



NAFA President, 1964-1965

DONORS:

Cynthia Avery, Alan and Sally Jenkins, Robert B. and Carol S. Berry, The North American Falconers' Association

E. W. "Bill" Jameson Jr. was a professor, an expert zoologist, an author and — a dedicated falconer.

Born in Buffalo, NY, Bill graduated from Cornell University in 1943 with a degree in zoology. After spending time as a Navy officer in WWII, he earned his masters degree at the University of Kansas and then returned to Cornell for his PhD.

He studied mice in California, and then studied chiggers and fleas in Japan, Taiwan and Korea. He even became a worldwide expert on chiggers.

He was an expert on a variety of mammal parasites, demonstrating, for example, the similarities and differences of the squirrels of Taiwan with those of mainland China through the study of parasites. With his expertise, it was not unusual for him to receive vials of parasites from around the world for him to help identify.

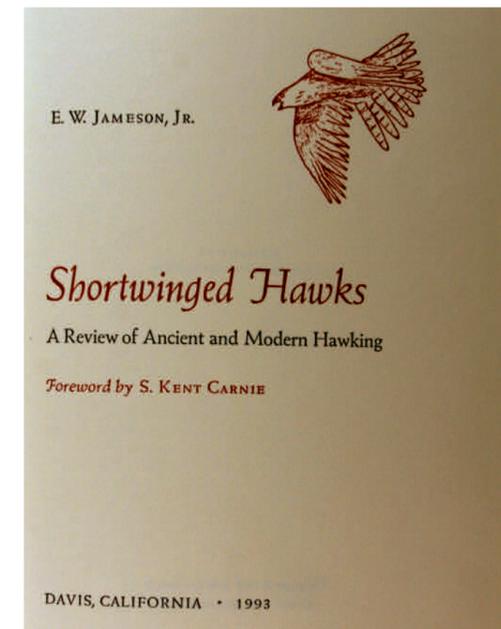
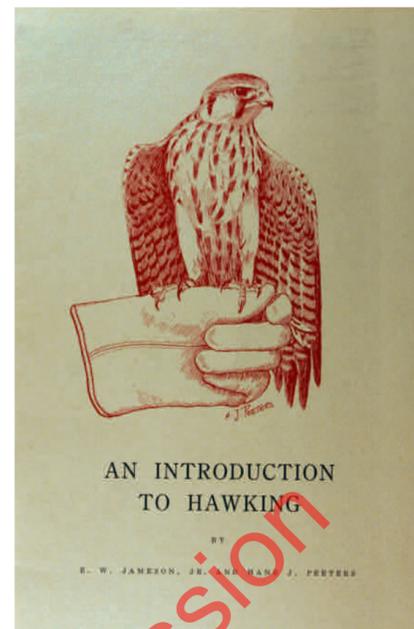
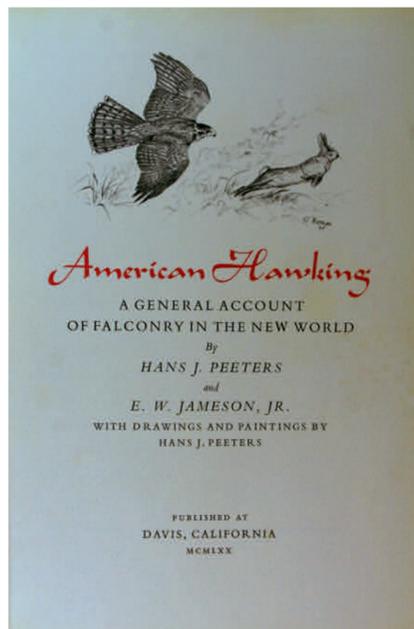
Jameson then spent 40 years as a zoology professor at UC Davis, where he also studied mice and lizards and published numerous articles in his field. He was an accomplished author on subjects that included zoology, falconry, California mammals and even Chinese characters. Prior to his death, at age 89, he was working on yet another book, on the evolution of North American mammals.

The book "Mammals of California," first published in 1989 by the University of California Press, is still in print and is the standard field guide for wildlife enthusiasts.

Other zoology books of his include "Patterns of Vertebrate Biology" and "The Natural History of the Prairie Vole." Probably not books found on your bedside bookshelf.

Jameson's falconry books include "An Introduction to Hawking," "American Hawking — A General Account of Falconry in the New World" (both with illustrations by renowned wildlife artist Hans Peeters), "Shortwinged Hawks — A Review of Ancient and Modern Hawking" and "The Hawking of Japan: The History and Development of Japanese Falconry," a work translated by his wife, which he then updated and published. That book was first printed in 1962 (500 copies) and then reprinted in 1976. Long out of print, it is a valued collector's item worth several hundred dollars. Jameson, himself, was an avid collector of books dealing with falconry.

Peeters and Jameson were very busy over the years. For the "American Hawking" book, Peeters was the senior editor and Jameson the junior editor. For "Mammals of California," those roles were reversed. Peeters is an author in his own right, with books that include "Raptors of California" and "Owls



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of California and the West." His artwork can be found in many places and publications, even on Mexican postal stamps. But it was falconry that first brought them together in 1956 and kept them in constant contact throughout the years. Peeters, also a zoology professor in California, found Jameson to be a "splendid and generous" individual. Like the time Peeters admired one of Jameson's birds. "He spontaneously offered me the Sparrowhawk," he said. It would not be the last bird given to him by Jameson. Meanwhile, Jameson was extremely fond of Hawk Eagles. His favorite was "a beautiful, beautiful animal" that came originally from South America and that he had for 13 years, Peeters said. Jameson was one of those who tended to find falcons somewhat faithless, but those Hawk Eagles were a delight to him.

