

Burnagippan
Oughtinard
8.6.83

Dear Gerald,

I was glad to get your letter but very sorry to hear of your mother's illness. However you do say she is making a good recovery so you will be thankful for that.

I hear that the contents of Fernyde Lodge are to be auctioned at Fernyde on June 23rd but the auctioneer Jim Egan tells me that the vendor has taken all the pictures except Charles Lamb's three. I am very sorry that Rind-Hewes's gipsy picture has gone beyond your reach but I wouldn't worry because your ability has reached a level wherein you need no inspiration other than your own.

I now visualize your visiting
series until you find the one
containing the magic 3. The recent
cold weather has probably resulted in
a late nesting season but normally
I always regarded June 10th as being
the date to get out the ropes.
For what the information may be
worth the series on Belmullet usually
yields 3 eggs on average. If you go
there see Anthony Coyle, Glenlara
who annually reports to me the
number of eggs in "his" series.

Peter and I wish you the best
of good luck

Yours
Ronald.

NO TELEPHONE

Bunnagippaun
Oughterard
Co. Galway

23.12.85

Dear Gerard,

After you left yesterday
my eyes fell on the bottle of whisky
so gaily decorated in its wrapper
and I was ashamed to think that in
the excitement of your visit I did
not thank you properly for such a
very generous gift. It deserves so
much more than a brief "Thank you" so
here I am trying to make amends for
my shortcoming.

Oh pity you did not take any
pigeons with you. Anyway I hope it will

bring you here again to get some. It by
chance we should be out when you call
do please take the pigeons and if you
take the lot that will be O.K. because
I am going in for doves.

It was awfully good of you to
give Peter that picture he is tremendously
proud of it. And thank you very
much indeed Gerard for the whisky
I took a measure of it last night
and this morning my cold has ~~vanished~~
vanished

Yours ever

Ronald.

Greetings



Hope you are keeping well. Have had a wonderful
season and a very good young home bred fulmar you
very high. Weighs only 700 gms. Best Wishes for Christmas & 1983
Stephen.



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I often think of the
first time I saw grouse
hawking with you and the
old 1929 Chrysler I had!!

Grouse Hawking. Dornoy 1983.

Belgum, French, German & Tour Truly.

Burnagippaun
Oughterard
Co. Galway
20.2.54

Dear Gerard,

I was at Richard Ward's last Friday.
As you have probably heard he had two major
operations after Christmas and has only recently
recovered from them. He is getting some quail and
about 20 red-legged partridge and he hopes to have
from his pair of merlins.

I was having tea at the Furness's
lovely home at the Hill of Doon end of Lough Corrib.
He showed me a photo of his shark picture.
I think you should have a lot of pictorial post-
cards done from the original because it really
is outstanding. Anyone would be impressed by
it. How brilliantly you have captured the
sinuous grace of that sinister yet beautiful
creature! John Furness is tremendously
pleased with it and no wonder. When I was
with him last Friday he said let's go to Clifden
and look up Gerard so I expect you will see
us before long although he still looks a bit
shaken after his hospitalization.

My old friend and one time hawking

partner on my Shropshire grouse moor is coming over to collect a hawking dog - a pointer I believe from John Nash and he will be staying with me for a few days next month. He has 2 or 3 people training dogs for him in readiness for next August in Caithness where last year his falcons killed 97 grouse but he says that he could easily have doubled more than that score with a Deers dog - his old favourite having died from old age. I'm not sure yet whether he will be here next month or early April but above all else we shall want to call on your goodself after he has arrived here.

Richard Ward tells me that John Morris' last year's licensed tercel will go for anything that moves but that his favourite quarry is hoodie crows of which he has killed several but his flights and tail feathers have suffered greatly as one would expect - but some tercel. Hoodies killed one of Geoff's falcons.

Alec Finn was here recently - fresh from America where he went hawking with falcons who were flying gyrfalcons.

Talking of gyers I recently received a letter from an Alaskan falconer who flies

gyers only at the 3 species of ptarmigan which seemingly are plentiful there. But for frustrating restrictions you might be able to get him to supply you with gyers.

