's and was most atmospheric. Low ceilings, flagstone floors, and ancient beams made our stay very memorable. We all enjoyed large pints of Strongbow Cider and raised a toast to the albino son of an earlier owner of the pub who was allowed to be buried in the churchyard, but whose grave was not allowed to be marked by the stone



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sir Thomas Sherley Home and C. F. R. G. Schwerdt Home

his parents wished. That stone now stands outside the pub.

### Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup> - Walking tour of Steyning, Tour of Sir Thomas Sherley's House and Mausoleum of C. F. R. G. Schwerdt

Janet Pennington met us at our hotel, and we set off for a walking tour of the town in the rain. The actual town site was first occupied around 3500 BC due to the two small rivers traversing the town. This made it a prime location for agriculture, trading, and mills. Janet, the local historian, provided terrific insight and information about the town legends and history. One of my personal favorites was the story of the medieval tanning factories in which they incorporated canine feces into the process. They actually paid people to travel around to the various hunting kennels to gather the doggie do-do for the tanning plant. Can you imagine the smell? We, also, saw the home in which the renowned poet, William Butler Yeats, lived for many years, and the small green on which a man was burned at the stake. The town has a wealth of 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century timbered homes and is very picturesque. The downpour forced a shortening of the tour, and we were soon off to see Wiston House, the home of Sir Thomas Sherley.

This year, the Archives of American Falconry is republishing a rare and virtually unknown falconry book written in 1603 by Sir Thomas Sherley of Wiston in Sussex. Peter has visited Wiston several times and thought that all of us associated with the Archives would enjoy seeing the actual home of the author and the grounds over which he hawked. We were awed when we entered the parkland and

drove up the mile long drive to the house. There, in front of us, was an impressive Elizabethan mansion that time forgot. Sir Thomas Sherley was one of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers, a member of the landed aristocracy who controlled life in old England. He served his monarch loyally as Sheriff of Sussex, a Member of Parliament, and as treasurer of her armies in the Low Countries. He was, however, a bit of a scoundrel and reportedly embezzled a small fortune for which he was ultimately held accountable. Part of it was used to build Wiston House. Sherley died bankrupt in 1612 but left behind a lovely work on falconry that gives us a very complete picture of how the sport was practiced in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

After a wonderful tour of this beautiful house, where we saw the rooms in which he lived and housed his hawks, and also, the church in which he is buried, we were off to Lyndhurst in preparation for the Lascelles dedication the next day. I asked Peter to swing north a little out of the way to see if we could find the home of C. F. G. R. Schwerdt.

I am sure that most falconers have never heard of Schwerdt, but if you are a falconry book collector with a collection of works that at least date back to the 1800's, you have likely seen his name. Alongside that of J. E. Harting, whose *Bibliotheca Accipitraria* is well known for its discussion of falconry works, Schwerdt's catalogs of sporting literature are the finest known. As a falconry book collector, and curator at the Archives of Falconry, I have examined hundreds of falconry related books. I consider "The Schwerdt Catalogue" entitled *Hunting, Hawking, and Shooting* to be the finest falconry-related work ever produced. The depth of the bibliographic descriptions, the large format, the quality of the printing, and the material reproduced is the best I have ever seen. "The Schwerdt Catalogue" is a compilation and presentation of the most magnificent books, manuscripts, and prints collections ever assembled by a single individual. Our famous North American falconry bookseller, Robert Hecht, recently made me aware of a Schwerdt family genealogy. Since very little information about the Schwerdt's personal life has become known, it is appropriate to share it here.

Charles Francis George Richard Schwerdt, the older of Franz Ignaz and Agnes Schwerdt-Brentano's two sons, was born in Muenster, Germany, on March 12, 1862. In 1868, his family moved to



Wiston House - Home of Sir Thomas Sherley.



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Old Alresford House home of C. F. R. G. Schwerdt

Bonn where he spent his childhood and adolescent years. He was a brilliant student and finished his secondary schooling at the early age of seventeen, expecting to continue his studies at a higher level. Unfortunately, he was prevented from doing so due to the reduced financial circumstances in which his parents then found themselves. During his school days, Richard, as he was called, knew a family named Speyer, some members of which had settled in and started a business in England. They offered to employ him, and so he went to London after renouncing his German nationality. C. A. and E. Speyer & Co. were general dry good merchants and importers of notions, principally buttons and braids. Richard's progress in the firm was rapid, and he became a partner at the age of twenty-two. Five years later, the firm was renamed Speyer, Schwerdt, & Co. Under his guidance, the business grew and prospered. Richard Schwerdt grew to love England, and he spent the remaining years of his life there. He became a British subject, and except for frequent visits with his German family and friends with whom he always maintained close contact, he never again lived in his native Germany.

During his frequent visits to that country, he met the young and beautiful Mathilde von Guaita (April 16, 1869 - March 13, 1955) and fell in love with her. An ensuing union between Richard Schwerdt and Mathilde von Guaita occurred; "Tilla" as she was called, was the great turning point in his life. Richard Schwerdt's marriage to Mathilde brought him great inherited wealth and while he retained an interest in the London based firm, it eventually became secondary to other pursuits. He was now in a position to live the life that pleased him most—namely that of an English country squire.

This he did in a really grand manner. Richard was an avid sportsman, and he saw to it that his children were properly trained in the sports and games that he favored. In his three Hampshire country estates, successively acquired, he kept a large stable of horses, rode to the hounds, and had his own local shoots and fishing streams. He rented large deer and grouse moors in Scotland and a Chamois shoot in the Tyrol. He was among the first automobile owners in England. Richard and Tilla first moved to Hampshire in 1892, taking up resi-



*John and Vicki Swift at Schwerdt's Home - Old Alresford House.*

dence at "Mill Court," Alton, where they remained until 1905. In that year, they moved to "Old Alresford House" some ten miles nearer Winchester. They rented this property until 1914. In 1914, Richard purchased "Longwood Owlesbury," a 1200-acre estate, from the late Earl of Northesk. He lived in Longwood until 1926 when the opportunity arose to purchase "Old Alresford House," which he did. Schwerdt returned to Alresford and lived there until his death.

During the last years of his life, Richard Schwerdt was preoccupied with his inevitable death. He knew that he was no longer able to continue living the life he had, or perpetuate his traditions by leaving the means to do so to any or all of his children. Money was not as plentiful and did not purchase as much as it did in his youth. Still, he wanted to leave some sort of a monument to himself and his family. He conceived the idea of building an elaborate mausoleum in the classical style, and the project was carried out during his lifetime. The impressive tomb was constructed on the edge of his property adjacent to the churchyard, and when completed, he donated the land on which it sits to the church. Richard Schwerdt died at his home on January 2 1939, in his 77<sup>th</sup> year, survived by his wife and four children.

Compared to what it once had been, the family fortune had dwindled through the many unproductive years of his life. The major part of his estate consisted of real property (Alresford) and personal



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## C. F. R. G. Schwerdt Mausoleum



*John and Peter at Schwerdt's Mausoleum.*

possessions, especially his library. His magnificent collection of books, manuscripts, and prints was sold at public auction in London in May 1939. The timing of the sale was most unfortunate as the Second World War was in the offing. It was a period of political anxiety, unrest, and economic instability following the worldwide depression of the 1930's. Prices for rare books and other art objects had declined. As a result, the proceeds of the sale were disappointing. Death duties further sharply reduced the value of the gross estate. However, the remainder was ample to allow Tilla Schwerdt to live out the remaining years of her life in dignity and comfort and still leave an estate to her children.

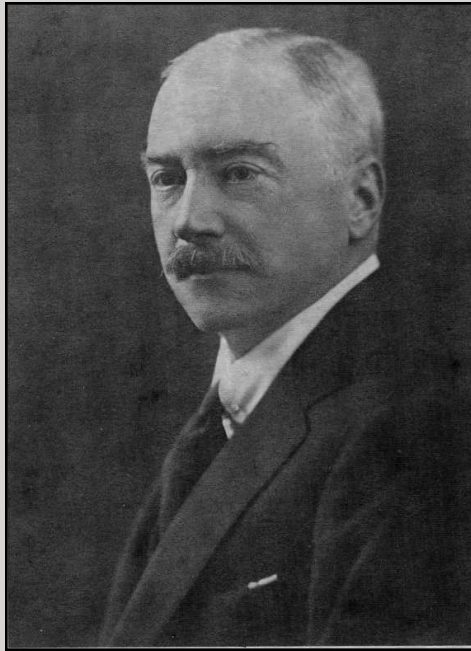
Schwerdt thought that the impressive mausoleum would be the principal vehicle for keeping his memory alive in the years after his demise. He was wrong in this, however. Richard's principal contribution, and the one for which he will be long remembered, was the publication of the unique catalog of his library of rare books and prints relating to *Hunting, Hawking and Shooting*. He began collecting in the 1890's soon after his marriage to Mathilde. Initially, collecting all types of books and prints on all types of sports; he soon found it necessary to limit the scope to three forms of hunting: hunting on horseback; hunting with weapons and traps; and hawking. He practiced the first two forms himself and always had a keen interest in falconry. Schwerdt maintained an active correspondence with all the major antiquarian booksellers of

the period. First in his collecting instructions was the quality of the object. It must only be the best. This was to be his driving motivation, and it was often said that he was unaware of the significance or even the content of the works he collected. He never wanted to be regarded as a scholar but as a collector of fine and rare "gems." He loved to surround himself with the choicest treasures from his favored field, hunting. Gathering this collection took many years of diligent searching and the investment of a great deal of money. Much of his time was devoted to the scholarly cataloguing of his library. In this, he was assisted by his wife and by bibliographers who were engaged for this purpose. His catalog is one of the

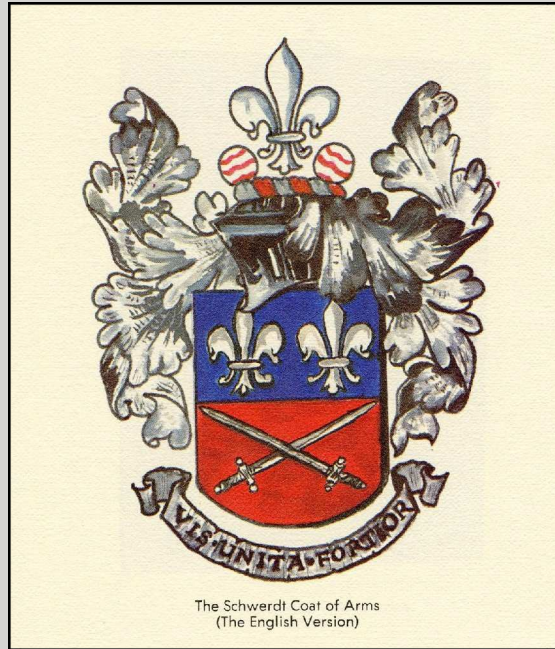
finest examples of printing in any generation. The finest procurable rag paper was used. The plates, many in color, reproducing rare prints and bindings, were prepared with the utmost care. It took four large profusely illustrated volumes to list and describe the hundreds of items in his collection. The first three volumes were published in 1928 and the fourth in 1937, two years before his death. The edition was limited to 300 numbered copies and all the original plates were destroyed. The catalogue was privately printed for the author by Waterloo and Sons Limited of London and the sumptuous Morocco bindings were done by Kelly & Sons, also of London. There is a color frontispiece in each volume (1 double-page), and a total of 382 plates (137 in colour) of bindings, title pages, and reproductions of famous prints. Full collations are given for all works, even for such titles as *The Sporting Magazine* and *Annals of Sporting*. The Podeschi Mellon catalogue refers to it as a classic example of the sumptuous, old-style, privately produced bibliographical catalogue. Its anachronistic luxury is balanced by its practical bibliographical content, which is of high quality. The first 50 copies were bound in full red Moroccan leather and given or sold to selected collectors, libraries or booksellers. The remaining 250 were bound in one half-green Moroccan leather and cloth. The limited publication, along with its high price, has made this catalogue scarce except to the most committed collector. It has been stated that a collection of this quality and magnitude cannot ever

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The C. F. R. G. Schwerdt Family



**C. F. R. G. Schwerdt ca 1920**



**Schwerdt Coat of Arms**



**Richard and Tilla Schwerdt 1888**

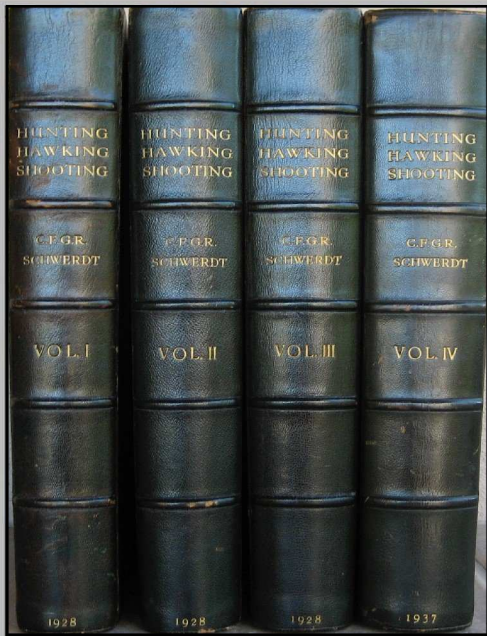


**The Schwerdt Family**

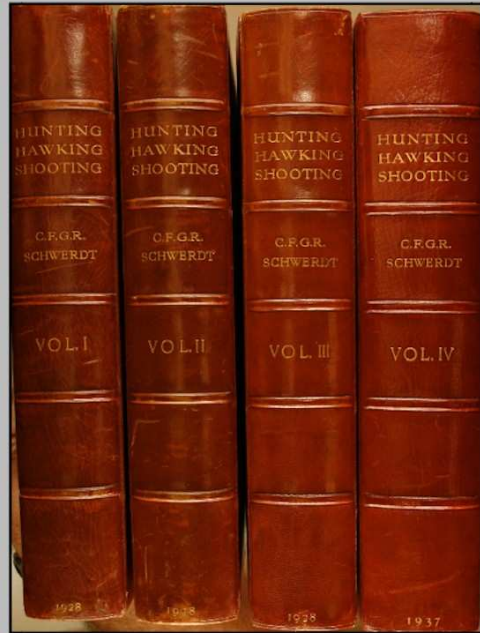


# The Dead Falconers Tours

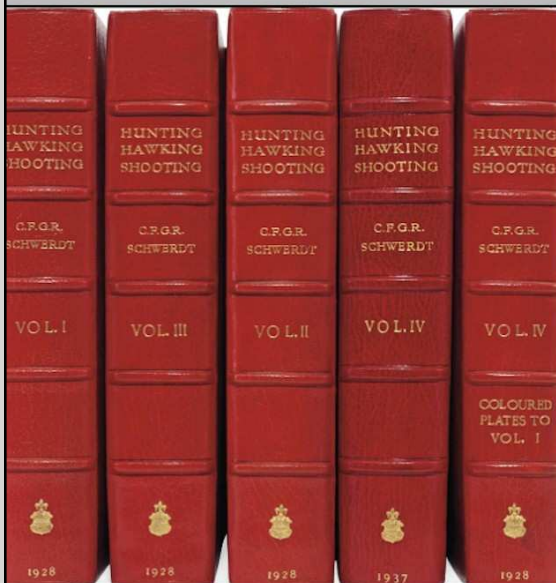
## Schwerdt's Catalogue Binding Styles



**Standard Edition 250 Copies**



**Deluxe Edition 50 Copies**



**Schwerdt's Personal Copy 10 Volumes**  
Includes each state of the plates



**Comparison between two editions**



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Rededication of Gerald William Lascelles gravesite

be assembled again.

