



# D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY





The Portrait of Charles d'Arcussia from the Memoire.

Translation

Truly I shall not trust in my bow nor will my sword save me.

ESPARRON, that brave knight,  
Has described the Chase so well  
In his learned and distinctive style  
That no saker, gyr, nor falcon  
Can ever fly as high  
As the glory of his worth.



# D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY

Translated by

JOHN LOFT

Author of "A Merlin for Me"



© John Loft 2003

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.

John Loft has asserted his moral right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the author of this work.

Published by  
John Loft  
Briar Cottage  
Julian Bower  
Louth  
Lincolnshire  
LN11 9QN

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 0 9535 8811 4

Typeset by  
Manton Typesetters, Louth, Lincolnshire, UK.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by  
St Edmundsbury Press Ltd, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.



# Contents

The Verse . . . . .	xxiv
Translator's Preface . . . . .	xxv
Notes on Translation . . . . .	xxvii
List of the Plates . . . . .	xxxi
Charles D'Arcussia . . . . .	xxxii

## THE FIRST PART

Chapter I . . . . .	7
<i>How the Birds of Falconry excel all other Birds</i>	
Chapter II . . . . .	9
<i>How it is necessary to recognize hawks in order to understand their natures</i>	
Chapter III . . . . .	10
<i>On the differences I have noted in our hawks, as to their plumage, their size, and their country of origin</i>	
Chapter IV . . . . .	12
<i>Of the species called the Falcon, the foremost of our hawks</i>	
Chapter V . . . . .	13
<i>A statement of the names for the Falcon, which differ according to the time and the season in which she is taken</i>	
Chapter VI . . . . .	14
<i>About the Eyas Falcon and how you should take it from the eyrie and rear it</i>	
Chapter VII . . . . .	15
<i>Another way of rearing Eyas Falcons</i>	
Chapter VIII . . . . .	15
<i>How to train Eyas Falcons</i>	
Chapter IX . . . . .	18
<i>How you should choose an Eyas Falcon</i>	



Chapter X .....	19
<i>How you should set about giving castings to the Eyas and what they should be</i>	
Chapter XI .....	20
<i>For a Falcon that naturally makes her circles in style above you</i>	
Chapter XII .....	21
<i>How you should show partridges to a waiting-on Falcon on her first flight</i>	
Chapter XIII .....	23
<i>For a heavy Falcon</i>	
Chapter XIV .....	24
<i>How an Eyas Falcon should be managed to bring it into good flying condition</i>	
Chapter XV .....	25
<i>How to inspect passage-hawks brought to you by trappers or cadgers</i>	
Chapter XVI .....	27
<i>How to train a passager</i>	
Chapter XVII .....	28
<i>About the differences between Eyas, Gentle, and Pilgrim Falcons</i>	
Chapter XVIII .....	30
<i>About the Falcon Gentle</i>	
Chapter XIX .....	32
<i>About the Pilgrim Falcon</i>	
Chapter XX .....	32
<i>About the Falcon Antenere</i>	
Chapter XXI .....	34
<i>About the Falcon Mué or Madré, wrongly called Agar by the ancients</i>	
Chapter XXII .....	37
<i>About the Eyas Lanner</i>	
Chapter XXIII .....	38
<i>About the passage Lanner</i>	
Chapter XXIV .....	42
<i>About the Lanner called Alphanet</i>	
Chapter XXV .....	44
<i>About the Saker</i>	



CONTENTS

vii

Chapter XXVI .....	45
<i>About the Gerfalcon</i>	
Chapter XXVII .....	49
<i>About Alethes, the newly discovered hawks</i>	
Chapter XXVIII .....	51
<i>About the Merlin</i>	
Notes to the First Part .....	54

THE SECOND PART

Chapter I .....	57
<i>About the illnesses of our hawks in general</i>	
Chapter II .....	59
<i>About the Rheum, which is the chief illness of hawks, and about its cure</i>	
Chapter III .....	60
<i>About the Falling Sickness</i>	
Chapter IV .....	62
<i>A remedy for specks or spots in the eye</i>	
Chapter V .....	62
<i>A remedy for the ailment known as Claw in the Eye</i>	
Chapter VI .....	63
<i>Remedies for trouble with the ears</i>	
Chapter VII .....	63
<i>A remedy for the ill that affects the palate</i>	
Chapter VIII .....	64
<i>A remedy for a growth that develops in a hawk's beak</i>	
Chapter IX .....	65
<i>A remedy for nostrils blocked by rheum</i>	
Chapter X .....	67
<i>Remedies for barbles, or papillae</i>	
Chapter XI .....	67
<i>About the Pip, or Roup, and its remedies</i>	
Chapter XII .....	68
<i>About an ailment called the Ant, which affects the hawk's beak, with a remedy</i>	



viii	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Chapter XIII	.....	68
	<i>About Gapes in hawks</i>	
Chapter XIV	.....	69
	<i>About the rheum which sinks to the shoulders and between the wings</i>	
Chapter XV	.....	70
	<i>About the second main illness of hawks, which is foot-trouble, and the other afflictions that stem from it</i>	
Chapter XVI	.....	71
	<i>The squeezing, stopping, and cutting of veins to preserve the feet of our hawks</i>	
Chapter XVII	.....	72
	<i>About Gout, and the remedies for it</i>	
Chapter XVIII	.....	73
	<i>About Scab, and the remedies for it</i>	
Chapter XIX	.....	75
	<i>About the third main illness of hawks: Phthisis, and the other afflictions that stem from it</i>	
Chapter XX	.....	76
	<i>Asthma, which causes panting from the stomach</i>	
Chapter XXI	.....	77
	<i>Nostrils blocked by Asthma</i>	
Chapter XXII	.....	78
	<i>About the fourth and last main illness of our hawks, the Cray or Gravel, and the other illnesses that stem from it</i>	
Chapter XXIII	.....	79
	<i>About Threadworms</i>	
Chapter XXIV	.....	80
	<i>Crop-bound hawks which struggle to cast but cannot</i>	
Chapter XXV	.....	82
	<i>For the hawk which through being chilled cannot move her wings</i>	
Chapter XXVI	.....	82
	<i>About a hawk which has lost her appetite</i>	
Chapter XXVII	.....	83
	<i>About a hawk which has leeches</i>	





