

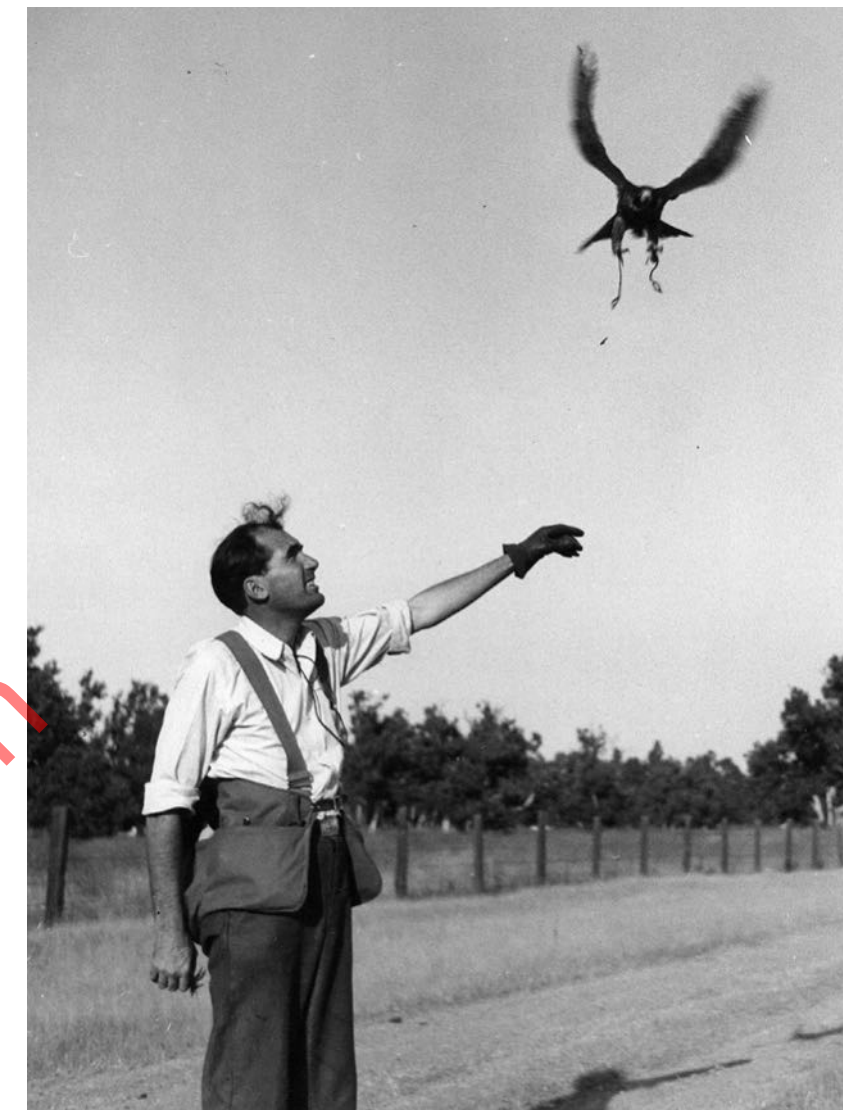


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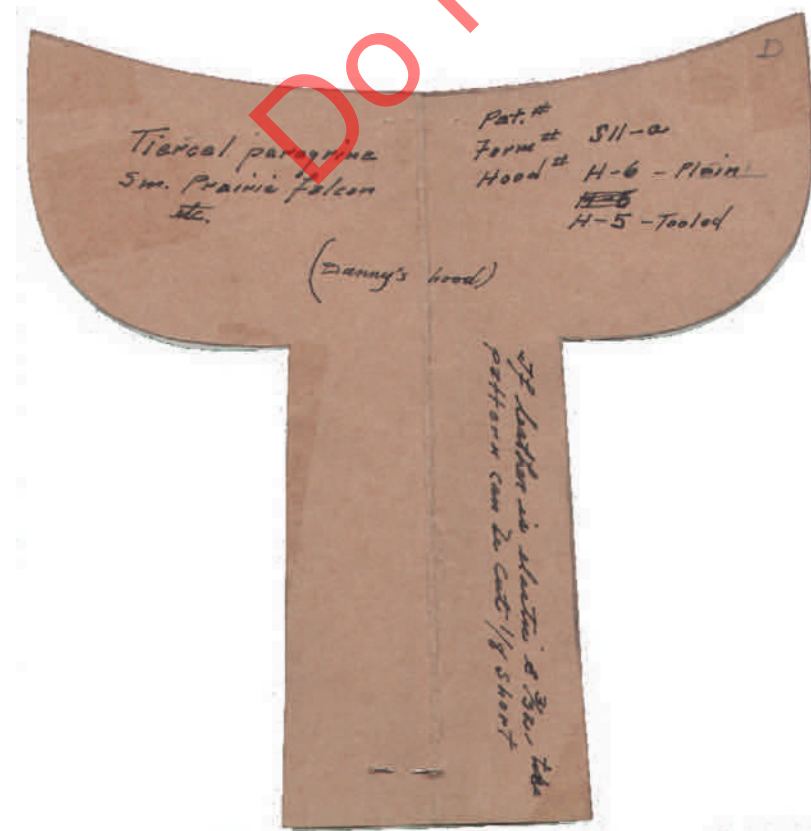
Kent Carnie



**Minard D. Stevens 1912–1987**



Stevens was highly influenced by German falconer/hoodmaker/artist Otto Kals (below), who developed the one-piece Dutch hood pattern.



With the passing of Minard Stevens, the fraternity that is falconry lost one of its true masters. His "mastery" came not from any permit categorization but rather from the genuine depth of his own experiences, from an understanding and an insight into the heart of the sport and of its birds rarely seen in his century.