I wish I could have seen the collection intact and perused the numerous works he collected, but the collection was dispersed long before I was born. One can occasionally come across a work he owned here and there. Yale's Beinecke Library has several books with the Schwerdt bookplate, including a magnificent 1575 Turbervile on hawking, bound in velvet with a large sterling silver falcon on both the front and back covers. The Archives is fortunate to own a copy of the Schwerdt Catalog, which all falconers are welcome to view.

We had a chance to visit the Mausoleum, as it clearly stands out as a modern work in an old churchyard. We were able to look through the glass doors and see the wall plaques of several family members including one who died as recently as 1996, so the families are still active in the area. We walked next door, met the current owner of Old Alresford House and were able to look at the grounds. This visit was especially enjoyable for a falconry book collector, a step back in time.

The light was fading, so we needed to get to Lyndhurst for the Lascelles Ceremony on Saturday morning. On the way into Lyndhurst, we stopped by the cemetery to see the monument we had helped restore. I must say seeing the pure white column in the fading light made a big impression and made the two-year project very worthwhile. The trans-

went to dinner and afterwards I took her by Queen's House and showed her where Gerald Lascelles had lived for 35 years. On the way back, we stopped by the grave of Alice Liddell Hargreaves, the inspiration for Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. A nice start to the weekend.

### **Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> - Bolton's Bench Cemetery, Gerald William Lascelles C. B. 1849-1928 Ceremony**

Peter picked us up at 9:30 AM, and we headed to the cemetery in preparation for the ceremony with anticipated attendance by both American and UK falconers. Several people had already arrived



*Lascelles monument - opening prayer by Rev. Camilla Walton*



*Gerald Lascelles monument before restoration.*

formation of the dirtied and broken monument we found in 2002 to its present beauty was nothing short of astonishing. Finally, Gerald Lascelles had a monument worthy of his place in falconry history. After checking into our 16th century B & B, Vicki and I

including British falconer and ceremony organizer Paul Beecroft. Graham Wellstead, Clive Palmer, and Roger Upton arrived with their falcons, appropriate for the day. We had a chance to visit with several British falconers before the scheduled start at 10:30 AM. I was serving as the Master of Ceremonies, so I had to see that everyone was in place. Paul and Peter had done an excellent job in preparation and even had a commemorative program printed for the occasion. Piper Alex Anderson played the opening lament, *The Dark Isle*, as we gathered around the monument. The actual service was opened by Reverend Camilla Walton who spoke, first of Reverend Peter Murphy who was too ill to attend but how excited he had been about this project. She told us that it was a privilege and honor to be with us and how impressed she was with the incredible work and dedication it has taken to restore this monument to its now impressive and worthy state. She commented, "For me it's won-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Rededication of Gerald William Lascelles gravesite



Lascelles' restored monument with Restoration Chairmen Peter Devers and Paul Beecroft.

derful that falconers from the United Kingdom and the United States of America have shown such tenacity, goodwill and strong relationship to unite and carry out this restoration work." A short prayer was offered before we adjourned to the nearby chapel where we could sit in case of rain.

I welcomed everyone, gave a brief history of the Dead Falconers Tour, and explained the reason for combined effort of both British and American falconers are that we all have the same roots. I then introduced the current Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest, Mike Seddon, who welcomed everyone to Lyndhurst and gave us his impressions of Gerald Lascelles. He spoke, also, of the fact that perhaps Lascelles should best be remembered for his obvious affection for his staff and inherent desire to care for his workers and in particular his efforts to improve the standard of workers cottages. Paul Beecroft then gave an excellent and extensive synopsis of Gerald Lascelles' life. Paul spoke of Lascelles concerns that the art of falconry was dying out apart from a small band of enthusiasts and that it was idle to dream of a 'revival of falconry,' but he hoped that the veterans were in error in these thoughts. Paul concluded by saying, "Well Sir, those veterans were in error, and it was not idle for you to dream of a 'revival of falconry.' Because of you and people like you, the art of falconry is alive and well, some 76 years after you left us. Today, on the eve of the Falconers Fair, we have come together here, falconers, to honor you and to thank

you for the contribution that you made to falconry, and you may rest, in the knowledge, that falconry continues and will continue. And, like you, I too, am thankful that the tinkle of a falcon's bell is generally to be heard in my garden as well."

Roger Upton, noted British falconer, author, and historian gave some anecdotal stories about Lascelles that brought him to life as a real person, not just an icon. He thought so much of Gerald Lascelles that he was mentioned in the dedication of one of his own books. Lascelles had held the Old Hawking Club together, and Roger mentioned the high standard of game and rook hawking in the days of Lascelles' club management. Kent Carnie of the Archives of American Falconry spoke about the influence Gerald Lascelles had on American falconry and the importance of British falconry literature on the development of American falconry. In the early years of American falconry, there were no American books on the sport, so they relied on British works, in particular that of Gerald Lascelles. Americans hold his name in great respect and his understanding of passage hawks was very important to the development of falconry in America. He told us that the Archives is very proud to hold in trust for all falconers Lascelles' personal copies of 'Thirty-Five years in the New Forest' and 'Coursing and Falconry.' Following Kent's comments, everyone then returned to the gravesite for several final prayers and to officially rededicate the monu-



Lascelles' memorial plaque from US and UK falconers.

ment. The Reverend Camilla Walton offered a final blessing with the words, "Gracious God, we give you thanks for the dedication and love shown by the falconers of the United Kingdom



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Rededication of Gerald William Lascelles gravesite



**The Piper**



**Kent Carnie addresses the attendees**



**Rev. Camilla Watson, Roger Upton  
John Swift**



**Graham Wellstead, Roger Upton  
Clive Palmer**



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The program for the Grave Restorations

Gerald William Lascelles  
Lyndhurst, Hampshire



Edward Blair Michell  
Wyke Champflower, Somerset

Saturday, May 1, 2004

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Rededication of Gerald Lascelles gravesite

In Honour Of Falconer  
Gerald William Lascelles, C. B.

A ceremony for the Rededication of  
His Family Monument  
in  
Boltons Bench Cemetery  
Lyndhurst, Hampshire  
England

Restored By The Falconers Of  
Great Britain & The United States

Saturday, 1 May 2004  
10:30 A.M.

Piper Alex Anderson	<i>The Dark Isle</i>
Rev. Peter Murphy	St. Michael & All Angels Church, Lyndhurst
John R. Swift	North American Falconers Association
Mike Seddon	Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest
Paul Beecroft	British Falconers' Club, British Hawking Association
S. Kent Carnie	Archives Of American Falconry, NAFA, BFC
Piper Alex Anderson	<i>Amazing Grace</i>



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Restoration Fund

### The Lascelles & Michell Restoration Fund

In the year 2002 a party of four falconers, associated with the Archives of American Falconry, decided to visit Britain to attend the Falconers Fair in Shropshire. As a humorous conceit we decided to fashion the rest of our British stay around visits to the graves of renowned 19<sup>th</sup> century falconry authors, parodying the famous literary and royal tours that are popular to this day. Our foray was jokingly dubbed the "Dead Falconers Tour 2002" and we four Americans spent several weeks traipsing around the country looking for dead falconers wherever they might be hiding. We set as our goal finding the last resting places of Salvin and Brodrick, Harting and Freeman, Sebright, Burton, Sherley, Lascelles, Michell, Fisher, and others.

The tour took us to many lovely places in central and southern Britain. Many of the graves we found were well tended and in good repair, and we paid our respects to these falconers of the past whose books and writings we enjoy. Two graves, however, left us totally shocked and dismayed.

The last resting place of Gerald Lascelles, in Boltons Bench Cemetery in Lyndhurst, Hampshire, was a wreck. We found it with the aid of Reverend Peter Murphy of Saint Michael & All Angels Church, and he too was taken aback by its condition. Gerald Lascelles is not only an important figure in falconry circles but also in the history of the New Forest and Lyndhurst. For his grave to look so abandoned was heartbreaking. The marble palings of his plot had all but sunk out of sight. The marble column was broken, fallen to one side of the grave, and was so covered in tall grasses that we almost missed it. Mold and algae obscured most of the inscriptions, and in many cases the leading in the letters was gone. What had once been white marble was now the color of the darkest black gy. Our respect for Lascelles is tremendous and we wondered why his descendants had let his grave go to ruin. Why wouldn't they have kept it up?

Our research found that the direct descendants of Lascelles are now many generations removed. Quite possibly none of the family has visited the grave since Gerald Lascelles was interred. We realized that if the memorial was to be cleaned and restored it was we, Lascelles' falconry descendants, who would have to do it.

Again with Reverend Murphy's assistance, we engaged the firm of Hoare Banks Stonemasons in Lymington to undertake the restoration. Peter Devers in the US and Paul Beecroft in the UK became joint chairmen

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Restoration Fund

of the restoration effort and, with the generous donations of falconers in both countries, succeeded admirably in restoring dignity to the last resting place of our famous 19<sup>th</sup> century "ancestor". It is our hope that falconers today and in the future will visit this place and tip their hat to the memory of a man who gave so much to the sport over so long a span of time.

The grave of Edward Blair Michell was not found to be in terrible condition – it was not found at all! Though the London Times reported him being buried at the church in Wyke Champflower, Somerset, we couldn't find his grave. The cemetery is the size of a tennis court but though we looked everywhere Michell could not be found. This was very odd as he was a man of considerable repute in the 19<sup>th</sup> century both as a sportsman and legal mind. He was also a man of some wealth and could easily have afforded an attractive memorial stone. Mrs. Elizabeth Winkley, owner of the manor house adjacent to the cemetery, helped us immeasurably in contacting the local history societies and church powers about the missing grave. Many, however, doubted that he was there at all.

Several weeks after the Dead Falconers Tour party departed Wyke Champflower a British falconer, Brian Bird, arrived on the same quest. Mrs. Winkley thought it decidedly odd that two parties had come looking for Michell within a month of each other when no one had come looking for him ever! Much intrigued, the local historians were again consulted but no one could be found who could definitively put Michell in the ground in Wyke Champflower.

In 2003 Peter Devers and Brian Bird had another go at looking for Michell, even checking the neighboring cemeteries in the parish. No grave was found. On a hunch Brian went to check the local newspaper to see what was written there and that proved to be the Rosetta Stone unlocking the mystery. The newspaper wrote of his interment in the Wyke Champflower cemetery and was quite exhaustive in detailing the service, the mourners, and the tributes. With the knowledge that Michell is definitely laid to rest in Wyke Champflower, the parish granted us permission to place a marble memorial tablet to him there. Brian Bird in the UK and John Swift in the US became co-chairmen of the Michell Fund and, with the moneys raised, have set a handsome stone in the cemetery in his memory. To the tablet you see in the photograph will now be added the words "within this cemetery" so visitors will know his last resting place is certain. It is to be hoped that now and again a falconer will drop by this place to pay respects to a man whose expertise is still unequaled, and



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **The Restoration Fund**

whose book is still read and admired a hundred years on. When at the cemetery look out over the surrounding meadows, for this is where Michell flew his famous merlins for many years. His homestead, Pomeroy Farm, is also nearby.

We are pleased that you can be with us today in celebrating the lives of two great falconers of the past, Gerald William Lascelles and Edward Blair Michell. The thanks of all falconers are extended to those who have contributed to making the restoration of these memorials possible.

### The Restoration Committee

Paul Beecroft & Brian Bird ~ Great Britain

Peter B. Devers & John R. Swift ~ United States of America

### The Dead Falconers Tour 2002 Participants

John R. Swift Vicki Swift Natalie Nicholson Peter B. Devers

### Photo Credits

Cover Portrait ~ Falcon by John Drayton, circa 1733

Gerald Lascelles ~ From Thirty-five Years In The New Forest

Gerald Lascelles restored monument ~ Stephanie Croxon

Edward Blair Michell ~ Portrait provided by Martyn Hopwood

Edward Blair Michell's Memorial Tablet ~ Brian F. Bird

Holy Trinity Churchyard ~ Peter B. Devers

175 copies of this brochure have been printed

on archival paper

in

Millbrook, New York

April 2004

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Restoration Fund

### The Roll of Contributors of Funds & Assistance

Blair Anderson	Kirt E. Jones
Scott Baldwin	Jed.H.Lavitt
Lynn Beecroft	Jennie Leach
Paul Beecroft	H. Paul Lee III
Brian Bird	William Mattox
Karen Bird	Guy McCallan
Rev. Stephen Bould	Beverly Brannon Mitchell
British Falconers' Club	Rev. Peter Murphy
British Hawking Association	New York State Falconry Assn.
Lyn & Tony Bruno	Natalie Nicholson
Col. S. Kent Carnie	Claas Niehues
Ron Clarke	North American Falconers' Assn.
Stephanie Croxon	Clive Palmer
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# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Biography of Gerald William Lascelles



Gerald William Lascelles, C. B.

# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **Biography of Gerald William Lascelles**

### **GERALD WILLIAM LASCELLES, C. B. 1849 ~ 1928**

Perhaps no man was more at the center of 19<sup>th</sup> century British falconry than Gerald William Lascelles. Around him were tightly circled the members of the Old Hawking Club whose dedication to the sport is legendary. Their exploits on the Salisbury Plain and on the moors of the north brought the art of falconry to pitch not seen in many years. His friendship and assistance were generously extended throughout his life to others not members of the club. Men such as Charles Hawkins Fisher, Edward Blair Michell, Thomas Mann, Pichot in France, and Benjamin Hoffman in America were deemed his friends and confidants. Lascelles' letters and visits tied many of these men together who might otherwise have gone solitary ways. Through his books and numerous articles on the sport he extended his reach to laymen worldwide who read of, and hopefully received a greater understanding of, a sport that was deemed somewhat passé even in the Britain of his time. These writings of his are still greatly enjoyed today, a hundred years on.