CONTENTS

ix

Chapter XXVIII .....	83
<i>About a lost hawk which has been maltreated by those who found her</i>	
Chapter XXIX .....	84
<i>About the hawk with an injury to the eye</i>	
Chapter XXX .....	85
<i>About swellings and injuries on the hawk's feet made by the jesses or bewits</i>	
Chapter XXXI .....	85
<i>A hawk with a broken wing</i>	
Chapter XXXII .....	86
<i>About the breakage of the thigh, leg, or toes of a hawk</i>	
Chapter XXXIII .....	87
<i>About the cuts and wounds of hawks, and the remedies</i>	
Chapter XXXIV .....	88
<i>About a sore-hawk's feathers and about the moult</i>	
Chapter XXXV .....	90
<i>Three ways of restoring feathers that are not completely broken</i>	
Chapter XXXVI .....	91
<i>For imping feathers that are quite broken</i>	
Chapter XXXVII .....	91
<i>Another way of imping</i>	
Chapter XXXVIII .....	92
<i>How to put a Lanner's tail on a Falcon or any other hawk</i>	
Chapter XXXIX .....	93
<i>What must be considered before purging hawks</i>	
Chapter XL .....	94
<i>Of the strength and nature of different hawks and their varying resistance to purges</i>	
Chapter XLI .....	95
<i>For making a hawk cast her gorge when she has eaten something against your will</i>	
Chapter XLII .....	95
<i>The pills of Hiera</i>	





x	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Chapter XLIII	.....	96
<i>Common Pills</i>		
Chapter XLIV	.....	96
<i>Pills of Musk</i>		
Chapter XLVI	.....	97
<i>About Mummy</i>		
Chapter XLVII	.....	97
<i>To make a hawk cast up her stomach-lining</i>		
Chapter XLVIII	.....	98
<i>White pills and sweet pills which are suitable for robust hawks</i>		
Chapter XLIX	.....	99
<i>Country pills, which are for passage Sakers and Lanners only</i>		
Chapter L	.....	100
<i>Blood-letting through the palate, the beak, and the talons</i>		
Notes to the Second Part	.....	101

### THE THIRD PART

Letter I	.....	105
<i>Before setting up the establishment of a falconer it is necessary to be well advised</i>		
Letter II	.....	106
<i>Hawks that are taken from the eyrie too soon and how they should be treated</i>		
Letter III	.....	108
<i>The care of Eyas Falcons</i>		
Letter IV	.....	109
<i>It is better for the master to learn how to handle hawks than to be dependent on an unsatisfactory falconer</i>		
Letter V	.....	110
<i>How to keep hawks in good health</i>		
Letter VI	.....	111
<i>How you must handle a hawk gently while casting her to put on jesses and bells</i>		



CONTENTS

xi

Letter VII .....	112
<i>Against the scroungers who shamelessly ask to be given dogs and hawks</i>	
Letter VIII .....	113
<i>About Tiercel Falcons and how to use them</i>	
Letter IX .....	114
<i>How to preserve the feathers of Eyas Falcons</i>	
Letter X .....	115
<i>On the deaths of a Saker and a Sakret through having been moved from one place to another during their moult</i>	
Letter XI .....	116
<i>On peppering hawks and how to get rid of lice in their feathers or in their nostrils</i>	
Letter XII .....	118
<i>How there is less craft needed in flying Falcons than Sakers and Lanners</i>	
Letter XIII .....	119
<i>On not feeding hawks before they have cast and what can be learnt from a casting</i>	
Letter XIV .....	120
<i>Tread carefully when trying out recipes and purges for hawks and take note of the weather at the time</i>	
Letter XV .....	122
<i>About the ailment, sometimes called Susbec, discussed in the Second Chapter of the Second Book</i>	
Letter XVI .....	123
<i>How to keep those hawks that let themselves be borne away on the wind</i>	
Letter XVII .....	124
<i>How to keep hawks in Autumn and how to fly them during that season</i>	
Letter XVIII .....	125
<i>About moulting hawks, their plumage, and the ills which taking them from the mews too soon will cause</i>	
Letter XIX .....	128
<i>A Falcon with a swollen body</i>	





xii	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Letter XX	.....	129
	<i>About the individual characteristics of hawks and how you should be aware of them</i>	
Letter XXI	.....	130
	<i>About hawks that digest feathers before they cast and what steps to take</i>	
Chapter [sic] XXII	.....	131
	<i>About a moulting hawk that has dropped a long primary still in the blood</i>	
Letter XXIII	.....	132
	<i>About the loss of a hawk and the assessments to be made when she has gone, with other recommendations</i>	
Letter XXIV	.....	134
	<i>About a falcon that comes looking for the Falconer after the put-in</i>	
Letter XXV	.....	135
	<i>On Passage Hawks, in addition to what was said in Chapter XVI of the First Book</i>	
Letter XXVI	.....	136
	<i>A Hawk that becomes discouraged in the Winter and the reason for it</i>	
Letter XXVII	.....	137
	<i>Eagles and how to protect hawks from them</i>	
Letter XXVIII	.....	138
	<i>Haggard Falcons and how to keep them to partridges: how they are delicate in the matter of purging, not as fast as sore-hawks, and suitable for flying at the river, and at crows</i>	
Letter XXIX	.....	140
	<i>The different colours of hawks' feet</i>	
Letter XXX	.....	141
	<i>How hawks dislike a change of master</i>	
Letter XXXI	.....	142
	<i>Why Falconry is more to be esteemed than Hunting</i>	
Letter XXXII	.....	144
	<i>A letter aimed at a certain person about expressions not acceptable in Falconry</i>	