I have also had several letters from Tony Huston who lives on a farm bordering the Royal Sandringham estate in Norfolk. Recently he was flying his falcon when in a high wind it drifted towards Sandringham when Princess Anne was in the act of picking up a woodcock when the falcon attempted to snatch it from her royal highness. It then flew over the Duke of Edinburgh and waited on over him before continuing on its way towards the Queen who exclaimed "I hear hawk bells". She then ordered the head keeper to go to Tony to tell him to come and take up his hawk (which he still has not recovered) the upshot of it all was that the Royal Family were coming to dine with Tony and Margot that same night. You can bet that most of the talk was about hawks and hawking.

Hoping to see you soon. Pete sends his regards and so do I

Ronald. PTO

Do think about circulating post-cards
of your paintings like other artists do.
Wouldn't your Greenland 442 and sp-hawk
look terrific. ~~Post~~ Photos usually flatter
paintings more than you need any flattery

enclosed a photo from Stephen Frank who
also used to hawk grouse with me in Brooks

Bunnas yps ma

28.2.64

Dear Guard,

Thanks for your interesting letter. But surely you won't going to quarantine pigeons in your sacred ones!

I hope your exhibition is on when Geoff Pollard is here so I can take him to see it but it may not be so easy as I don't know exactly when he is coming neither do I know the duration dates of the exhibition nor where it is to be held but time will reveal everything I hope.

If its racing homing pigeons you want I enclose two addresses where you can get them in

the Republic.

Incidentally there is an annual directory published called Douish Poultry Fancy. I have ordered the 1984 issue to be sent to you. (It's paid for)

Beside poultry it gives you the addresses where you can get waterfowl, pheasants, peacocks, pigeons, doves, canaries, finches etc all in the Republic.

I have just returned from Dublin where I saw some strikingly handsome Red Canaries a great rarity.

Yours

Ronald

PLOUGH COTTAGE
THE BATH ROAD
MARLBOROUGH
WILTSHIRE

28th Feb '84.

Dear Ronald Stevens,

I haven't been in contact for many years but having seen some fine gyrfalcons over the past few seasons I have often thought of you and your love of that species.

I am sure that Geoff Pollard has written to you and told you of Umberto Caproni's very fine Captive bred jerkin. This is a very large jerkin (Icelandic in colour) and started life as a screamer. This he gave up on eating grouse. In the first season he killed 20 or so grouse but none from waiting-on. His second season he was less good and great credit must go to Umberto for persevering with him. He would not wait-on pressed his grouse less and sometimes played the fool such as binding to my hat and carrying it off. Then suddenly, one evening at the very end of September, he waited-on and for the last week of that season he waited-on every flight and killed grouse. The following season he waited-on from the start and killed a lot of grouse but seemed to have reached his maximum height. This last season he carried on as before in lovely style but towards the end of the season suddenly started going higher than before and consistently

waited-on at a great height. His score was I think 64 grouse. He is perfect to hood in the mews but not easy in the field.

Three seasons ago I was asked to fly a passage Greenlander for one of my best finds. This falcon now four years old is probably the finest flyer (gyp) I have ever seen. She has taken well over 100 'houbara' bustard is the very best style. The heat has absolutely no effect on her → she seems to get fit in a remarkably short time. She, in the last few seasons has been reserved for bustard that lift a very long way ahead of the hunting vehicles. Her method of flying is fascinating - she is never on the level → always hangs alongside her quarry then hits it with a very hard steep stoop at 90° to the quarry. Unfortunately her repeated hard hitting of such large quarry has made her feet rather puffy → I only hope she doesn't end up with useless feet. She undoubtedly would take heron or kite in a way that would have immortalized her in the days of the Loo Club. I also have a grey passage gyp which does not like 'houbara' but is an absolute natural at waiting-on. Along narrow tracks, she circles all the time → makes height very quickly. We may well try her at grouse this season. Despite the gyrs I still love my peregrines. I have a wonderful fifth season tiercel who has taken about 200 grouse now → my best wood hawk is an eighth season passage tiercel.

Yours sincerely Roger Upton

R. Stevens Esq
Bunnagippawn
Oughterard
Co. Galway.