Gerald William Lascelles, the third son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Harewood, was born in Goldsbrough, Yorkshire, on October 26, 1849. One of the great families of the north of England, the Lascelles trace their ancestry back to John De Lascelles of Hinderskelfe, County York (now Castle Howard) in 1315 during the time of King Edward II. If falconry can be said to be "in your blood" it is true for Gerald Lascelles. His paternal great-grandmother was the sister of renowned falconer and eccentric, Sir John Saunders Sebright.

Lascelles grew up on the expansive Harewood Estate where wildlife and sport were readily at hand. His rambles across the hundreds of acres of parkland, and delight in the natural world he found there, instilled in him a lifelong love of the countryside and its denizens. He was blooded at the age of six and took up shooting as soon as his father deemed him reliable enough to carry a gun. He was educated at Eton, where he was in Mr. F.E. "Judy" Durnford's house, and afterwards matriculated from Magdalene College, Cambridge. With the Harewood Estate entailed to his oldest brother Lascelles knew he would have to make his own way in the world. A brief stint with Lloyd's in London and afterwards a position in a manufacturing company in Leeds were not agreeable to his country heart. A letter written to his falconry friend Lord Lilford in 1879 speaks of his unhappiness with his factory position and asks if Lilford knows of anyone



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **Biography of Gerald William Lascelles**

“who may have a vacancy for an estate agent, head or sub.” Through connections and competency he was able to land the prestigious job of Deputy Surveyor Of The New Forest in 1880. He held this position for 35 years and wrote of it in his delightful book, “Thirty-five Years In The New Forest”.

Gerald William Lascelles began his falconry career as a young boy with a sparrow-hawk under the tutelage of Sir Charles Slingsby of Scriven. At age 17 (1866) he was invited to spend his Easter holiday on the Salisbury Plain with Cecil Duncombe, a member of the Old Hawking Club. The club was managed by Clough Newcome, a former member of the renowned Loo Hawking Club in Holland, with Robert Barr as the professional falconer. The beauty and finesse of rook hawking thrilled him and his heart was set on training longwings from then on. While at Cambridge he kept a merlin in his rooms and would often traipse over to the Newcome's whenever hawks were to be flown. During the Franco-Prussian War Lascelles was able to participate in the sport often as the entire mews of falcons owned by the Champagne Hawking Club of France was sent to Britain for safekeeping. These were quartered at the home of the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh within easy reach of his college.

In 1871, with the death of Clough Newcome, the Old Hawking Club broke up and Lascelles was gifted with a falcon that had been allotted to Duncombe. He rook hawked with this for several seasons on the Salisbury Plain, along with others who were smitten by the sport. Several of the former OHC members chafed at the loss of the club that had been an important part of their lives, and in 1872 the club was reconstituted with Gerald Lascelles as Manager and Honorary Secretary. He held this position for 44 years, until 1915, when declining health forced him to resign his responsibilities.

The sport provided by the club Lascelles managed is looked upon by many as the golden era of hawking on the Salisbury Plain. Each year, with one of the inns in the area selected as their headquarters, the members would gather with hawks, horses, and dogs for a month or more of classic sport. Visitors from Britain and elsewhere were often welcomed by the OHC to view the flights. Lascelles obligations as Deputy Surveyor did not allow him to spend the entire time there, but it was a rare week when he wasn't to be found in the hawking fields at one time or another. In the fall, Lascelles arranged for certain of the falcons to be sent north with OHC members for autumn grouse hawking. His work as Deputy Surveyor made northerly visits almost impossible, so his hawking was principally confined to that on the Plain. Shooting, at which he excelled, was his principal sport

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Biography of Gerald William Lascelles

in the autumn of each year, especially while living at the Queen's House in Lyndhurst.

Today we principally know Gerald Lascelles through the books and articles he authored. In 1892 the Badminton Library book "Coursing and Falconry" was published, with Major Harding Cox the author of the first part and Lascelles the author of the second. This complete edition was reprinted in 1899, 1901, 1912, and 1986. In 1971 the falconry section of "Coursing and Falconry" was reprinted on its own, and to this the publisher gave the title "The Art Of Falconry". This has also been reprinted several times and is still available today, much admired and much referred to by falconers a hundred years on.

In 1875 Constance Agatha Mary Fitzclarence, only child of Mr. John Burton-Phillipson, of Sunninghill, Berkshire, captured Gerald's heart and they were married in a quiet ceremony on February 9<sup>th</sup>. They had four children: Gerald Hubert (1876-1928), John Beilby (1884-1907), Richard (born & died 1887) and Cynthia Rachel (1885-1961). In 1920 Cynthia married the 4<sup>th</sup> Baron Poltimore and it is through her descendants that the line of Gerald Lascelles carries on.

In his book, *Thirty-five Years In The New Forest*, Lascelles wrote of his fears that the sport of falconry would die when he and his generation of countrymen passed from this earth. He also wrote of his hopes that he was wrong in this, that "better and younger men will carry on what has been well described as 'the noblest sport in which man has ever indulged'...after I have ceased to take a part in it."

Those of us who contributed to the restoration of this monument honour the memory of Gerald Lascelles, and indeed know that Gerald Lascelles' part in our sport did not cease with his death in 1928. It carries on today when we take guidance from his writings and join with his countryman's heart in our love of the sport of flight.

Peter B. Devers, 2004



# The Dead Falconers Tours

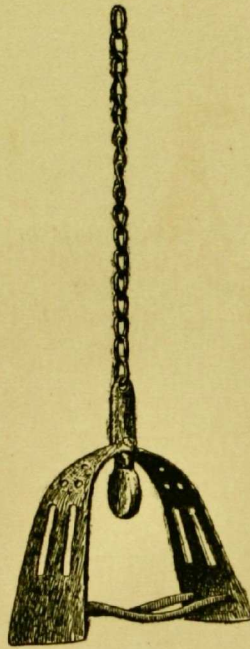
Gerald Lascelles Life as Deputy Surveyor

## THIRTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE NEW FOREST

BY THE

HON. GERALD LASCELLES, C.B.

DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF NEW FOREST; ALSO OF ALICE  
HOLT, WOOLMER, BERE, AND PARKHURST FORESTS  
STEWARD OF THE MANOR OF LYN DHURST



THE "STIRRUP OF RUFUS"

LONDON  
EDWARD ARNOLD

1915

[All rights reserved]

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Gerald Lascelles Life as a falconer

### COURSING AND FALCONRY

COURSING

BY HARDING COX

FALCONRY

BY THE HON. GERALD LASCELLES



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS by JOHN CHARLTON, R. H. MOORE  
LANCELOT SPEED, G. E. LODGE, and from PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON  
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.  
1892

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# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Edward Blair Michell Dedication Ceremony

In Honour Of Falconer  
Edward Blair Michell

A ceremony for the Dedication of  
His Monument

in

Holy Trinity Churchyard  
Wyke Champflower, Somerset  
England

Given By The Falconers Of  
Great Britain & The United States

Saturday, 1 May 2004  
5:30 P.M.

### Principal Speakers at the Service

Rev. Stephen Bould  
Gordon Robinson  
Peter Barry Devers  
Brian Tippings  
Miss Shepherd

Rector of Bruton Parish  
Vice-President, The British Falconers' Club  
Archives of American Falconry  
Churchwarden of Holy Trinity Church  
Organist

### Churchwardens

Mrs. Elizabeth Winkley

Mr. Brian Tippings

# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

**Edward Blair Michell**



**Edward Blair Michell**



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

**Edward Blair Michell**

## **EDWARD BLAIR MICHELL**

**1842 - 1926**

**Obituary from "The Field" by J. E. Harting**

With the greatest regret we record the death of Edward Blair Michell, the famous boxer, falconer, and sculler at the ripe old age of 84. He passed away in his sleep on the morning of November 11th, in London, and so unexpected was the event that his friends had gathered that evening at his old club in Stratton Street, to dine at the "Falconers' Feast," over which he invariably presided at Martinmas. His long life was in many ways a warfare, and it was in every way appropriate that his long rest and peace should have begun on Armistice Day. On the Monday before, he had sent the writer of these lines half of one of those excellent cheeses they make at Wyke Champflower, in Somerset, where he was buried, accompanied by a copy of English verses and a synopsis of the chapters of his Memoirs which he had begun, too late, to write. They will be a loss alike to literature and to sport, and in these columns we can give but a brief account of his long and varied career.

Mr. E. B. Michell, like all those who lived to an advanced age, found the mountain tops growing more and more lonely as the years rolled on, with comrades and friends around him finishing their course; but in his day he had played a prominent part on the stage of life, forming one of a goodly company many of whose names are still remembered in various walks of life.

He was born in 1842, and was the son of Richard Michell, who was a Fellow and Tutor of Lincoln College, afterwards becoming principal of Magdalen Hall, and then Public Examiner, Founder, and First Principal of Hertford College. His mother was Emily Blair, a direct lineal descendent of the Earls of Cromarty. In 1851 he went to Exmouth School, then under Mr. J. Penrose, of Latin verse fame, and in 1856 won the Gaisford and Westcott prizes, defeating amongst other competitors, the late F. Jeune, afterwards Lord St. Helier. In 1857 Mr. E. B. Michell was elected first on the list of scholars at Winchester College, while in 1860 his name appears on the rolls of Magdalen College. It is then that we become acquainted with his athletic and outdoor career, for all through his life he evinced an ardour for sport and country pursuits, a taste which never deserted him; and nothing gave him greater pleasure, when increasing years had forced him somewhat to moderate the pace, than to chat over bygone times and recall the famous deeds of his youth. These deeds were

# The Dead Falconers Tours

Edward Blair Michell

many and varied, for as far back as the year 1863, besides taking a first class Mods. in Classics, he won the hurdle race at the Oxford University Athletic Club Sports, and about the same time scored what was probably the earliest of his many rowing victories by winning the Senior Sculls at the Kingston Regatta, and the Senior Sculls and Pairs at Walton. To use an Irishism in this connection, he did not let the grass grow under his feet, for the year 1864 saw him winning the Oxford University Boat Club Sculls. A more notable achievement followed in the succeeding year, for, besides gaining honours at his College, he won the Diamond Sculls repeating the victory in the following year, while he also won the Wingfield Sculls and with it, of course, the Amateur Championship of the Thames. On this occasion, among his opponents was our old correspondent and the famous oar, W. B. Woodgate, the other competitor being J. G. Chambers. It may be remarked here that Messrs. Michell and Woodgate competed again for the Skulls in 1868, but were defeated by W. Stout; indeed, Mr. Michell had rowed for the Skulls unsuccessfully in 1863 and 1865. In 1868, besides carrying off the Wingfields, he was also champion of the Clyde, Severn, Ouse, and Wye, and the following year started the Pangbourne Athletic Regatta.

In 1868 we find him in another sporting character, for, as Hon. Secretary of the All-England Croquet Club, the late Mr. Michell arranged for the purchase of the championship ground, which afterwards was so well known as the All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Ground at Wimbledon.

Mr. Michell, of course, did not devote all his life to sport. He had, indeed, like all good sportsmen, studied more serious things, but sought and found healthy recreation on the river and on land in his spare moments. So in 1869 he was called to the Bar, and in the following year he scored a great sporting victory by winning the Middle-Weight Amateur Boxing Championship, a pastime to which he was always devoted and of which, as will be seen later on, he was a brilliant exponent. His love of adventure led him to Paris, where he was *bachelier en droit* at the University, and remained during the siege, and he published soon afterwards a book of his experiences. But war happily does not last forever, and so when the piping times of peace came round again, Mr. Michell turned his attention once again to the lighter things of life - if the term may be permitted in this connection - by winning in 1872 the Heavy-Weight Amateur Boxing Championship. A few years later he edited his father's Latin speeches under the title *Orationes Creweianae*, but the ruling passion was still strong in him, and in 1881 he won the Light-Weight Amateur Boxing



# The Dead Falconers Tours

Edward Blair Michell

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# The Dead Falconers Tours

Edward Blair Michell

Championship, thus achieving a feat in the boxing world which is probably unequalled - that is, the late Mr. E. B. Michell was able to claim that he was a champion middle-weight, heavy-weight, and light-weight amateur boxer. This was, of course, in the years previous to the formation of the Amateur Boxing Association. In 1885 he was appointed legal adviser to the Government of the King of Siam, and a few years later showed his scholarship by publishing a Siamese-English dictionary, while one of his later publications, issued in 1917, was "A Reminiscence in Verse" of his old school, "Penroses," at Exmouth.

Rowing and boxing were not the only athletic sports in which he excelled. Early in his career he acquired a taste for hawking, and from the seventies onward until the year of his death he may be said to have made a hobby of it. An earnest study of the works of old writers on the subject - Turbervile, Bert, Latham, and especially the French falconer, Charles d'Arcussia, whose graphic depictions of the flights he witnessed when falconer to Louis XIII, are so delightfully instructive - led to his seriously taking up the sport, and becoming eventually an enthusiastic exponent of it. In these circumstances it was only natural that he should seek to impart to others some of the pleasure he derived from the exercise of this old-fashioned sport, hence we have long been accustomed to read articles on this subject from his pen in the *Field*, *Country Life*, and other journals illustrated from time to time with photographs or sketches by good artists showing details of the sport as well as portraits of the various hawks employed by falconers. Although in the early days Michell owned peregrines as well as merlins, sparrow-hawks, and occasionally hobbies, he found greater facilities for flying the smaller hawks, and to these gradually he came to devote almost exclusive attention. He was especially successful in lark-hawking with merlins, and the sport which he enjoyed with his trained birds on Salisbury Plain, and duly chronicled, induced many witnesses of the flights to follow his example and learn to train and fly birds of their own.