CONTENTS

xiii

Letter XXXIII .....	146
<i>A hawk that carries, and the remedies for it</i>	
Letter XXXIV .....	147
<i>A hawk that is in low condition and thin during very cold weather</i>	
Letter XXXV .....	148
<i>What is to be done with hawks that retain their stomach-linings when dosed</i>	
Letter XXXVI .....	149
<i>A delicate hawk that brings up a dose too soon, and the usefulness of manna</i>	
Letter XXXVII .....	151
<i>Against the opinion of those who say that hunting and hawking damage the corn, and how it ought to be protected</i>	
Letter XXXVIII .....	153
<i>What makes hawks love or hate a Falconer</i>	
Letter XXXIX .....	154
<i>About those who do not like to hawk or hunt on a Friday</i>	
Letter XL .....	156
<i>Hawks that go on the soar and how to prevent it</i>	
Letter XLI .....	157
<i>Hawks that are late or early with their moult</i>	
Letter XLII .....	158
<i>What one should do to separate hawks that rob each other when flown together</i>	
Letter XLIII—First Advice .....	160
<i>The establishment needed by someone who wants to practise Falconry and fly partridges</i>	
Advice II .....	162
<i>What should be observed by those who want to maintain an establishment for Falconry</i>	
Advice III .....	164
<i>More advice to a Falconer</i>	
Advice IV .....	165
<i>How you should mark down your hawk when she has flown, and bring your dogs up to the put-in</i>	





xiv	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Advice V	.....	165
	<i>How to train new dogs for the put-in</i>	
Advice VI	.....	166
	<i>How to bring down a hawk that has gone on the soar</i>	
Advice VII	.....	166
	<i>A warning to someone with only one hawk</i>	
Advice VIII	.....	167
	<i>How to throw off a hawk</i>	
Advice IX	.....	168
	<i>Against those who disdain to be called Falconers, and what a true Falconer is</i>	
Advice X	.....	168
	<i>How you ought to manage the quest for partridges</i>	
Advice XI	.....	169
	<i>What hawks one should keep and the care one should take over choosing them</i>	
Advice XII	.....	170
	<i>Lost hawks</i>	
Advice XIII	.....	171
	<i>Why you should keep away from sportsmen's conversations and avoid being reputed a liar</i>	
Advice XIV	.....	171
	<i>Brief guide and instructions for a Falconer</i>	
Advice XV	.....	175
	<i>An invention for taking Passage-hawks</i>	
Advice XVI	.....	175
	<i>Another well-tried invention for the same purpose</i>	
Letter XLIV	.....	176
	<i>A way of stocking your ground with partridges</i>	
Letter XLV	.....	178
	<i>How to enter hawks to hares</i>	
Letter XLVI	.....	179
	<i>The High Flight and how to enter hawks to the Kite</i>	
Letter XLVII	.....	180
	<i>How to fly at large quarries</i>	
Letter XLVIII	.....	182
	<i>The Author apologises and justifies himself</i>	
Notes to the Third Part	.....	184





CONTENTS

xv

THE FOURTH PART

Chapter I . . . . .	189
<i>The internal parts of Hawks: their shape, position, substance, and function</i>	
Chapter II . . . . .	193
<i>The anatomy of birds of prey and its upper space, which is the head</i>	
Chapter III . . . . .	196
<i>The middle space</i>	
Chapter IV . . . . .	198
<i>The lower space</i>	
Chapter V . . . . .	199
<i>The wings</i>	
Chapter VI . . . . .	201
<i>The aisleron</i>	
Chapter VII . . . . .	201
<i>The leg</i>	
Chapter VIII . . . . .	204
<i>The flesh of hawks</i>	
Chapter IX . . . . .	205
<i>How wild Falcons mate, lay eggs, and hatch them</i>	
Chapter X . . . . .	206
<i>Some wonderful actions that can be observed when Falcons are feeding their young in the eyrie</i>	
Chapter XI . . . . .	207
<i>How the parents teach their young to fly and to catch prey</i>	
Chapter XII . . . . .	207
<i>How young Falcons in the nest can heal their own eyes</i>	
Chapter XIII . . . . .	209
<i>How hawks use their beak and claws to draw blood from themselves</i>	
Chapter XIV . . . . .	209
<i>Hawks preserve their health by moulting</i>	
Chapter XV . . . . .	210
<i>The purges which hawks give themselves</i>	