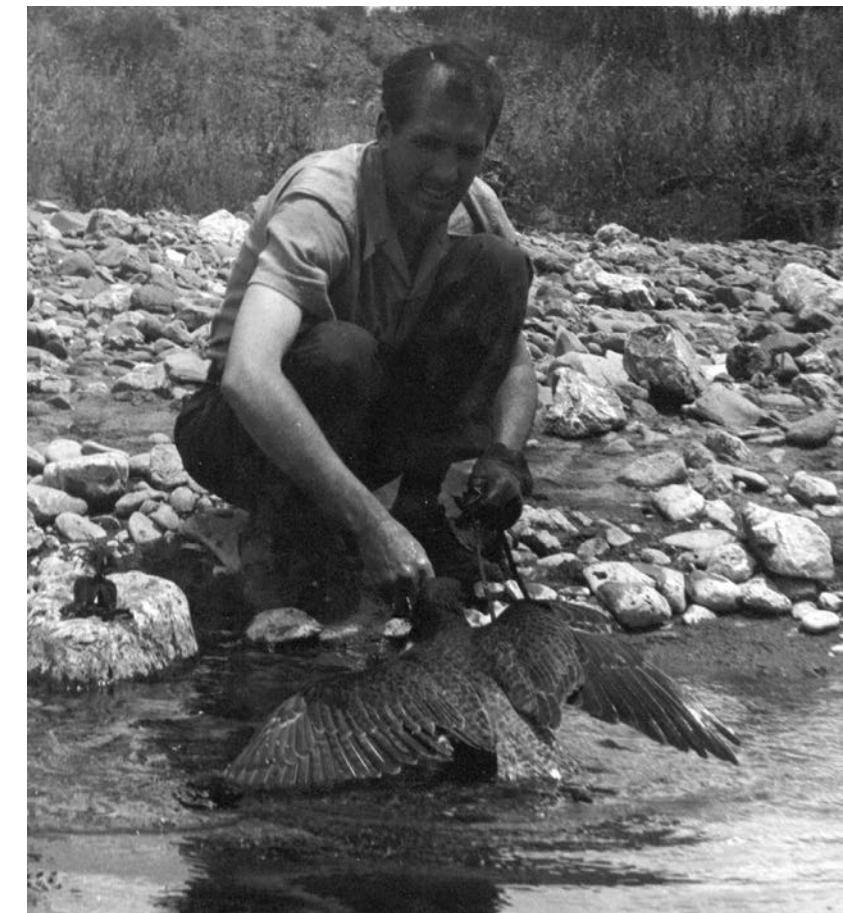
Steve was a man of many talents. At one time a champion goat-roper — he was also a builder. A series of magnificent hospitals and hotels across our land serve as monuments to his competence and painstaking personal supervision. He could quote at length from Shakespeare and from the Rubaiyat, and asked about a hawking problem, he would get a far-away look in his eyes and start, "My son...", then to quote from one of the sport's classics, most often Taymur Mirza, all in a soft accent hinting back to his west-Texas origins.