In 1900 he published a volume on the subject, *The Art and Practice of Hawking*, which was reviewed in the *Field* of May 5th of that year, and in the *Queen* of June 16th following. Based on some of the many articles which he had previously written, these were revised and in some cases considerably expanded, care being taken also to correct some errors of detail which had been pointed out by other falconers. Especially useful is a resume of the results obtained with well trained hawks, both long-winged and short-winged, and notable bags made by contemporary falconers, the volume being embellished with some excellent pictures by



# The Dead Falconers Tours

Edward Blair Michell

Mr. George Lodge, whose acquaintance with hawking enabled him to hit off very cleverly the scenes represented. On one point only need we quote from his fine book, and that has reference to the pains taken by him to investigate the claims made by old writers in favour of the hobby for lark-hawking. Those acquainted with the literature of the subject will be aware that in olden days hobbies were esteemed for "daring larks," that is, for enabling their owners to capture larks by flying the hawk over ground frequented by them, and thus causing them to lie so close that they might be picked up by hand or by having a net drawn over them. The question which Mr. Michell was anxious to settle was whether the hobby was formerly trained to fly at larks in the same manner as the merlin is at the present day, and if so, whether it was as good a hawk or perhaps better for the purpose. His experiments resulted in disappointment. He tells us in a chapter on "Lark Hawking" that he twice attempted to train a male hobby for larks, and took great pains with them. They were in perfect plumage, well "hacked" and trained to the lure, and would "wait on" for a quarter of an hour or more at a vast height. Yet it was found impossible to induce either of them to make any serious attempt at a flight. One of them made two or three rings after a wild lark, but did not persevere. The present writer saw it on the wing while being flown on the downs at Epsom. The rings were certainly pretty and the style of flying very good, but the pace was insufficient for a mounting lark. Michell thought it poor and was disinclined to endorse the statements of Latham, Blome, and other old writers to the effect that the hobby would repay the trouble of training. He thought the training of this hawk must have become a lost art, or the hobby had changed its nature entirely since it was thus eulogised. One trained to the lure by the present writer became very tame, and when on the wing would take small birds thrown out to it, but would not attempt to pursue a lark on the downs. A life-size portrait of this bird, painted by Charles Whymper, was hung in the Grosvenor Gallery at the Exhibition of Sport and Art. Mr. Michell's account of his experiments with hobbies, and his instructions for training merlins and sparrowhawks will always make his name famous in the annals of falconry. We append the verses he wrote in 1923 for the "Falconers' Feast," a gathering of sportsmen at which he always presided on St. Martin's Day. The partridges and burgundy served were invariably the best!

On July 24th, 1923, Mr. E. B. Michell fell off an omnibus near Victoria Station and broke his right arm and right leg, but he apparently made a marvelous recovery, though he would not allow the injured limbs to be set by a surgeon. While he was still in bed, his brother, the Rev. A.

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Edward Blair Michell

T. Michell, died at Oxford, a notable Rugby player, who represented Oxford in the first University match and England in the first match against Ireland. He had also rowed for Oriel in their Henley crew and won the University Sculls in 1874. His sister Mary, who died in 1912, married first the third Duke of Sutherland and afterwards Sir Arthur Rollit. Another brother, W. G. Michell, played Rugby for Cambridge in 1873. A fourth, Roland, is still with us and this athletic family is well represented in Roland's grandson (Cave) now at Eton.

\* \* \*

E. B. Michell's home of many years is almost directly across the lane from Wyke Manor and the Church of the Holy Trinity. As it was in his time, the place is still known as "Pomeroy Farm". Michell often flew his Merlins on the open grounds around both farm and church, so you are not only standing where he is buried, but also where he lived.



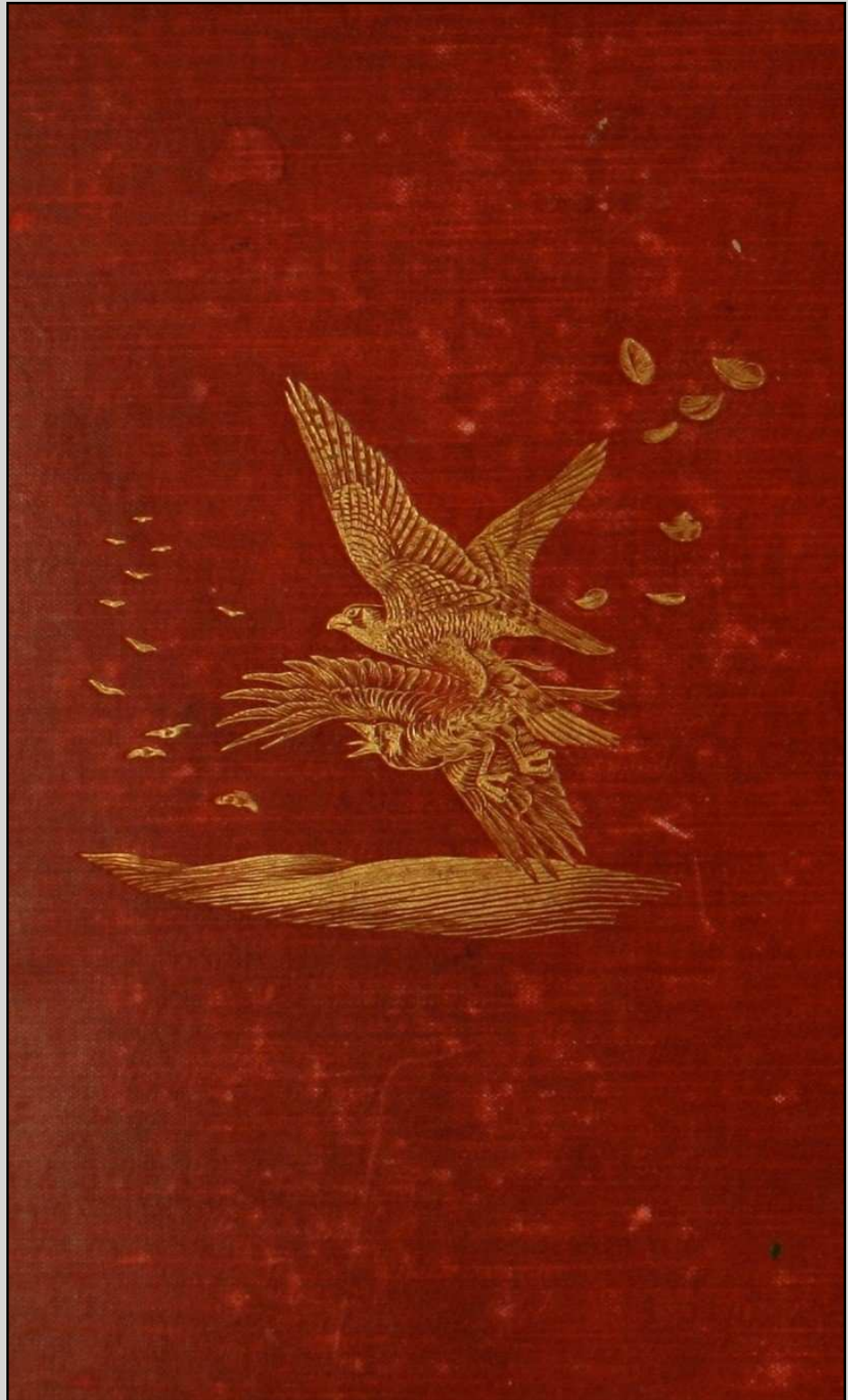
## **The Dead Falconers Tours**

**Edward Blair Michell**



# The Dead Falconers Tours

Edward Blair Michell





# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Edward Blair Michell

and the United States of America. For the unity and strength of the bonds that tie them together, revealed in this work of honour and respect." Scottish Piper Alex Anderson played a stirring rendition of "Amazing Grace" to finish the ceremony.

Paul had arranged to have lunch at a nearby pub, the Forest Lodge Hotel, so we had a great chance to visit with all the attendees. We were fortunate to find falconer Clive Rowland to lead a caravan of cars to Wyke Champflower for the Michell Ceremony scheduled for 5:30 PM. Wyke Champflower is not really a town anymore so it can be hard to find. We stopped by Clive's house, located not far from Wyke, for a spot of tea and had a very brief visit afterwards with another falconer, Richard Den-



Historian, Gordon Robinson with Paul Beecroft at the Michell Memorial.



Michell memorial plaque with Merlin falcon.

nis, to see his mews and birds. As we arrived at the church, we saw that a nice crowd of people were assembling. After a few minutes spent in the churchyard admiring the tablet Brian Bird had designed, and being introduced all around, we entered The Church of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, which dates to Norman times nearly 1000 years ago. The Rector, Father Stephen Bould, conducted the service accompanied by an organist.

I mentioned that Peter and Brian Bird had found a newspaper, which described in detail the funeral service for E. B. Michell. Two of the songs at that service were sung again this day. Fortunately, our minister had the foresight to shorten one song of 140 verses to just seven. Gordon Robinson, falconer and author then paid a tribute to Michell. He spoke of some of Michell's life, showing what a truly remarkable man he was. He told us a number

of interesting and often funny anecdotes such as the time Michell was traveling in a train with a hawk. He was alone in an old fashioned carriage with seats on each side and no corridor, when a man who was drunk got in, squinted at the hawk and started making remarks about "parrot keepers." He did not, perhaps, appreciate that he was addressing a light, middle, and heavyweight boxing champion. The man got Michell's right fist crack on the jaw and collapsed in disorder. Michell kicked and pushed him out of sight under the seat and changed carriages at the next station.

Following Peter's reading of the scriptural passage, Father Stephen Bould read *The Falconers Song*, a poem written by E. B. Michell:



Chairmen John Swift and Brian Bird at Michell Memorial with Merlin falcon.



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## British Falconers Fair

*Ye sporting men of England who hunt the stag or fox,  
Or wield the rod or gun or whip, or match your fighting  
cocks -*

*How little do you know about the Princes of the Air  
Whose education and success is our especial care!  
The cheery round of horse and hound, of bugle or of  
horn,*

*Are gay enough to make a man rejoice that he was  
born;*

*The murmur of the rippling brook, the buzzing of the  
flies,*

*The splash of eddying water as the trout or salmon rise,  
The rustle of the pheasant as he springs out of the glade:  
All these are things to make a man feel proud that he was  
made.*

*But give to me, oh! give to us, above all mortal things,  
That ancient sport of Falconry, the favourite of kings;  
No ruined backers here you'll see by ruthless bookies  
bled,*

*By rascal touts and tipsters, or by stable-boys misled;  
No squabbles as to who killed what, no jealousies, no lies  
As to the weight of baskets filled or the right sorts of flies,  
But all the hard-won joys or feats that Falconry alone  
Can count among her victories and proudly call her own,  
Of all field-sports the most humane, no chance of wound  
ed birds,*

*To stumble forth in piteous plight among the cut-throat  
herds*

*The prey of weasel or of stoat, or the foul carrion-crows,  
Or recreant buzzard meditating murder as he goes.*

*Oh! for a tongue or pen or brush with which to glorify  
The swiftest, strongest, and the best of all the birds that  
fly!*

*Eyasses, Branchers, Sorhawks, Blue-hawks, Haggards,  
Lanteners,*

*These are the noble names beloved by practised falcon  
ers,*

*The man who lives - or vegetates - with eyes and ears so  
dead*

*That such delights can send no thrill of joy through heart  
and head,*

*Dying goes down to the vile earth from which, poor wight,  
he sprung,*

*Unwept, unloved, unhonoured, unlamented and unsung.*

*Ye falconers of England who, scorning slothful ease,  
Train your own hawks to mount and stoop and battle  
with the breeze,*

*Good luck to you! Long life to you! Good pupils and fine  
flights!*

*Good riddance of the countless foes who fight against  
your rights!*

*Your flights at magpie, gull, or rook, at rabbit, hare, or  
game,*

*Each in its turn full of fine sport yet no one kind the same  
Each here deserves a chronicler more eloquent than I  
To praise them up to - that familiar place of theirs - the  
sky.*

Further prayers were then said, the final hymn was sung, and a blessing was given. We then adjourned to the cemetery for photographs followed by an invitation to the manor house next door for a wonderful reception hosted by Mrs. Elizabeth Winkley. After nearly an hour of visiting with new and old friends, we went across the road to Pomeroy Farm, the former home of E. B. Michell. It is still a working farm but has incorporated modern amenities into it. The present owners, who had attended the service, gave all of us a wonderful tour. We could not spend as much time there as we would have liked as we still had a three-hour drive to Newport that evening for the Falconers Fair. Brian and Karen Bird did a wonderful job planning the Michell ceremony. Now E. B. Michell has a permanent marker which future falconers can visit should they desire. It had been a wonderful day and the appropriate culmination of two years of planning.



NAFA and Archives tent with Peter, John, Vicki, Kent, Carrie, Kelly, and John Green.

### Sunday and Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> - Falconers Fair

We arrived early so we would have a good chance for a first look at any new artwork or equipment that might be for sale. There is always more than we can afford, but our credit cards always seem to have room for more. The weather co-operated, and the sun came out in the afternoon making the day enjoyable. NAFA and the Archives shared a tent this year, and many people stopped in to visit and renew friendships. John and Laila Green always do a very effective job of representing our national organization. Every British falconry and hawking club is represented with their own booth



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## British Falconers Fair



*Terry Large with Red-tailed Hawk.*



*A heartfelt THANKS to the British Falconers Club for all of their help! Brian Bird, John, Kent, Peter, and BFC President Gordon Mellor.*

selling their club journals and memorabilia and promoting their club and its activities. Many equipment makers, among them Americans Ricardo Velarde, Doug Pineo, and Robert Bagley, were there hawking their wares. The fair is always conducted in a



*Basset Hound demonstration at the Falconers Fair.*

professional manner and while 80% of it is falconry related, all forms of country pursuits are represented. There are hound shows for beagles, which are hunted in packs after hare; displays of shooting and angling; ferret demonstrations; and, this year, a colorful presentation of knightly jousting. The flying displays are always a highlight for fair-goers. Falcons of all sizes and species, eagles, and Harris Hawks delighted the crowd. This year's fair set a new attendance record of 25,000 for the two-day event. If you are a falconer and going to the UK, you should plan to attend this unique celebration of raptors and our sport.



*Fantastic NAFA representatives, John and Laila Green.*

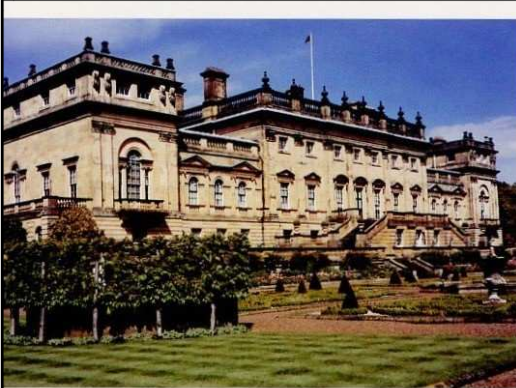
### Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup> - Travel to York

Vicki and I had never been up to Yorkshire in the northern part of England, so that was our next destination. We stopped to visit Harewood House, the childhood home of Gerald Lascelles, to see if we could gather any new information. It was a beautiful home full of numerous portraits of the former residents including one of Gerald's great-grandmother, Henrietta Sebright Lascelles. One of the questions we hoped to clear up was her relationship to falconer, Sir John Saunders Sebright as most of the genealogical information states she is his daughter. We were dubious about that. The confusion arises because Sir John Saunders Sebright's father (6th Bart.) has exactly the same name. The staff at Harewood house set it straight. She is, in fact, our falconer Sir John Saunders Sebright's (7th Bart.) sister. For a researcher such as myself, it was a momentous occasion as the question was officially answered from the source. On our tour of the grounds, a Red Kite was circling overhead, a trib-



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Harewood House and Thornville Royal



*Harewood House - childhood home of Gerald Lascelles.*

ute to all those working for their restoration in Yorkshire. They were once a favored quarry for falconers, but habitat destruction almost led to their extinction. It was a wonderful way to end our tour of this historic home.