xvi	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Chapter XVI	.....	211
	<i>The habits of wild Falcons</i>	
Chapter XVII	.....	213
	<i>How hawks purge themselves by themselves and several other wonders</i>	
Chapter XVIII	.....	214
	<i>How everyone can follow the chase with a clear conscience</i>	
Chapter XX	.....	216
	<i>The stones of the Eagle and the gravel of the Falcon</i>	
Chapter XXI	.....	217
	<i>Hawks that are too light or too heavy on the wing, and the remedies</i>	
Chapter XXII	.....	218
	<i>Restless hawks, and the remedies for it</i>	
Chapter XXIII	.....	220
	<i>Remedies for an excess of fat or grease</i>	
Chapter XXIV	.....	221
	<i>Pills suitable for hawks in a temperate climate, whatever the season</i>	
Chapter XXV	.....	222
	<i>The properties of Coral as rangle</i>	
Chapter XXVI	.....	223
	<i>Partridge-hawking takes precedence over all other flights apart from that at Heron and Kite</i>	
Chapter XXVII	.....	224
	<i>It is necessary to be a good rider but great men should be content to enjoy a flight without riding too hard</i>	
Chapter XXVIII	.....	226
	<i>Different partridges and their habits</i>	
Chapter XXIX	.....	227
	<i>How to ride partridges down</i>	
Chapter XXX	.....	230
	<i>A madness in dogs, called folly, rabies, or Hydrophobia</i>	
Notes to the Fourth Part	.....	241





CONTENTS

xvii

THE FIFTH PART

Chapter I . . . . .	243
<i>The etymology of the name and the people for whom a Goshawk is suitable</i>	
Chapter II . . . . .	246
<i>The Eyas Goshawk</i>	
Chapter III . . . . .	248
<i>The Passage Goshawk</i>	
Chapter IV . . . . .	250
<i>Instructions for keeping Goshawks in good condition and for flying them successfully</i>	
Chapter V . . . . .	251
<i>Feeding up: a useful way of treating many kinds of illness in Goshawks</i>	
Chapter VI . . . . .	252
<i>Experiences with Goshawks</i>	
Chapter VII . . . . .	253
<i>How you ought to please a Goshawk</i>	
Chapter VIII . . . . .	253
<i>How you ought to prepare a Goshawk before setting out for the field</i>	
Chapter IX . . . . .	254
<i>How you ought to slip a Goshawk</i>	
Chapter X . . . . .	254
<i>Why you ought to avoid hawking in the dew</i>	
Chapter XI . . . . .	254
<i>Goshawks on the look-out</i>	
Chapter XII . . . . .	255
<i>How to take down an unwilling Goshawk</i>	
Chapter XIII . . . . .	255
<i>How you ought to help a Goshawk at the put-in</i>	
Chapter XIV . . . . .	256
<i>How you should look for the lee-slopes on windy days</i>	
Chapter XV . . . . .	256
<i>The Austringer's staff</i>	
Chapter XVI . . . . .	256
<i>Flying duck with a Goshawk</i>	





xviii	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Chapter XVII	.....	257
	<i>The Goshawks that fly better into wind</i>	
Chapter XVIII	.....	257
	<i>To preserve the natural fire of a newly-taken passage Goshawk</i>	
Chapter XIX	.....	258
	<i>Flying Rabbits with a Goshawk</i>	
Chapter XX	.....	258
	<i>The differences amongst Goshawks</i>	
Chapter XXI	.....	259
	<i>Boulimia or feebleness, a dangerous condition in Goshawks</i>	
Chapter XXII	.....	260
	<i>Goshawks which go on the soar, and the failure to return of other hawks, according to their species</i>	
Chapter XXIII	.....	261
	<i>How much you should allow for the expenses of Falconry</i>	
Chapter XXIV	.....	263
	<i>How the exercise of the chase preserves the health of those who enjoy it</i>	
Chapter XXV	.....	264
	<i>Sparrowhawks</i>	
Chapter XXVI	.....	266
	<i>The antiquity of Falconry</i>	
Notes to the Fifth Part	.....	273

#### THE ROYAL MEWS

An Inventory of the Royal Mews and the flights he has introduced	.....	281
Other lesser flights that His Majesty has introduced for his diversion	.....	282
The Organisation of the Royal Mews	.....	282
How the King goes out Hawking, and on what days	..	283
Flights at Crested Larks	.....	285
Heron flights with the King and Queen present.	.....	285



CONTENTS

xix

Flying at Ravens ..... 287

Flights in the gardens of the Louvre introduced by the King ..... 288

Flights at bagged birds ..... 288

Flights at seeled pigeons. .... 288

More exploits of the Heron-hawks. .... 289

Notes to The Royal Mews. .... 291

THE CONFERENCE

First day of the meeting of Chasseurs ..... 293

The second day, when the flight at the Kite is discussed ..... 295

The third day, when the flight at the Crow is discussed ..... 296

The fourth day, when various kinds of hawk are discussed and which of them one should want for oneself ..... 298

The fifth day, which deals with the flight at partridges ..... 300

The sixth day, which deals with hawking and several things that can arise while Partridge-hawking, and with what meat is good for the hawks and what is not good ..... 303

The seventh day, when various Falconers, ancient and modern, are discussed ..... 305

The eighth day, which deals with a remarkable journey made by a Sakret that was mentioned in the twenty-second chapter of "La Fauconnerie" .. 309

The ninth day, when the terms of Falconry are discussed and how they should be used ..... 311

The tenth day, when the different types and species of hawks are discussed, and the Falcons called Sahins and the Falcons called Balarins ..... 313

The eleventh day, which deals with Merlins, Falquets, and Hobbies and some means for keeping them ... 314



The twelfth day, when a summary of the maladies of hawks is given: and an explanation is made of some changes that can be seen in them every six hours during the twenty-four hours of the natural day . . .	316
The thirteenth day, which deals with quarrels that have arisen over hawks during the Conference . . .	319
The fourteenth day, in which Goshawks are discussed further to what has already been said about them .	321
The fifteenth day, in which Dogs are discussed . . . . .	325
The sixteenth and last day of the Conference in which the flight of Harpies is discussed . . . . .	329
Notes to the Conference . . . . .	341