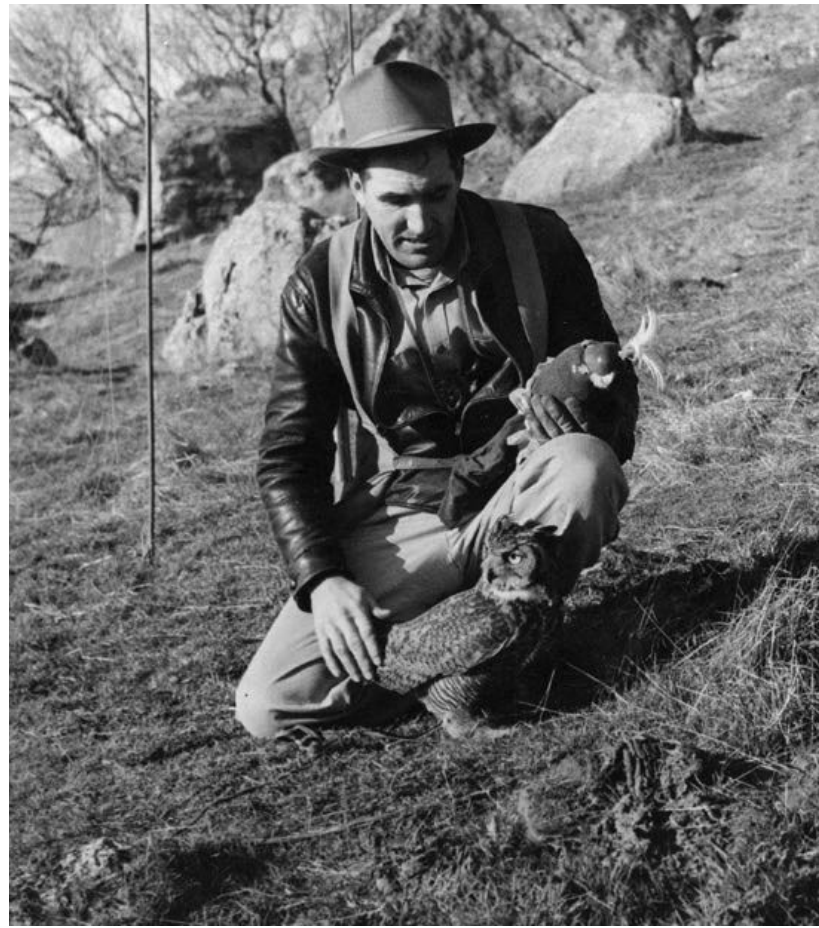
And he was a poet with a bird. He was flying haggards in those long bygone years when a few falconers still took the occasional haggard — but when most on the continent were attempting eyesses. His brief article "The Haggard Prairie Falcon", startled if not staggered, most of his readers who never even conceived of such a bird. Once an old peregrine proved virtually intractable — ignoring all efforts to gain any hint of submission from her. Steve took her on a quiet hand and whispered "coo-coo". Almost immediately she reached down and commenced feeding.

Steve was the first on our continent to produce a really fine Dutch-style hood. What he stitched and molded so expertly on forms of his own making his wife Dirk then tooled to perfection. It was years before others achieved his level of skill and insight into the hoodmaker's art. Of all of his abilities, I think he was proudest of his hoodmaking.

So much more one might write about this very special man — but he was always, most of all, a very private person. I would not intrude.

—S. Kent Carnie





*It was such a small thing,  
to make a falcon's hood.  
But I could not know that one day  
strangers would come to my door,  
enthralled by falcons forever;  
to talk of old legends,  
and sometimes sharing with me  
their treasured relics.*

*Nor could I know  
that for a lifetime  
I was to seek through the mails  
and emissaries,  
to exchange my handiwork  
with other hoodmakers  
in faraway places*

*—mds*