On the way to York for the evening, I convinced Peter to take a slight detour to visit the former home of one of England's most famous sportsmen, falconer Col. Thomas Thornton of Thornville Royal. Col. Thornton (1747-1823) was significant in that he kept falconry alive from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. His exploits are chronicled throughout the sporting periodicals of the time as he participated in almost all forms of sport. He purchased his famous home and estate "Thornville Royal" from the Duke



*Portrait of Col. Thornton by Philip Reinagle.*

of York for almost 8 million in today's dollars. The Duke of York was the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of King George III, the King during the American Revolution. Thornton resided at Thornville Royal but also kept another residence in eastern Yorkshire called "Falconers Hall." Here he would invite friends for weeks of sporting activities that included falconry.

Thornton helped form and manage the Falconers Club in 1772 with Lord Orford. He

resigned from the club in 1781 and was presented with a special ornate silver gilt urn depicting falconry and engraved with the names of members of the Club. This has long been considered the most significant piece of falconry ephemera ever produced. It was given by falconers to a falconer and depicts falconry scenes. The urn has been on public display only once, at a sporting exhibition in 1890 at the Grosvenor Gallery in London. J. E. Harting discusses the urn on pages 255 -257 of his *Bibliotheca Accipitraria* and also includes a photograph. Through the tenacity of Tony Huston and the generous support of an Archives donor, the famous urn is now at the Archives of American Falconry in Boise, Idaho. As a curator of the Archives, I felt we should learn as much as possible about Col. Thornton in order to prepare a full biography of this important historical falconer.

We headed north along the A1, once called the Great North Road, which connects Scotland to England. Thornville Royal was located very close to this important transportation route. Though the original house had unfortunately been torn down and replaced with a Victorian mansion in 1851, I hoped there would still be something remaining connected to Col. Thornton. I had been told prior to leaving for England that we could not get into the house, as it is now a convention center and popular wedding site. I was also told that Col. Thornton's mother was buried at St. Martin's, a church nearby on an adjacent property.



*Tomb of Col. Thornton's mother, Mary Thornton.*



## The Dead Falconers Tours

Colonel Thornton with Falcon *Sans Quartier* and Greyhound *Major*





# The Dead Falconers Tours

Colonel Thomas Thornton





# The Dead Falconers Tours

Colonel Thomas Thornton's *A Sporting Tour Through France*

A  
*Sporting Tour,*  
*through*  
FRANCE &c,  
*by*  
Colonel Thornton  
*In a Series of Letters to the R<sup>t</sup> Hon: the*  
Earl of Darlington.  
*IN TWO VOLUMES.*



*Published by Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme,*

*Paternoster Row, London.*

## The Dead Falconers Tours

### Colonel Thomas Thornton's Silver Gilt Tea Urn



Photo by Jim Hansen



# The Dead Falconers Tours

Colonel Thomas Thornton





# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Thornville Royal



## Library at Thornville Royal





# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Thornville Royal and Castle Howard



*"Temple of Victory," Thornton's hack site.*

We found the church near the gate into the estate, now called Allerton Castle, and we were off looking for the tomb. Of course, Peter found it first, inside the church near the altar, while Vicki and I were poking around the tombstones in the drizzle outside. We learned that her name was Mary and she died on October 26, 1800 at 84 years of age. Those facts would change any idea that Col. Thornton's mother was the "Mrs. Thornton" who was reputedly the first female jockey, entering a horse race in 1804. We photographed the tomb and then drove up to the back door of the Castle asking if anything remained from Col. Thornton's time period. I was told that the "Temple of Victory" depicted in Col. Thornton's "A Sporting Tour through the various parts of France in 1802" was still there but fenced and alarmed. I asked if I could photograph it and the estate manager directed me to a good spot.

The folly looks exactly as it did over 200 years ago when Col. Thornton hacked his young Peregrines from the "Temple." The Temple can easily be observed as one travels north along the A1 immediately passing the overpass for the A56 by looking to the Northeast for it dominates the landscape. It sits atop a hill that locals say was created when the soldiers, which the Duke of York had billeted nearby, removed the earth from three lakes and built the "Hill." This is the hill made famous by the nursery rhyme "The Grand Duke of York, he had 10,000 men. He marched them up the hill and marched them down again..." We had learned more than we expected and excitedly headed into York after taking numerous photographs.

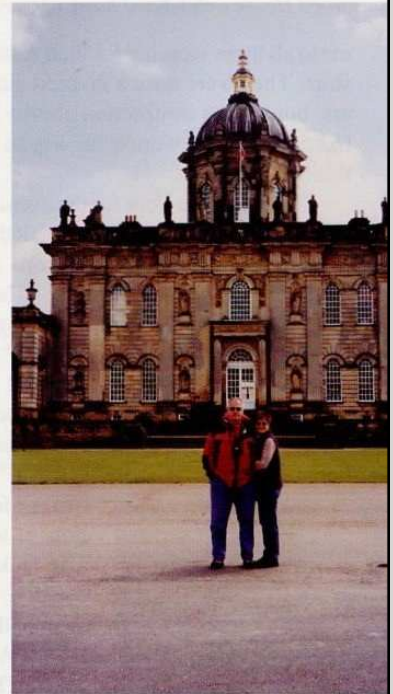
York is one of the most picturesque of England's ancient cities. Its medieval walls are still mostly intact and rest on the foundations of the original Roman walls built over 1,900 years ago. Its narrow winding streets are still dotted with half-timbered homes and shops dating to the 1500's. We had dinner in an old pub, located inside the stone walls, which was built in 1503. What were we doing in the US in 1503? Not very much! The walls were bulging outward and the floors were sagging but the food was great and the cider cold. Afterwards, we went on a ghost tour of the city with a special guide who provided more in the way of entertainment than actual stories. It was great fun and a good way to

end a long, busy but very eventful day.

**Wednesday,  
May 5<sup>th</sup> -  
York**

The morning found us walking back into town to shop and tour York Minster, the beautiful thousand year old Cathedral that towers over the city. It is humbling to see so much history and the way this historical church is pre-

served. We then had lunch and drove out to see Castle Howard, an ancestral home of the Earls of Carlisle. As is the case with many large estates in England, the home, gardens, and grounds of Castle Howard are now open to the public. It is a wonderful place with many Italian and Roman artifacts on display. There are, also, many family portraits scattered throughout its halls and numerous rooms. You can imagine my delight when my wife pointed out a beautiful portrait of Col. Thornton with a falcon!



*John and Vicki at Castle Howard*



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Sion Hall Falconry Center

Immediately adjacent to him was a portrait of his mother. The majority of Col. Thornton's art was auctioned in 1819 because of his dwindling personal finances, so the current location of many of them is not known. An attempt to obtain a photograph of the portrait is underway so it can be displayed with the Urn. What a terrific discovery for falconers!

We still had some daylight left, so we went looking for an old abbey that Peter had visited on a previous trip and loved. Vicki and I thought it would be just another ruin, but we were taken aback by a magnificent ancient structure situated in a beautiful valley. The Rievaulx Abbey, founded in 1132, fell into disrepair with the sack of the monasteries carried out by Henry VIII when he started the Church of England. He removed everything including the roof, which was made from lead, a very valuable item which he sold to fund his treasury. The exterior walls, still towering skyward in its tranquil valley setting, give one a glimpse as to what it must have originally looked like for hundreds of years. A wonderful place to visit!

### Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup> - Travel to Grasmere

Thursday morning found us traveling west towards the Lake District with several planned stops along the way. We stopped by Thornville Royal to get another view of the Temple and took a quick



*Falconer, Ben Potter at Sion Hall with Golden Eagle.*

photograph of Allerton Castle. A short journey to the next town brought us to another early Roman site, Aldborough, which had several large ceramic tile floors on display. They are really interesting especially considering their age.

As we were flying down the road, Peter asked if we wanted to stop by another falconry center.

"Yes, of course" we said, and he hit the brakes as we went flying by the turn. This was the falconry center at Sion Hall managed by Ben Potter. We did not tell anyone we were falconers as we toured the numerous displays. I have always been impressed with the conditions that I see in the centers visited. Most are well designed, spotlessly maintained, with first class accommodations for the raptors. As it turned out we were the only people in the audience that morning: it was a weekday, and it was threatening rain. Ben asked us what we wanted to see and we said "eagles," so he got them out. He found out we were falconers so he asked if we wanted the birds to come to our fist. Vicki had an African Batelur Eagle fly to her fist; they are so beautiful with their red cere and feet. I selected a Golden Eagle, and I must say they are impressive on the fist. I have never held a better mannered bird, and I doubt my tiercel Harris Hawk would even make a cropfull. Peter had a go with the eagle as well. Ben released a Red Kite for us to watch, a bird that flew as lightly and beautifully as a butterfly.

After bidding Ben goodbye, we continued our journey toward Grasmere in Cumbria. We were awed by the beautiful rolling countryside and intrigued that all the hilltops were bare, much like the alpine region I used to see in the Rockies. The highest mountain in the region was only 3,200 feet above sea level so what had happened to the trees? It turns out that they were likely harvested for firewood, building, and ships. All the fences are made from stone. It appears that without a law requiring replanting, the hillsides were simply left bare and used for grazing. No one can decide if the trees should be replanted, as the hillsides have been bare for most of recent memory. In our first visit to the New Forest at Lyndhurst two years earlier, the Deputy Surveyor told us that the British realized in 1800 that they would have to replant their oak trees that had been cut for the war with Napoleon if they hoped to build new ships for the navy in 1900. They did replant them but it took 200 years for the first one to be harvested. Thank goodness for the discovery of steel for the British would not have had enough trees for their shipping or war fleet to fight Hitler!

We toured Bolton Castle, a spectacular mediaeval fortress, situated in the heart of the beautiful Yorkshire Dales. Richard le Scrope, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Scrope of Bolton and Lord Chancellor of England, built it in



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Lakeland Birds Of Prey Center

1399. Bolton has never been sold, and remains in the private ownership of Lord Bolton, Richard le Scropes' descendant. It was once the home for Mary Queen of Scots during a year of imprisonment from 1568 and 1569. Imprisonment was significantly different than it is today. Mary had 51 people attending to her including two falconers. She could leave the Castle daily for rides into the countryside pursuing one of her favorite activities, hawking. The view from the top of the Castle wall was incredible as it looked out over miles of green countryside. Upon leaving Bolton we continued westward, arriving in the lovely village of Grasmere after dark. On the way to the pub for dinner, we passed the grave of renowned poet William Wordsworth (1770-1850) buried at St. Oswald's Church. It is one of the most visited literary shrines in the world.

### Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

We decided to visit Hadrian's Wall about 30 miles to the north, but first, I arranged a quick visit to nearby Lanercost Abbey to see a family relative. Twenty years ago, my mother's sister discovered our family ancestors were from the area. A three-year search resulted in the location of the grave of our great-great-great-grandmother, so I had to drop by. I must admit it was unusual to see a family relative in another country but almost all of us came from somewhere else. Lanercost Abbey would have been worth the trip by itself as it was a wonderfully restored Augustinian priory built in 1144. It was used by King Edward I as a place of rest and attacked by William Wallace on his forays into England. Their battles were made famous to modern visitors by the movie Braveheart. It was just a short drive to the Birdsowald Roman Fort along Hadrian's Wall. The Roman Emperor, Hadrian, decided to consolidate his Empire and protect his northernmost region of Great Britain by constructing a wall to keep the tribes (Scots) from their constant raids. The wall had been begun in 122 AD and was constructed in just six years with nearly 1 million cubic meters of stone held together by one of Rome's most famous discoveries, cement. It extended 80 miles along the entire northern border between Scotland and England from east to west. It was 8 to 10 feet thick and 15 feet high with a small garrison stationed every mile and lookout towers every 1/3 mile. Seventeen large forts like Birdsowald were constructed to house larger



*Paul Bevan with Bald Eagle at Lakeland Birds of Prey Centre.*

Roman garrisons of 500 to 1000 men. The wall was successful in keeping the Scots out for over 300 years until it was abandoned in 383. Many of the blocks were then removed and used for construction of numerous buildings throughout the region, but much of the base remains, making it the most important and famous Roman ruins remaining in England. It is a really impressive structure.

Peter suggested that we drop in for a visit at the Lakeland Birds of Prey Centre operated by Paul Bevan, a British falconer who had lived in New York for 10 years where he became a friend with Peter. Fortunately, Paul was there, and we had a nice visit and got to see his center and a flying display. He was especially busy at this time of year as a raptor breeder but drove all three of us over to see nearby Lowther Castle, former home of the Earls of Lonsdale. It is not likely most falconers will easily recognize the name, but he sponsored a famous and beautifully presented series of sporting books entitled "The Lonsdale Library." Unfortunately, the original house had the roof removed in 1957 and all interior structures were sold in order to comply with the laws concerning estate taxes. In order to keep his estate land, in the face of exorbitant death duties, the heir to the estate removed all but the exterior walls of the house, so it could not be figured into the value of the inheritance. One could tell that it was once a beautiful home.

Peter and I were in need of a book fix, so we headed off to visit David Grayling, a noted sporting bookseller. We enjoyed a nice visit and bought a few copies of some needed works. The most important thing for me, however, was obtaining Michael Brander's telephone number, which Grayling just



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Jemima Parry-Jones

happened to have. Brander wrote extensively on Col. Thornton's sporting tours, so I was hoping to gain some new information for my Thornton biography. While in the shop, Diana Durman Walters phoned David, and we shouted out that we had just bought all the falconry books and none were left for her. On the return trip to Grasmere, near sunset, we stopped by Castlerigg Stone Circle, a smaller version of the familiar Stonehenge. Peter says it is his Celtic blood calling, so that he can't pass any ancient monument by; a fitting end to a wonderful day.

### Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>

Vicki said enough is enough "it's time to shop," so off we went. The only falconry related item spotted was a dinner plate of a naked woman falconer. Peter promptly added it to his collection. Peter had arranged for us to have dinner with falconers Greg and Dilys Butler at their nearby home. We were in for a real treat as we navigated our way across highly scenic countryside, but over very narrow



Jemima Parry-Jones with Red Kite at National Birds of Prey Centre.

highway lanes that were a tad unnerving. We got to see Greg's nesting Goshawks and had a great dinner at a local pub. The ride out had been thrilling and now we would get to do it back in the dark. Vicki and I had well fortified ourselves for this with several pints of Strongbow Cider.

### Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>

It was time to head for London, and we had a full day's drive ahead of us, but I knew that Peter would want to stop somewhere. I talked him into



dropping by to see Jemima Parry-Jones at the National Birds of Prey Centre. We, also, hoped to see the stained glass windows she had prepared in memory of her father, falconer and author Phillip Glasier. This was a Dead Falconers Tour after all! Jemima had been scheduled to move to South Carolina last year, taking most of the birds from the center with her, but the outbreak of West Nile Virus has delayed her actual move. We were fortunate that she was there. We had a short but nice visit, and she directed us to the church where her father is buried. The two windows were very impressive and clearly illustrate his involvement as a falconer and his work with birds of prey. Jemima raised the necessary funds from a few friends and supporters. It was a fitting tribute to him and is located in a church near the National Birds of Prey Centre that he founded. After taking photographs of the windows and the grave, we returned to the center to see the flying demonstrations and to say good bye.

Since we were near Stroud, I convinced Peter that I needed to see Major Fisher's grave for myself. This time we knew where it actually was. I snapped a few photographs of the memorial, as I knew I was unlikely to return again. It was a fitting



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Finding Major Fisher



*John finally finds the family crypt of Major C. H. Fisher. Should have listened to your wife, John!*

conclusion to several years of work and research on the falconers who kept the sport alive. We arrived late into London and had a difficult time adjusting to the rapid pace of the city after two weeks in the country. A quick subway ride into Victoria Station brought us back to reality very quickly.

### Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup>

Monday was primarily a travel day, but I managed to beat Peter to Grosvenor's Prints for a quick perusal of some falconry-related artwork. I found nothing of interest, so Vicki and I headed to the airport and home. Peter stayed for a few more days to search out some other stores, finding a lovely miniature portrait of Colonel Thornton and falcon (with a lock of his hair embedded in the back) in a jeweler's shop. At the price of \$150,000, Peter decided the jeweler must keep such an exquisite treasure. He, also, visited Paul Beecroft and spent a day with Roger, Mark, and Jean Upton. Mark's paintings of Arab falconry captivated him. Peter, also, spent time in the British Library and various record offices tracking down details on falconry authors for the Archives. He discovered that E. B. Michell wrote an unpublished manuscript entitled "Perdita, The Story of a Falcon," and is now on a quest to locate it.

### CONCLUSION OF THE DEAD FALCONERS TOUR

The original intention of the tour participants was to learn as much as we could about the falconers from the past who kept the sport alive until modern times. Achieving that goal took four years,

thousands of miles in travel, countless hours of research and personal contact with dozens of interested people and fellow falconers. The information we learned has been published in the North American Falconer's Association Journal in the hopes of informing current falconers about our history and preserving the collected data for future researchers and falconers. We all feel that we accomplished our objective and hope that a future generation of interested falconers will, also, set out on their own Dead Falconers Tour. Perhaps, one day, they'll even locate – us!

Before leaving I need to thank all those groups and individuals who contributed to the restoration of the monuments for Gerald Lascelles and E. B. Michell. They are as follows: Alex Anderson, Blair Anderson, Scott Baldwin, Lynn Beecroft, Paul Beecroft, Brian Bird, Karen Bird, Rev. Stephen Bould, British Falconers' Club, British Hawking Association, Lyn Bruno, Tony Bruno, Col. S. Kent Carnie, Ron Clarke, Nancy Cowan, Stephanie Croxon, Margaret Cullen, Bob Dalton, Robert Davenport, Peter Barry Devers, Paul Duncombe, Mike Dupuy, Richard A. Escutia, L. Andrew Feher, Argyle Fenster, Steve Field, John Forness, Mary Forness, Stephen A. Gatti, Tony Hall, Richard G. Hiestler, Jr., Hoare Banks Stonemasons, Richard Holmstrom, Everet Horton, Crispin St. Hulse, Neil P. Hunter, Howard Hyde, Kirt E. Jones, Jed H. Lavitt, Jennie Leach, H. Paul Lee III, William K. Mallon, William Mattox, Guy McCallan, Beverly Brannon Mitchell, Rev. Peter Murphy, New York State Falconry Association, Natalie Nicholson, Claas Niehues, North American Falconers Association, Clive Palmer, Wayne F. Pennington, Emery Perzentka, Gordon Robinson, Angela & Craig Ruder, J.C.S. of the BFC, Simon Slader, John R. Swift, Vicki Swift, Ralph Thompson, Brian Tipping, Roger Upton, Wayne E. Upton, Robert Waite, Rev. Camilla Walton, Graham Wellstead, Jennifer Williams, Elizabeth Winkley, Bianca Wolters, Jenny Wray and Philip Wray.







**The Dead Falconers Tours**

**Resulted in**

**The Wall of Remembrance**

**and**

**The Book of Remembrance**

**At**

**The Archives of Falconry**

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Archives of Falconry Strategic Planning Meeting in Boise October 2004

The period of the Dead Falconers Tours (2002 to 2004) was especially busy for the Archives with several significant concurrent events that warranted a planning session for the next four years.

Events occurring during the Dead Falconers Tour Period in 2003

- Dedicated the New Archives Wing of the Herrick Building.
- Received the Thornton Urn from Bob Berry.
- Received a Traditional Bedu Hunting Tent from the 2003 NAFA Field Meet
- Published *A Short discourse of Hawking to the Field* by AAF
- Changed name from Archives of American Falconry to the Archives of Falconry to reflect its global reach.

After the last Dead Falconers Tour in 2004, it was decided to hold a planning meeting at the Archives to implement several future projects.

- Construct a building in which to house a display Arab Falconry.
- Build a Wall of Remembrance along with a Book of Remembrance to remember our falconry friends.
- Conduct an annual event to encourage falconers to visit the Archives.

A meeting was held at the Archives in the fall of 2004 with Curator Kent Carnie, Asst Curator John Swift, Archives Associates Peter Devers and Natalie Nicholson to develop these plans.

Arab Falconry display. A rough draft was proposed and Kent Carine took the lead to work with Frank Bond the President of the IAF. Frank asked for a full proposal to include an endowment fund. Kent prepared a presentation for Frank to present and it was accepted.

Wall of Remembrance and Book of Remembrance. The concept for the Wall initially was to build a wall display inside the building with little plaques for each name. In consulting with Amy Siedenstrang, the Peregrine Fund Graphic Designer said absolutely not, falconers belong outside. A wall was suggested with bronze plaques for each name. Kent suggested a bronze falcon by Ross Matteson lifting off be placed at the end of the wall. Kent and the Swifts provided the initial funding with Kent overseeing the actual construction of the Wall.

Arab Falconry Display Frank Bond was successful in securing funding and with the passing of UAE President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, it was decided to dedicate the new wing to him. The Emirates took over planning for the project with its design given to Hanan Sayed Worrell a specialist in international urban and cultural projects. She would work with Kent on design and completing the project.

A preliminary preopening was held in November 2006 during the NAFA Field meet when the UAE played host and flew by private charter airlines 75 International Falconers to Boise from Kearny, Nebraska to preview the New Arab Wing.

All projects were completed and were dedicated at the first official annual Falconers Spring Rendezvous in March 2007. Twelve Falconers were remembered at the first Rendezvous.



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Wall of Remembrance proposed April Hawk Chalk 2005

### FROM THE ARCHIVES OF FALCONRY

COL. S. KENT CARNIE, CURATOR AND JOHN R. SWIFT, ASST. CURATOR

#### A Falconers' Memorial and Book of Remembrance

During the last three years, associates of The Archives of Falconry — Peter Devers, John Swift, and Natalie Nicholson — along with Vicki Swift and Curator Kent Carnie, spent many hours seeking out and visiting the memorials of British falconers.

These individuals were primarily the authors whose writings served as the literary foundation for American falconry in the 20th century. Their gravesites were sometimes elaborate, but more frequently were in disrepair or, in some cases, no longer existent. We returned to the United States with a deep desire to ensure that our own American falconers would be remembered. To further that end, all felt that an appropriate memorial should be established at The Archives of Falconry to honor our comrades in the Americas and globally, as appropriate. A memorial could serve as a permanent location where friends, fellow falconry club members, and/or the family of the deceased could honor the memory of their falconer among others who shared his or her passion for hawking.

The memorial will be a simple design of walls and paths. The centerpiece will be a bronze sculpture created by falconer Ross Matteson depicting a Peregrine falcon lifting off to the heavens, mounted on a large stone pedestal. On the surrounding walls, individual three-inch by eight-inch cast bronze plaques will bear the names of the each of the falconers honored with their birth and death dates.

While the monument will recognize each honoree in exactly the same manner, a Book of Remembrance housed in The Archives will provide a space for personal photographs and testimonials about the honored falconer. Two side by side, 16 x 20-inch pages will be allotted for each honoree on which their personal photograph, biography, obituary, photos of hawks flown, personal reminiscences, and the names of those making this remembrance possible can be placed. This book will be available for display at various falconry events.

Specific criteria for inclusion into the Falconers' Memorial and Book of Remembrance are as follows: the proposed honoree must have either been an active falconer or been an active member in good

standing in a local or national falconry club for five years; must be recommended in writing by three falconers who personally knew him/her, or by a local or national club; and that individual must not have intentionally worked to discredit the sport of falconry.

While The Archives of Falconry has no specific required donation for inclusion as part of the memorial, it should be understood that funds need to be sufficient to cover the costs of the monument as well as providing for its future care as well as the Archives itself. We recommend a \$1,000 minimum contribution. All donations will be placed in The Archives endowment fund. The endowment is a permanent fund in which only the annual interest earned is used while maintaining the original contribution intact. This fund ensures the permanent viability of the memorial and the entire Archives with all its programs and facilities.

Thus far, this idea has been well received by all the falconers and members of the local clubs with whom we have discussed it. It is hoped that this preliminary concept will generate ideas as to who should be memorialized as well as other suggestions on how to do so. Comments should be directed to Curator Kent Carnie at 208-362-8256 or Assistant Curator John Swift at 520-760-7325.

*"A society defines itself by the people it honors."*

*— John Fitzgerald Kennedy*



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **The Wall of Remembrance**



Aerial View of The Wall of Remembrance



## The Dead Falconers Tours

### The Dedication Plaque



Photo by Jim Hansen

### An actual plaque at the Archives



Photo by Jim Hansen

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The East Side of the Wall of Remembrance

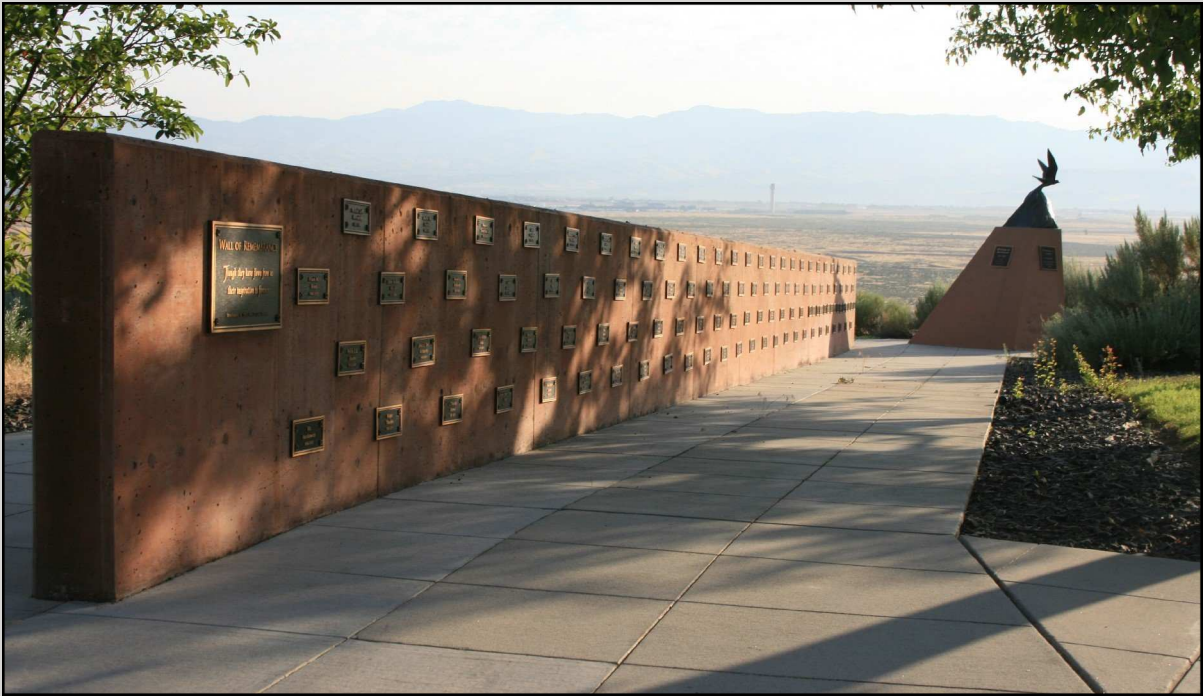


Photo by Jim Hansen

## The West Side of the Wall of Remembrance



Photo by Jim Hansen



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **The Wall of Remembrance in the Spring**