## THE ASSEMBLY

Discourse I . . . . .	348
Discourse II . . . . .	350
<i>The welcome of the Falconers who, after the civilities, begin to talk about their sport</i>	
Discourse III . . . . .	355
<i>An account of a meeting for an afternoon's hawking, in which how to keep hawks free of foot- trouble and the workings of fortune are discussed</i>	
Discourse IV . . . . .	358
<i>On the excellence of Falconry, the nobility of the Chase in general, and how our Kings have been the creators of the current forms of Hunting. Then it deals with training hawks to wait on</i>	
Discourse V . . . . .	362
<i>This treats of flights which one can have when the land is not suitable for hawking or the season does not allow it, and of flights at Owl and Little Bustard</i>	
Discourse VI . . . . .	364
<i>How the Falconer should conduct himself in his recreation as he grows old, and why the wife should be the mistress and why she should not</i>	



CONTENTS xxi

Discourse VII .....	367
<i>An account of hawking at Tournes which also tells of flights at curlew, woodpecker, and eagle</i>	
Discourse VIII .....	371
<i>The birds that annually cross and re-cross the sea, those that stay in their own country, their habits and food, with each one given its name and its group</i>	
Discourse IX .....	383
<i>The ruses that birds employ to save their lives and can be seen afresh in each species</i>	
Discourse X .....	385
<i>An illness that is very common in hawks and kills them during the moult</i>	
Discourse XI .....	387
<i>On dogs that are listless and shabby-coated in Summer</i>	
Discourse XII .....	391
<i>Hawking near Saint Baume</i>	
The Last Resolutions .....	398
Notes to the Assembly .....	403

THE LETTERS OF PHILOIERAX TO PHILOFALCO

First Letter .....	416
Letter II .....	417
<i>The mistake of those who think they can turn themselves into Falconers by reading books</i>	
Letter III .....	418
<i>How age can alter a man's interests</i>	
Letter IV .....	418
<i>It is not good to worry about future events</i>	
Letter V .....	420
<i>On thanks received for the cure of a sick hawk</i>	
Letter VI .....	421
<i>Three ascents by hawks and three descents</i>	



xxii	D'ARCUSSIA'S FALCONRY	
Letter VII	.....	422
	<i>The flight at the Heron and how the Devil flies our souls</i>	
Letter VIII	.....	425
	<i>How hawks use their powers of reason</i>	
Letter IX	.....	428
	<i>A hawk injured in the aisleron, of the different categories of feathers, of cleros, medios cleros, and clericos, of pennas, pinnas, and plumas, and of the illness called cleragre</i>	
Letter X	.....	429
	<i>A way of guarding hawks against dangerous beasts, with an adjuration for Eagles</i>	
Letter XI	.....	430
	<i>How everything serves to instruct those who desire to learn, and the life of the fields</i>	
Letter XII	.....	431
	<i>Why you should never take the faithfulness of a passage Lanner for granted</i>	
Letter XIII	.....	432
	<i>Why one should avoid meeting herds of tame pigs and a way of getting rid of fleas and lice on hawks</i>	
Letter XIV	.....	433
	<i>A hawk troubled by spirits at night</i>	
Letter XV	.....	434
	<i>The trained Eagles that were taken to the King</i>	
Letter XVI	.....	435
	<i>An impatient Falconer</i>	
Letter XVII	.....	436
	<i>One ought not to cope a hawk that is taking quarry, and the derivation of the word "Poltron" and of other terms for the feet and claws of hawks</i>	
Letter XVIII	.....	437
	<i>Marvels which occur when hawks are lost</i>	
Letter XIX	.....	438
	<i>Sakers and their value, and how the desire to understand leads us to study the sciences and the cause of that desire</i>	



CONTENTS

xxiii

Letter XX .....	44 <sup>o</sup>
<i>There is no pleasure in the sport when you are on bad terms with your servants</i>	
Letter XXI .....	44 <sup>o</sup>
<i>Men most often follow their first love till they die; it is not good to live too well; use of the bath for hawks; and the proper terms for it</i>	
Letter XXII .....	44 <sup>i</sup>
<i>Waiting for game</i>	
Letter XXIII .....	443
<i>The treatment of hunters and a remedy for soft fat</i>	
Letter XXIV .....	444
<i>A picture of hawking ten days after Pentecost, and a meditation that follows</i>	
Letter XXV .....	44 <sup>6</sup>
<i>In honour of Poetry</i>	
Letter XXVI .....	447
<i>Similarities between two great Falconers who were formerly Governors of Provence</i>	
Letter XXVII .....	44 <sup>8</sup>
<i>The antithesis observable between Favour and Fortune, with a description of the temple of Favour</i>	
Letter XXVIII .....	454
<i>Philoierax, being ill in bed, takes his leave of Philofalco in a last farewell</i>	
Notes to the Letters of Philoierax to Philofalco .....	459
Index .....	463