And the open countryside around Davis was ideal for falconry, teeming with jackrabbits and pheasants.

"Falconry-wise, he lived in heaven," Peeters said.

As a falconer, Jameson was largely self-taught. He came from the era when falconers did everything for themselves, even making their own equipment. His lifelong interest in the sport started back in the 1940s with his first hawks while a student at Cornell.

Jameson had many other interests, as well. There was more in his life than Hawk Eagles, squirrels and chiggers. Married twice, with five daughters, some might be surprised to learn that he built his own homes — from adobe bricks he made by hand. The second home was a large, impressive two-story house. He even made hawk houses of mud bricks. Brick-making takes an immense amount of work and dedication, an attribute that defined much of his life.

There was even a period in his life when he made his own wine. Davis, of course, is smack in the middle of wine-growing

country and, as an agricultural-based school, the university has a strong program. One of Jameson's sherries, which was "quite undrinkable," according to Peeters, nonetheless won an award in the late 1950s. (Which might say more about the state of winemaking in California at that time than it does about Jameson's winemaking skills.)

But his love of falconry was never far away. He even did a stint as president of the North American Falconers Association (NAFA) from 1964-65.

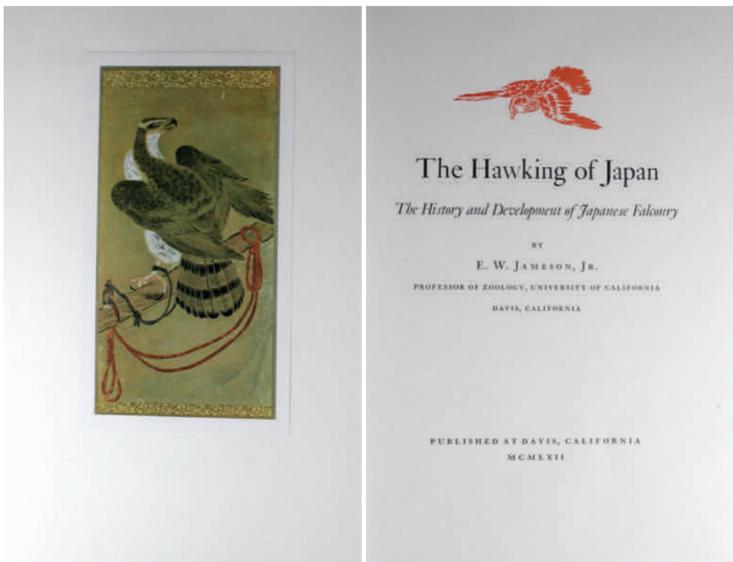
Although his interest in falconry was mostly a personal hobby — and he was a purist with the sport — he was astute in making good connections with Fish & Game officials.

JAMESON WAS ANOTHER CALIFORNIA FALCONER WHO PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN LEGITIMIZING THE SPORT THROUGH THE RULES AND REGULATIONS WHEN THEY WERE FIRST ESTABLISHED IN THE EARLY 1960S IN THE STATE. SINCE THAT TIME, FALCONRY HAS GREATLY INCREASED IN INTEREST AROUND THE COUNTRY AND THE WORLD, AND THE ROMANCE HAS REACHED INTO MANY, MANY HOMES.

And although Jameson was all scientist, Peeters believes there was a bit more behind his love for falconry:

"I suspect there might have been a romantic shadow in the background that led him down the path of falconry."

— *Reminiscences: Hans Peeters*



The Hawking of Japan: The History and Development of Japanese Falconry, a work translated by his wife, was first printed in 1962 (500 copies) and then reprinted in 1976. Long out of print, it is a valued collector's item worth several hundred dollars. Jameson, himself, was an avid collector of books dealing with falconry.

Excerpt from Bill's letter to a friend 24 Oct 1990:

... except for frequent contact with Hans, I have no knowledge of falconers today. (In response to your request for a photo) I could find one picture from the days of active hawking. Some time ago, I thought it would be fun to fly birds from horseback. I took riding classes for several years and had 3 horses, the last of which was a big superb fellow... the gos in the picture has just emerged from a pond in an effort to catch a duck. She was a female I flew for six years...

Cheers,
Bill



PROFESSOR E. W. JAMESON

Bill Jameson was a fine falconer. In his many years of experience in the sport, Bill had become addicted to short-wings. His successes over some 13 years flying an Ornate Hawk Eagle are legendary. He had little if any use for long-wings to the point where one could say that Jameson clearly "disdained" the "true" falcons; he would have nothing to do with them. With Hans Peeters as senior author and illustrator, he also co-authored, their book *American Hawking* in 1970.

At the head of their introductory chapter describing falconry history, Peeters, depicted a falconer clad in sixteenth century dress. The sketch more than slightly resembles Holbein's classic portrait of Robert Cheseman, falconer to Henry VIII.

Like the Holbein, Peeters' figure holds a magnificent gyrfalcon. Given the chapter's subject, the portrait seems appropriate. Appropriate, that is, until one recognizes the person depicted in such courtly garb is none other than Bill Jameson, holding this most-prized of his despised long-wings.

s.k.c.