**Photo By David Wells**

## **The Wall of Remembrance in the Winter**



**Photo By David Wells**

## The Dead Falconers Tours

### Dedicating the newly remembered falconers onto the Wall



Photo By David Wells

### Listening to stories about our friends



Photo By David Wells



# **The Dead Falconers Tours**

## **The East Entrance to the Wall of Remembrance**



Photo by Jim Hansen

## **Falcons Guarding the Entrance to the Wall of Remembrance**



Photo By Jim Hansen



# The Dead Falconers Tours

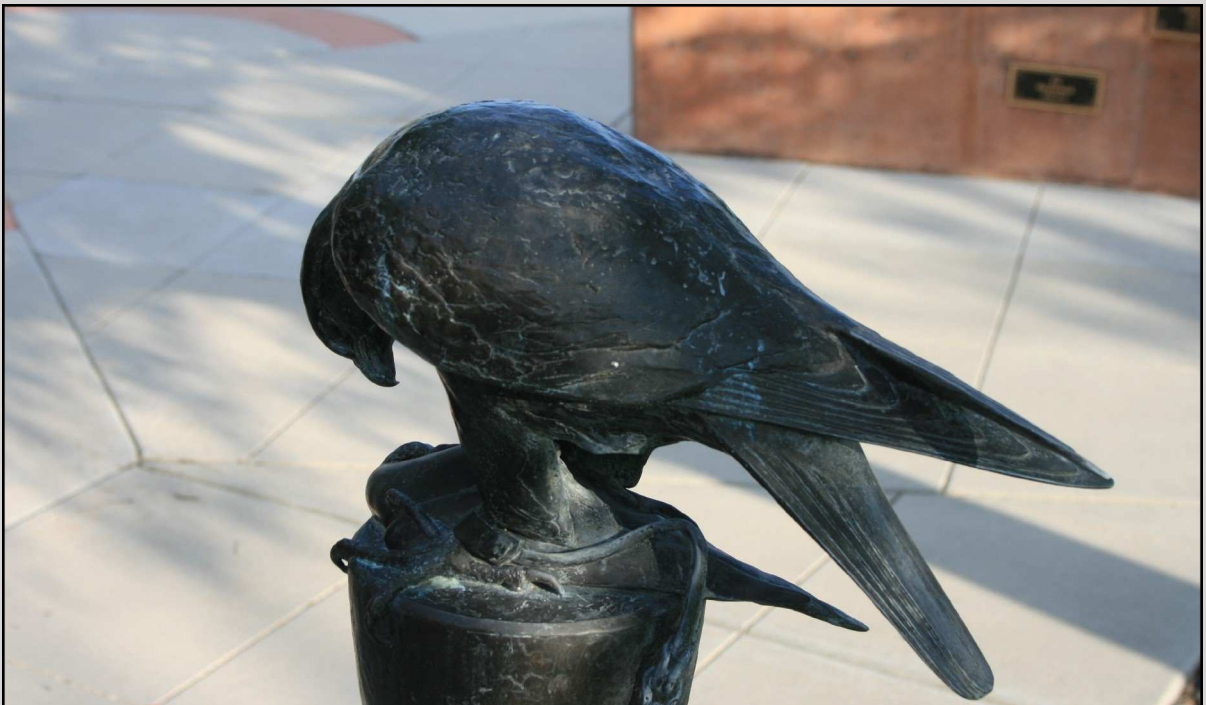
## Falcons at the Wall of Remembrance



Sculpture by Ross Matteson

Photo By Jim Hansen

## Falcons at the Wall of Remembrance



Sculpture by Ross Matteson

Photo By Jim Hansen

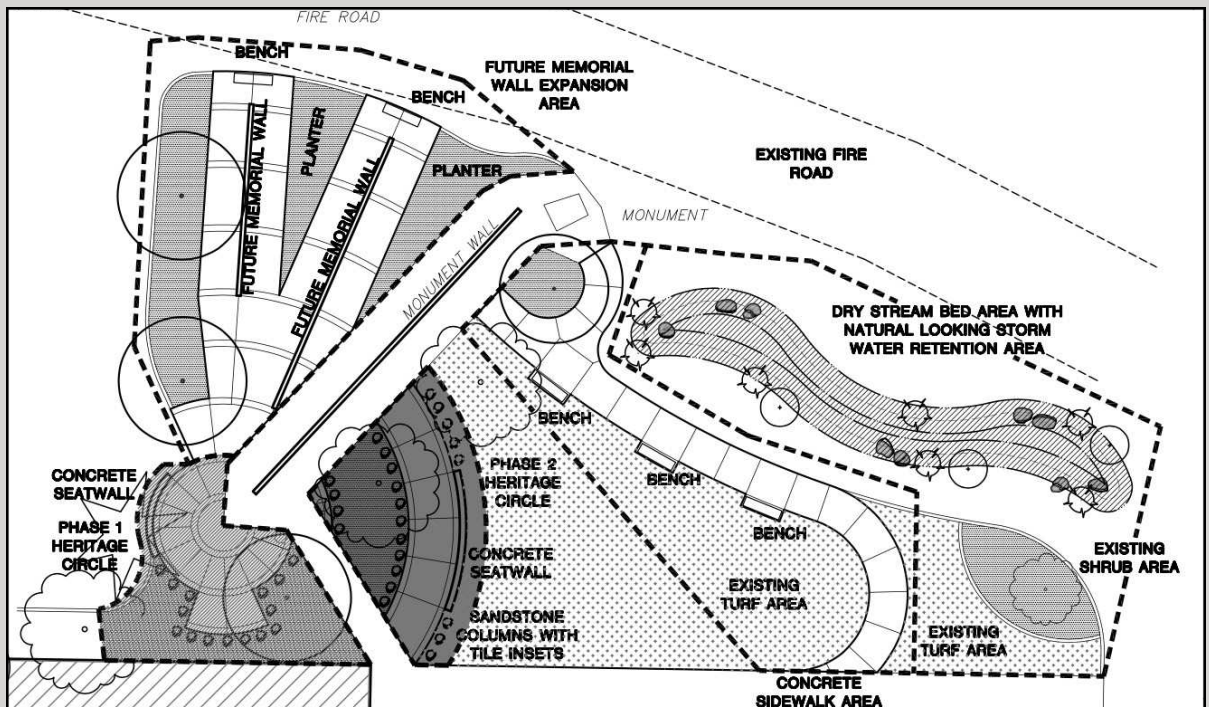


# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Wall at Sunset



## Expansion plans for the Wall and Legacy Circle





## The Dead Falconers Tours

### Renderings of the proposed expansion of the Wall and Legacy Circle



### Renderings of the proposed expansion of the Wall and Legacy Circle





# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Legacy Circle dedicated to Chad Cyrus



**10 million year old basalt columns form the Legacy Circle**





# The Dead Falconers Tours

**The Legacy Circle forms the hub of falconers supporting the Archives**



**Legacy Circle contributors form the core of Archives support**





# The Dead Falconers Tours

## Virginia Dedicated to Bill Burnham and Tom Cade



Sculpture by Ross Matteson

Photo by Jim Hansen

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Inductee Search Page

**Daniel J. Brimm III**



1924-2010

**Dan Brunotte**



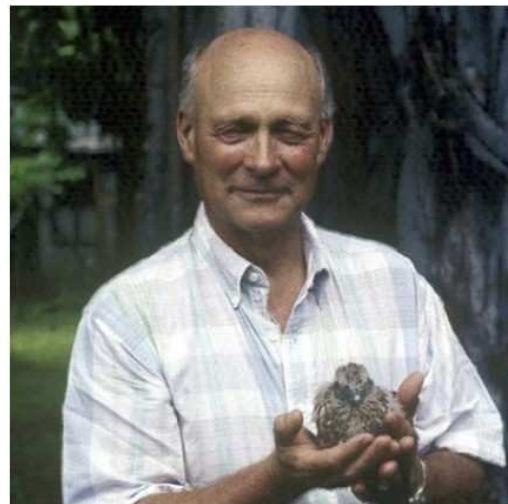
1948-2018

**William A. Burnham**



1947-2006

**Thomas J. Cade**



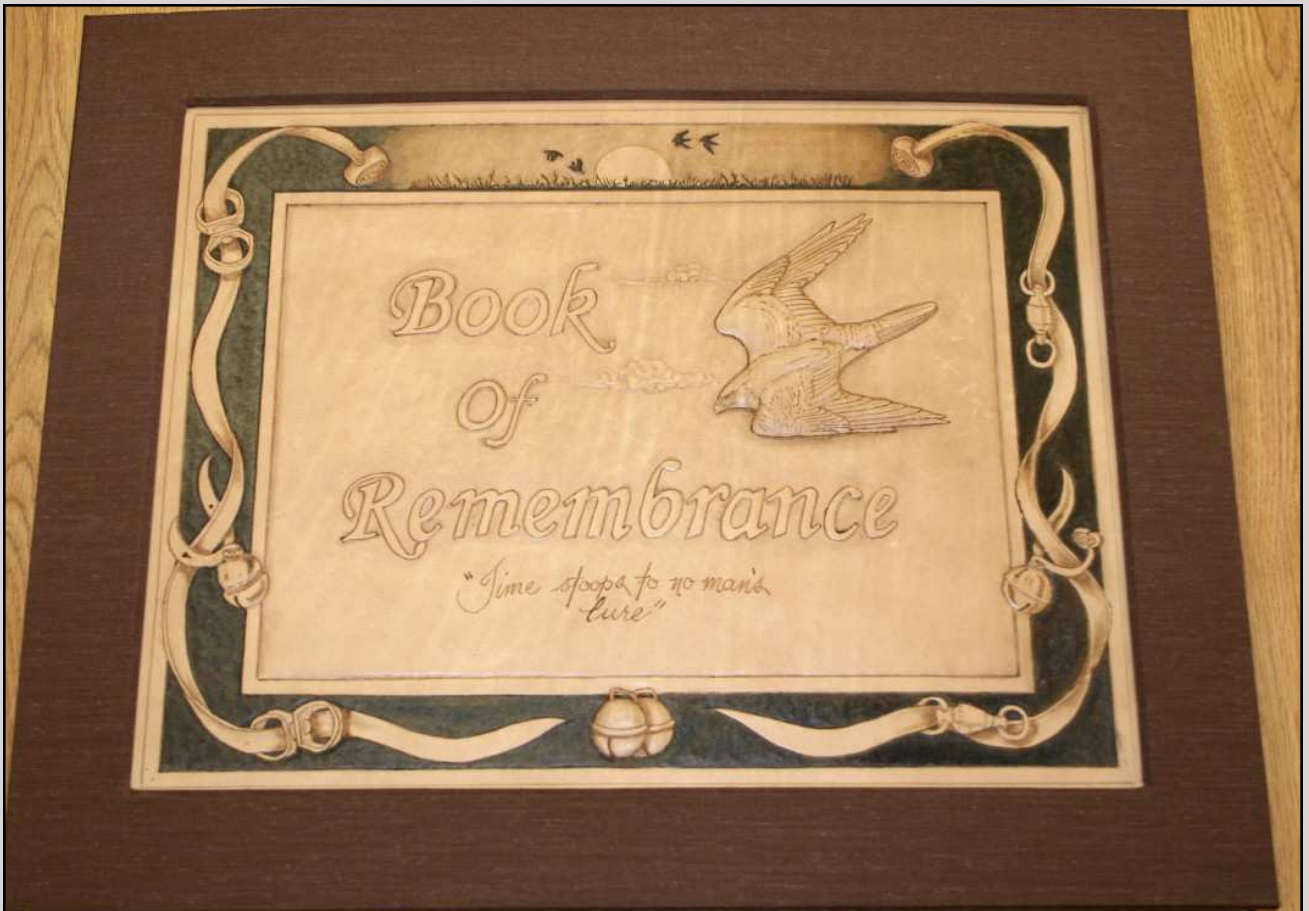
1928-2019

The Inductee Search Page can be found on the Archives Web Page. Click on Visit and go to the Wall of Remembrance and click on Inductees Search and find the one your are looking for.



# The Dead Falconers Tours

## The Book of Remembrance



### *Time stoops to no man's lure*

Slogan and cover design from Minard Stevens personal scrapbook. Leather craft by Richard Borquist

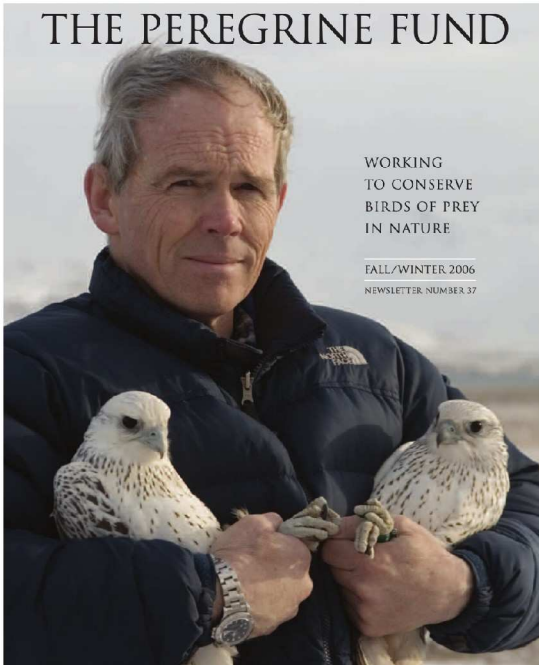
The Book of Remembrance was intended to be a place where family and friends could record their stories and anecdotes about the deceased falconer. It was to be a physical book kept at the Archives for relatives when they came to visit Wall of Remembrance. What was thought to be the easiest part of the project turned out to be the most difficult. Friends and family were forth coming in their financial support but reticent in any verbal stories. It seemed impossible to secure information from anyone. Some were easy and people willingly helped, some falconers still remain to be recorded into the Book of Remembrance. A news reporter was hired and was successful in adding many falconers to the book but the greatest expansion occurred when Bob Collins became curator. It became his passion and dozens of names were added. With Tom Smylie serving as moderator the annual Rendezvous for falconers to gather and reminisce about the good ol days grew larger each year. The book expanded from one volume to several large books but one still had to visit the archives to see what had been written about their falconer. Fortunately, the Internet allowed for the new Archives President John Goodell to upload the pages from the book onto the Web so now these remembered falconers could be visited anytime from anywhere in the world. No longer would a **Dead Falconers Tour** be necessary to locate and remember deceased Falconers.

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## William (Bill) A. Burnham's Book of Remembrance pages



Even at age 14, Bill's rock climbing skills were evident and developed to the point where he could pull an eyes eagle





# The Dead Falconers Tours

## William (Bill) A. Burnham's Book of Remembrance pages



### Thank You, Bill (1947-2006)

**W**illiam A. Burnham, our President and leader for the past 25 years, has died at the age of 59 after a brief battle with cancer. What can one say about a person who dies before his time? In Bill's case quite a lot.

We all die, "therefore," as John Donne cautioned, "never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." How long we live is not as important as how well we live—how much we contribute to the good of humanity and to the welfare of the earth, the sustainer of all life. Bill Burnham made outstanding contributions to the preservation of his beloved birds of prey and other wildlife, and to nurturing the habitats they require. Therefore, we should not mourn but celebrate his life and move forward, strengthened by our association with him and thankful for all he has done.

Bill became associated with The Peregrine Fund (TPF) in 1974, after receiving his M.S. degree at Brigham Young University under Paul Clayton White. That summer, Jim Weaver met him on a field trip to western Greenland. Hiking and camping with Bill in the arctic wilderness, Jim became greatly impressed by his stamina in the field and by his eagerness to face up to hard challenges. Jim recommended that TPF hire Bill to head up a new program of captive breeding and reintroduction of Peregrines that were very low in reproduction with the Colorado Division of Wildlife to restore falcons in the Rocky Mountains.