## The Verse

<i>Title or Subject</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Page</i>
Critics	D'Arcussia	2
Esparron's Falconry	Gallaup	3
Art of Falconry	Joan Raynaudus	3
Moderation	Anon	23
Ill Luck	Anon	164
Epigram	Martial	174
Reply	S.Antony of Padua	186
Falconry	D'Arcussia	268
Quatrain	D'Arcussia	271
Sonnet	D'Arcussia	271
Stanzas	Corbin	272
The King's Falconry	D'Arcussia	280
To the King	D'Arcussia	290
Instructions to the Household	D'Arcussia	332
Conundrum	D'Arcussia	347
Epitaph	D'Arcussia	353
Good Breeding	Horace	389
Meditation: Ste Baume	D'Arcussia	394
In Proportion	D'Arcussia	397
Future Fears	D'Arcussia	397
Hawks' Conspitacy	I.D.P.	415
Against Harpies	D'Arcussia	440
Meditation	D'Arcussia	443
The Muses	D'Arcussia	448
Favour's Temple	D'Arcussia	449
Family Arms	Anon	457



## Translator's Preface

When he died, Anthony Jack, long serving President of the British Falconers' Club and Translator of "Ferreira's Falconry", left a typescript of his translation of this work by Charles D'Arcussia. His wife, Elizabeth, at my request, gave it to me and lent me his original French text, of the 1643 edition. I hoped to be able to see it through to publication, for him and for her, but discovered that it required much more attention than merely to prepare it for the typesetter. Indeed, I found enough defects in it to persuade me that the whole text would have to be scanned, a task which could only be achieved by a re-translation. Most of the chapters on disease had been omitted and needed at least to be summarised—as I naïvely decided without realising that they would have first to be translated. Also not translated were most of the poems and all the chapters not directly relevant to Falconry. In for a penny, in for a pound. A complete translation seemed unavoidable, and, having undertaken the labour of it, I now publish it under my name.

One of the many troubles of translators is that their work cannot be adequately checked unless someone can be found willing to translate the whole work again for comparison—and as no-one else has attempted D'Arcussia for four hundred years it would be pointless for me to look for such a person. But there was no need: I was able to check my version against Anthony's. He preserved me from making many "howlers", and I did the same for him. It is obvious enough now that the most important of all the acknowledgements I wish to make is to him, my friend and neighbour of many years, and to Elizabeth also.

I am most particularly indebted to M.Henri DESMONTS who has helped and encouraged me at every turn and has kept the e-mails flying to and fro like tennis-balls across the Channel. Also to M.Bernard PREVOST, Maître de L'Equipage Charles D'Arcussia, for providing the Memoire by M.Augustin ROUX.



After them come my brother, Martin, who translated all the Latin for me and produced the English version of the Epigram at the beginning of the book, and his wife Valerie who translated the Sonnet that precedes it. There is a collective thank-you to the Squires family, to Christine and Mike, who supervised my French and my cartography respectively, and their daughter, Julie, who claims that while in France she walked three miles across rough country and forded a river in order to collect the D'Arcussia entry from the Dictionnaire de Biographie Française for me. Stephen Bodio and his wife, Libby, gave me advice and encouragement and chased up obscure foreign phrases and the obsolete names of birds and beasts. Dr Linda Birch of the Edward Grey Institute of Ornithology made possible my research there and gave invaluable help with the plates. Dr Derek Toomer and most of his colleagues at the B.T.O. Headquarters got together in a search for possible sources of information about those pesky bird-names. And Ray Turner, who always assured me that there was one person who was looking forward to reading the fruits of my labours, responded in detail to all my requests. To them all my grateful thanks.

Whatever stylish qualities the printed volume may display are there because of the expertise, discrimination, and powers of persuasion of David Manton of Manton Typesetters.

I do not have to admit the shameful truth that, although I can *understand* some snatches of spoken French provided that it is delivered unnaturally slowly, I cannot *speak* French anything like effectively, almost never having had any cause to attempt it, but after so much practice I can now *read* it without too much trouble, especially if it is ancient enough.

*“Merci, au nom de la culture et de la tradition Française en matière de la fauconnerie.”*

Henri Desmonts



## Notes on Translation

To D’Arcussia the word “faucon” signified a bird of the species that we call the peregrine but nothing else. He never used it, as we use “falcon”, to indicate a member of the *falconidae* or a “longwing”. He never used it, as we do, to indicate a female member of that group. “Faucon” applied only to *Falco peregrinus*.

He classified the birds of prey according to a logical system which differs from our Linnæan system but still makes good sense to us, and brought order to the confused opinions of his contemporaries. This translation follows his system. In it “falcon” means “peregrine” and nothing else. I trust that readers will fairly soon become acclimatised to my somewhat wrong-headed practice. The word “peregrine” is used only twice in his book and never in this translation of it. My aim is not to modernise his text, only to render it into the formal English used in our day while trying to preserve its 17<sup>th</sup> Century flavour.

D’Arcussia lacked the Anglo-Saxons’ advantage of having a single word that covers all the birds of prey. He had to refer to them as “oyseaux”, or “birds”. I persist in calling them “hawks”, as our hawking forebears always did, and, for once, have the excuse of not being able, here, to use that word “falcon” for an unspecified longwing, even if d’Arcussia’s way does lead, on occasion, to the apparently contradictory expression, “a Tiercel Falcon”.

He was not alone in his use of “falcon”. By applying to Ray Turner, I discovered that Latham and Turberville also used “falcon” instead of “peregrine” as he did, and Latham actually found fault with Turberville, or rather with one of the authors who contributed to that collection, for applying “peregrine”, meaning “wandering”, to the haggard and not to the passenger also. It was the ornithologists in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century who started applying “peregrine” to the species and were followed by the falconers. Freeman used it as his pen-name. History, and d’Arcussia, show that having differences and



disagreements about specialist names and terms has not been confined to our day.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

I have followed D'Arcussia's practice in the use of Capital Letters at the beginning of nouns. He was sparing with them, but considered that God deserved one, and the King also, but not man; all the Hawks, including Eyases but not passagers; nearly all Birds but usually not partridges; and all Occupations and Trades above the rank of servant. Personal Adjectives and Pronouns did not attract the Upper Case, so that not only did the King appear as "his" Majesty [apparently "her" Majesty to an Englishman since *Majestie* is a Feminine Noun] but God was referred to merely as "him". Saints were honoured not for their holiness but on account of their occupation. I should like any reader who may be puzzled by these Capitals to know that D'Arcussia did have a system, and any departures from it are more likely to be my fault than his.

As far as is reasonable, I have copied the book's plan and format, to present something of the look of the original, and have not done much to repair the anomalies resulting from the cobbling together of the separately produced parts from which this final work was compiled. Whoever saw to the publishing of the later editions sometimes tacked the new material on to the end of earlier work without making adjustments for the ways in which either text was affected. The "Royal Mews" was originally added to the first five Parts. Later, when the "Conference", the "Assembly", the "Last Resolutions", and "Philoierax's Letters" had all been added, there were ten Parts and the "Royal Mews" appeared at the end. Full Title-Pages appear before each main section and together they indicate how the pieces were put together.

The major alterations I have made are the return of the "Royal Mews" to its original place and the concentrating of the scattered indexes into one conventional "List of Contents" that now appears above, on the first pages. I trust it will be more useful and convenient than having, as in the



original, one Index at the end of Part Five, a Summary preceding “Philoierax’s Letters”, and a very detailed Index to the “Conference” at the very end of the book, with no attention paid to the contents of the “Assembly”.

D’Arcussia had no objection to great, unbroken blocks of prose and I sometimes have had to break them into shorter paragraphs. He was overfond of the Semi-colon and the Colon. Many of them have been converted into Full Stops. He used Brackets very seldom [Any square ones are my parentheses] and the Dash never. He had no markers for Direct Speech. He did use Italics for marginal glosses, lists, titles, captions, and poetry. [One marvels at the craft of the type-carvers who hand-made all the wooden blocks. It is apparent that Italics made even greater demands on their astonishing skill, especially as they were often smaller than the main text.] In spite of these minor concerns, his whole style of writing was very close to the conventions of our day [If not of the electronic days to come] and I have modified and “modernised” it as little as possible.

## THE PLATES

The reproductions in this book are taken from two different editions. As my 1643 edition has two lines omitted and lacks the four plates of surgical instruments I visited Oxford and the British Falconers’ Club Library, housed in the Edward Grey Institute, to study the 1598 first edition and, with luck, make good the defects. The missing lines of text were there and the missing plates also but what delighted me even more was the brightness and clarity of the portraits of the hawks. I was allowed, and helped, to take copies from them. I had hoped that the intermewed Falcon, the Corsican Falcon, the Alphanet, and both Goshawks in these, earliest, plates had not had the tops of their heads sliced off in the printing-house, but it was obvious, from the interruptions in the lines made by the engraver, that they had.

I imagined that the lack of definition in the later plates was the result of much wear suffered during the printing of nine



editions, but the typesetter studied all the plates closely, and made the surprising discovery that the 1643 plates were not taken from the same blocks as the originals. He pointed out to me that they were very careful, even meticulous, copies but the strokes of the engraving-tool did not exactly correspond. Naturally enough, but disappointingly, they accepted and followed the distorted head-shapes of the originals.

Comparing the two sets revealed that d'Arcussia's directions had not been followed in a later edition by some overweening editor, who could not accept that a Gerfalcon could be dark in colour, and, in spite of the difference in their sizes, had re-captioned the Gerfalcon as an Alethe, and the very pale Alethe as a Gerfalcon!



## List of the Plates

	<i>Page</i>
Monsieur d'Esparron's good immature falcon, called the Corsican	11
His eight-times moulted falcon from the mountains, called Borrásque	22
A twice-moulted passage-falcon belonging to the same gentleman	33
A lanner that has done service for M.d'Esparron through ten moults	36
His haggard alphanet, an excellent partridge-hawk	40
✦ The same alphanet, turning her shoulders	41
Haggard saker, called Glorious	43
Haggard gerfalcon	46
An alethe	50
A merlin	52
Hawk skeletons	202–203
The case of instruments used for curing hawks	234–237
An immature goshawk	245
An intermewed goshawk	249



# Charles d’Arcussia

## AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The material in this brief record is taken from information gathered from the text itself but chiefly from a Memoire which was delivered to the Academy of Aix-en-Provence by a Member, M. Augustin ROUX, and is obtainable from the Musée Arbaud in Aix.

The entry under “Charles d’Arcussia” in the Dictionnaire de Biographie Française provides a much shorter version of the same story. Its sources of information come from works published before 1912, when the Register of Notaries which M. Augustin ROUX used extensively became available for research, and this may account for some differences in the two accounts.

For instance, according to the Dictionnaire, Charles left three sons and a daughter, whereas the Memoire *names* six sons and three daughters that survived him. More seriously, to the writer in the Dictionnaire it seems that Charles “took no part in the religious strife” and therefore the siege of Esparron can never have occurred. To heighten the mystery, it makes Charles the *younger* brother of a Jean d’Arcussia whose life and misadventures it records. It says that Jean was born in 1547; at the age of thirteen became a Councillor in the Parliament of Provence; and at the age of 15 was involved in a Calvinist conspiracy, which led to his flight from Aix and the death of one of the other Councillors involved, called Salomon, who was caught by a mob. Such detail convinces me that Jean existed, but it is hard to accept that he became a councillor so young, and harder still to believe that Charles could have held the titles and played the part of head of the family if his elder brother was alive. Perhaps Jean was a cousin.