On Christmas eve of 1974, Bill and his wife, Pat—soon to be joined by a son, Kurt—moved into some rooms on the second floor of an old game farm facility the Colorado Division of Wildlife made available for TPF use on the outskirts of Fort Collins. Kurt was born in May, 1975 at the same time the first baby Peregrines were hatching. Pat not only mothered her child, she also cared for many young falcons over the years and always remained the person Bill relied on most for running The Peregrine Fund. Bill quickly attracted several skilled and dedicated associates to help with the breeding and release of Peregrines. Two of them, Bill Heinrich and Cal Sandfort, are still with TPF 31 years later.

By the 1980s the Fort Collins team, under Bill's supervision, had produced hundreds of Peregrines and had released them in several Rocky Mountain states and in the Pacific Northwest. At the same time all this intensive work was underway, Bill somehow managed to earn a Ph.D. degree from Colorado State University without ever taking time off from his job. Bill's effectiveness in managing the western operations did not go unnoticed by the fledgling board of directors of TPF. In 1977 he was elected to the board of directors, and in 1982 he became the fifth "Founding Member" of the board, joining Bob Berry, Frank Bond, Tom Cade and Jim Weaver.

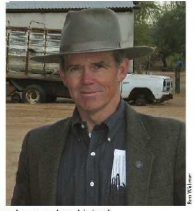
When TPF had an opportunity in 1983 to consolidate its eastern program at Cornell University and its western operations into one facility, Bill was put in charge of finding a location, constructing the new campus, and making the move. At the same time the directors decided to expand the mission of The Peregrine Fund to embrace work on birds of prey worldwide. Through Bill's leadership and ability to organize the volunteer efforts of many falconers and raptor enthusiasts, members of the business community, and government agencies into a unified and productive endeavor, the World Center for Birds of Prey came into existence on a hillside overlooking Boise, Idaho, in 1984. The site was dedicated in May; construction began soon after with much comradeship and enthusiasm, and the birds from Fort Collins were in their new quarters before the next breeding season in 1985. The Gurney birds followed a year later.

It quickly became clear to the small group of directors that TPF's expanded global mission would require a much bigger board of influential people and a strong and diversified chief executive. Bill became President in 1986, and he began to build a more active and diverse board of directors, including people from the business world, scientists, and conservationists. Through Stanley Nelson's introductions, he began to establish personal relationships with local business people in the Boise community, meeting weekly with some of them for breakfast and discussion. Several joined the board and brought some of their friends along. Our vice presidents, Jeff Cielak and Peter Jenny, whom Bill wisely chose to help him, made important additional contacts, as did Frank Bond and Bob Berry. Currently the board consists of more than 30 members, and it is considered to be one of the strongest boards of a non-profit, conservation organization in the country, thanks largely to Bill's ability to forge personal ties with influential and supportive people.

The combined fund raising abilities of Burnham, Cielak, and Jenny, and their equal facility in dealing with government bureaucrats and legislators, were beautiful to observe in action. They allowed TPF to move beyond its original focus on the Peregrine and to take on many other projects around the world, although we had been involved previously in cooperating with Carl Jones on recreation of the Kootenai Kestrel.

The first major effort was the "Maya Project," which grew out of Peter's and Bill's interest in the Orange-

(continued on page 2)



...he wisely left us with the capability to move forward without him, but ever in memory of him.

### Donors

Henrietta Alexander, Eide Bailly, Daniel Berger, David Bird, Karen Brender, Roy Britton, Veronica Brice, Steve Bly, Linda Behrman, William Brock, Spencer Beebe, George Cawthon, CC, Eide Cleaveland, Kathy Coontz, Bob Collins, Conoco Phillips, J. Colvin, Jeff Cielak, Donna Daniels, Disney Worldwide Service, Walt Disney Animal Kingdom, Mary Ann Edson, Phil Eldredge, Jan Erhart, Bob Fitzsimmons, Nancy Freutel, Peter Harrity, Larry Hays, Herrick Investments, Higgins & Rutledge Insurance, David Horwath, Wally Imfeld, Bryan Jennings, Robert W. Johnson IV Charitable Trust, Louise Kelly, Judith King, Luther King Capital Management, Eileen Leisk, Bill Mattox, Mimi McMillen, Ray Mendez, Microwave Telemetry Inc., Don Moser, MTL, Rishad Naoroji, Tyler Nelson, North American Grouse Partnership, Bob Oakleaf, E. Owens, Pioneer Hi-bred International, Timothy Pirrung, Garrett Riley, Patricia Rossi, Leonardo Salas, Cynthia Salley, William Satterfield, Jacqueline Schafer, Margaret Schiff, Linda Schueck, Peter Simon, Richard Snyder, Sue Sontag, Jim Tate, Terence Tiernan, Linda Thorstrom, Skip Tubbs, Wayne Upton, US Bank, Veco Polar Field Services, William Wade, Richard Watson, Conni Williams, E. Williams, George Williams, Margaret Wood, William Wood, Jesse Woody, Mike & Karen Yates

Bill Burnham's Book of Remembrance pages were selected for inclusion as he was instrumental in the formation of the Archives of Falconry. He served as President of the Peregrine Fund during the majority of the Peregrine reintroduction program which is considered the greatest species restoration plan ever conducted. These pages tell the story of Bill's life and gives the names of all those who contributed to his remembrance. The special plaque illustrated above was given in Bill's memory and placed on the Falcon base at the Wall of Remembrance in Bill's memory as he passed just a few months before the Wall was dedicated.

# The Dead Falconers Tours

## William (Bill) A. Burnham's Book of Remembrance pages

Thank You, Bill (continued from page 1)

breasted Falconer, a rare species of the Neotropics. Located in Tikal National Park, Guatemala, the fieldwork for the Maya Project was headed up by Dave Whitacre with several assistants, notably Russell Thomson, and included local Guatemalans. Carried out over several years, the project resulted in new scientific descriptions of the life histories of more than 20 species of tropical reptiles and a detailed analysis of their community ecology, as well as studies on Neotropical migrants and the training of a number of Guatemalan biologists.

In 1990, a comparable project started up in Madagascar and continued to the present, under the supervision of Rick Watson, again with impressive fieldwork by Russell Thomson. It has focused on the ecology of the rare and endangered raptors found only on the island, notably on the Madagascar Fish Eagle.

The list of overseas projects quickly expanded under Rick's supervision as International Programs Director, including activities in Africa, New Guinea, Mongolia, Pakistan and India, and Latin America. In Hawaii Bill set up a program for the captive breeding and reintroduction of endangered bird species unique to the islands and oversaw the development of two breeding facilities. Under the management of Alan Lieberman and Cindy Kachler, this program was later transferred to the Zoological Society of San Diego. Bill also established a new branch of The Peregrine Fund located in Panama City—*Peregrina* (Panama), and supervised the construction of the Neotropical Raptor Center to carry out research and conservation involving raptors of Latin America and the Caribbean, again emphasizing rare, little-known, and endangered species, such as the Hairy Eagle, Orange-breasted Falconer, and Ridgeback Hawk.

One of the most important but least heralded accomplishments spearheaded by Bill was the discovery of the cause for the 'Asian Vulture Crisis'—the virtual extinction of three species of griffon vultures on the Indian Subcontinent in just the past decade in collaboration with a former associate of TPF, Lindsay Oaks, now a veterinarian specializing in avian virology at Washington State University. TPF biologists obtained conclusive proof that a veterinary drug called diclofenac was fatal to vultures that fed on carcasses contaminated with this chemical, which had become widely used on the subcontinent as an analgesic and anti-inflammatory for domestic livestock. In 2006, as a direct result of this discovery, the governments of India, Nepal, and Pakistan banned the use of diclofenac for veterinary purposes. This achievement in a many ways equivalent in importance to the banning of DDT in the United States in 1972. Recovery of the vultures is now a possibility.

The study of Peregrines and Gyrfalcons in Greenland was Bill Burnham's favorite project. His first trip to Greenland was in 1972 when Bill Mattos started the Greenland Peregrine Survey, which on Mattos' retirement in 1998 he transferred to TPF. Burnham expanded the project to include Gyrfalcons and the prey species falcons eat, and with help from his son, Kurt, established the 'High Arctic Institute' at Thule, using a decommissioned facility (used by the U.S. Air Force) and soon worked together in Greenland each summer for the past 16 years, along with many other associates. Bill was able to fulfill his last wish by making two trips to Greenland in the summer of 2006, despite an incapacitating illness that would have kept anyone else in hospital.



Since the removal of the Peregrine from the list of endangered species in 1993, an accomplishment that involved Bill and other TPF staff in negotiations with the federal government for more than five years, our two main domestic projects have been the use of captive breeding and reintroduction to restore nesting populations of Aplomado Falcons in the Southwest and California Condors in northern Arizona. By negotiating use of the 'safe harbor' policy for private landowners in Texas and the not-essential experimental population designation under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act for condors in Arizona and falcons in New Mexico, Bill quietly but effectively maneuvered TPF through a tangle of political and societal issues that initially impeded the development of these projects.

Believing strongly that public education and academic training are the keys to successful conservation, Bill promoted projects such as the Velma Morrison Interpretive Center, which welcomes thousands of visitors each year, and the Gerald D. and Kathryn S. Herick Collections Facility. The latter houses a major ornithological library, egg and specimen collection, and the Archives of Falconry. Both facilities attest to Bill's commitment to education, as does TPF's support over the years of more than 20 Doctoral degrees, 53 Master's degrees, and numerous Bachelor degrees and high school diplomas earned by students around the world.

Bill also participated in many activities external from but related to TPF interests. For example, he helped establish a unique graduate program in raptor biology at Boise State University (BSU) and became an adjunct professor in the program, supervising a number of students who carried out research associated with TPF projects. Secretary of the Interior Edmund Leach appointed Bill to the National Public Lands Advisory Council; he also served as a trustee on the BSU Foundation; as a co-facilitator and then member of the Bureau of Land Management's Oversight Committee for the Snake River Birds of Prey Area, on the council for the multi-agency and university Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center at BSU; on the board of the North American Raptor Breeder's Association; on the advisory board of the Walt Disney Company's Animal Kingdoms; as an adviser to the Philippine government on science and conservation for the Philippine Eagle; as a board member of the Philippine Eagle Foundation, Inc. and in various other similar capacities.

He was elected to be a 'fellow' of the Arctic Institute of North America and of The Explorers Club. He was also presented



with The Explorers Club's Lowell Thomas Award in 2004. In 2006 he was chosen to receive the Conservation Medal of the Zoological Society of San Diego in recognition of his many contributions to the conservation of birds of prey.

I knew Bill for 32 years and watched in admiration how he developed as a person and crafted The Peregrine Fund into an extraordinary organization. Bill was the quintessential 'workaholic,' an early riser, often in his office before 6 a.m. and putting in many seven-day weeks. He was a natural-born leader, attracting many good and loyal people to work with him. He viewed his position as President to be one of making the big, strategic decisions, and he left his associates free to handle most of the tactical, day to day things. Consequently, he empowered a strong, well-organized group of people to carry on after him.

Bill worked hard, but he also played hard. He was not a large man, but he had great body strength and great endurance. His stamina in hiking and backpacking was legendary. On hikes in Greenland looking for falcon eyries, he was always ahead and would be set up in camp brewing coffee by the time the rest of us staggered in. Danger excited and challenged him. He actually enjoyed rappelling on a rope hundreds of feet down cliffs to enter falcon eyries. You can read his account of one such climb on a karst cliff in Guatemala in search of the nest of the Orange-breasted Falcon (page 149 in his 2006, *A Generation with Falcons*, 1997). Once in a

lifetime, Bill once hauled up his female Peregrine Falcon, Elroy, near Sheridan, Wyoming, in 2004; with his son Kurt conducting Peregrine Falcon surveys near Kamperthorn, Greenland, in the summer of 1992; and with his best friend Pete Widener antelope hunting near Buffalo, Wyoming, in the fall of 2005.

All gifts received in memory of Bill will be placed equally in the general endowment for The Peregrine Fund and the endowment for The Archives of Falconry.

campfire discussion, we both agreed that one of the things that makes true wilderness so exciting is the possibility of being eaten by a grizzly bear. Remove the bear—no more wilderness.

Bill was an avid falconer, especially in his earlier years. When he became President of TPF he skillfully reduced his practice of falconry, a time-consuming avocation, so that he could devote more attention to the needs of the organization. He did continue to hunt big game seasonally, often with his late friend, Pete Widener, and more recently upland game birds with Kurt and other companions. I know it was one of his great joys to return to falconry in recent years.

Although Bill had the reputation of being a practical, rough-and-ready, can-do, let's-get-it-done now, sort of guy, he also revealed a more philosophical and meditative—even poetic—side to his character from time to time. Some of his reflections on the need for conservation and the value of wild animals and wild places in his books, *A Generation with Falcons*, reflect a deep devotion to nature. I especially like his short essay on 'The Secret of a Peregrine' published in *Return of the Peregrine* (2003, p. 222), a book he conceived and helped edit: 'There is nothing in the world that smells like a newly-caught Peregrine. She smells like a mix of willow and birch of a green acetic tundra, the scent of pine as the rays of the sun pierce the forest to dry the needles of the morning dew, the freshness of the golden prairie grass on an autumn day, and the fragrance of the sea breeze through marsh flowers.'

Bill loved to explore new places and to test his endurance against hardships. One of my strong memories of him is how he used subarctic and confident at the controls of our 'Safe Boat' with Kurt by his side, as we faced into a gale and icy rain, while traveling up the west coast of Greenland with icebergs passing to port and starboard. Jack Stephens and I crouched in the back of the open boat, huddled in our rain ponies trying to keep from freezing to death, while Bill and Kurt faced the brunt of the storm during hours of hard travel to reach a safe harbor. When traveling under such conditions, I tend to enter a kind of sleepy lethargy, and all sorts of random thoughts and images drift through my groggy consciousness. Once I glanced up and saw Bill still at the wheel, and some words from history came to mind: 'There stands Jackson like a snowball.' I then realized that our 'Safe Boat' said to be unsinkable, was safe not so much because of its design as because of 'who was at the helm.'

One of Bill's legacies is that he has left behind a strong and capable wife and son who have guided us with grace and dignity through these last days with Bill. He has also left behind a dedicated and active group of colleagues, which he molded into an internationally respected conservation organization—The Peregrine Fund—and which he wisely left with the capability to move forward without him, but ever in memory of him.





## Bibliotheca Accipitraria II

### BIBLIOTHECA ACCIPITRARIA II

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### — FALCONRY —

*Published in the English Language  
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# Dead Falconers Tour 2002