## THE STORY

From the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, the Arcussias were important figures in the Kingdom of Naples, until, in the late 14<sup>th</sup> Century, Jeanne, Queen of Naples, was forced from that kingdom, and two brothers, Francois and Jacques Arcussia, accompanied her to Provence where for their services to the new Court of Provence they were rewarded with gifts of estates. They retained their Neapolitan titles of Arcussia de l'Ile de Capri.

1375 The seignory of Tourves was given to Louis d'Arcussia by Queen Jeanne.

1466 Francois d'Arcussia married Madeleine d'Esparron (Esclapon) and became joint-holder of the seignory of Esparron.

1554 Gaspard d'Arcussia, a Councillor in the Parliament in Aix, who had married Marguerite de Glandès, died, a few months after the birth, at Esparron, of Charles, the subject of this work. During his life Gaspard had bought two houses in Aix from the Chapter and made them into one, with garden, court, and dependencies, in the street Bernard de Jouques in the parish of Saint-Sauveur.

1565 When Marguerite, Gaspard's widow, remarried, she had to surrender the power to administer the persons and rights of her son and two daughters. Provision was made for them by agreement, and guardians appointed.

Charles, already a pupil in the service of le Comte de Tende, Governor of Provence, remained there and continued his education and training in the bearing of arms.

1566 The Arcussia line in Italy had become extinct, but Charles's father had done his study of the law in Turin and in this year Charles made a tour in that country, possibly in his position of page to le Comte. At the age of fourteen, Charles, as a noble, was able to attain his majority and dispense with tutors or guardians although his goods and money were not yet in his sole control.



- 1573 At the age of nineteen, Charles married Marguerite de Forbin, then sixteen. In the same year, his sister Marguerite married the joint-holder, with Charles, of Saint Martin de Pallières, which lies close to Esparron, to whom Charles ceded all the rights of the seignory.
- 1578 His sister, Anne, married Philippe de Gérente, and made over all her rights in the family to Charles.
- 1580 An exchange was arranged between Charles and Claude de Gombert as the first step in re-uniting the seignory under the name of the family. Other arrangements and purchases were made, but the process was not to be completed until 1610. If it appears that Charles was dedicated to establishing the rights and position of his family, his own comments later show that he resented the time he had to spend in litigation and acquired a rooted and bitter dislike for “the gentlemen of the long robes”.
- 1591 During the Religious War of this time, a force of the Catholic League besieged Esparron on Easter Monday. The opposing force of Royalists, who were in alliance with the Huguenots, were at Vinon, under La Valette, and were informed of the siege by a farmer sent to them by d’Arcussia. They came through the woods of Montmajor, on the opposite side of the valley, and fierce fighting ensued. D’Arcussia, never flinching in his loyalty to the King, contributed actively to hunting the Leaguers out of Esparron and out of the whole valley of Rians.

The troop-movements and engagement cost him dear. His château was damaged, the church and most of the houses in the village were destroyed, and the enforced provisioning of the men of war, with repeated destruction of their harvests, ruined the community.

It is strange that there is scarcely any reference in his book to the battle or its effects, or anything to tell that d’Arcussia had seen action, apart from his recalling that he had seen troops of cavalry crossing growing corn without doing it any lasting damage, and likening the sensation of riding at full speed to fleeing as if



expecting a pistol-ball in the back. Yet one effect of the campaigns was to prevent him from collecting his rents and to bring him to the extremity of selling, with her consent, the rings, jewels, and robes that had constituted part of the dowry of his wife in order to clothe their children.

Of the twenty-two children that were born to Charles and Marguerite, ten boys and five girls survived.

- 1584 D'Arcussia renounced all his rights in the fiefdom of Tourves, in consideration of which he received 17,000 écus. At the same time the Parliament of Provence confirmed him in the rank of Vicomte d'Esparron.
- 1596 D'Arcussia was elected as First Consul of Aix, and, with a reputation for firmness and diplomacy, was re-elected in 1619.
- 1597 He was summoned to the Estates of Provence and played the leading part in avoiding a confrontation with the Duc de Guise.
- 1598 "La Fauconnerie de Charles d'Arcussia" was first printed and published at Aix. It was dedicated to Henri IV and consisted only of the first five Parts. It ran to six editions.
- 1614 The Estates-General were summoned in Paris. D'Arcussia attended. At the beginning of "The Conference" he has just returned from a three-month stay at Court, which may well have been the same occasion, the one that gave him the material for his description of the Royal Mews.
- 1615 The new treatise appeared, having been written at the request of Louis XIII. It consisted of ten Parts, the "Last Resolutions" of this volume being made separate from the "Assembly". Five further editions followed, with amendments made by d'Arcussia himself and alterations to the Plates by the publisher.
- 1618 The rebuilding of the church at Esparron was completed. It was built on land given by Gaspard, Charles's father, and Charles contributed 2,000 écus to be paid as the work proceeded.



1621 He “found himself in Paris”.

1628 In early January, d’Arcussia died and was buried at Esparron in the tomb that he had prepared.

Amongst the letters to the brothers Dupuy, written by Peiresc, a neighbour, is one dated January 13<sup>th</sup> of that year which gives an account of the unusually fitting way in which d’Arcussia met his death.

“The said Esparron died a few days ago, greatly regretted amongst the nobility. One would have given him another twenty years of life. He was so robust. His is a notable loss. He caught a chill in going off to recover a hawk which had followed the voice of an echo instead of returning to the man who was calling her. He set off at once on foot, at a great rate, and broke into a sweat. In waiting for his horses, he took cold, and that killed him.”

