CAPITULUM QUARTUM.—OF THE BUK AND OF HIS NATURE

A BUK is a diuerse beest, he haþ not is heere as an herte, for he is more whitly, and also he haþ not suche an hede, he is lasse þan an hert, and he is more þan a Roo,[1] buk his hed is pamed, and longe pamyng, and he bereþ moo tyndes þan doþ an hert. His heed may not be wel deuysed wiþout paintyng, þei han a lengere tale þan þe hert and also he haþ moor grece to his aferaunt þan the hert. Thei ben fauned in þe monythe of Juyn.[2] And shortly to say þei han here nature after þe herte saue only þat þe hert gooþ rather to þe Rutte and is raþer in his seson agayne and also in alle oþer þingis of her kynde þe hert goþ to fore þe buk, for whan þe herte haþ be xv. daies at the Rutte scarcely þe buk gynneþ to achauf hym self and bolne. Also men gone not to swe hym with þe lymer neiþer men goon not to harbour hem as men doon to þe herte ne his fumes ben not to putte in iugement as þei of þe hert but men jugoþ hym by the foote or by the hede as I shal say more pleynly here aftir. þei croteye her fumes in diuerse maners aftir þe tymes, and after her metes, as doþ þe hert, but after blak and dþe (*sic*) þan oþer wise. Whan þei bene hunted þei bounted agayn in to her couertz and fleen not so longe, as doþ þe herte for somtyme þei renne vpon þe houndes[3] and þei rennen longe and fleene euere ȝif þei may alway.[4] The gar[5] hem be take at þe water and beten þe brokes as þe herte but not with so grete malice as þe hert, ne so gynnously, And also þei goon not to so greet Ryuers as þe hert, þei renneþ faster at þe bygynnyng þan dothe þe hert. The bolk about whan þei goo to Rutte not as þe hert doþ bute moche lowere þan þe herte and Ruttelyng in the þrote. Her nature and þat of þe hert ne loueþ not to gedere, for gladly þei wil not dwelle þere as mony hertes bene, ne þe hertes þer as þe bukkes be namely togedere in heerde, þe buckes flesshe is more sauery[6] þan is þat of þe herte or of þe Roo buk. The venyson of hem is ryght good and ykept and

CHAP. 4.—OF THE BUCK AND OF HIS NATURE

A BUCK is a different kind of beast, he hath not his hair as a hart, for he is more white, and also he hath not such a head. He is smaller than a hart and is larger than a roe.[1] A buck's head is palmed with a long palming, and he beareth more tines than doth a hart. His head cannot be well described without painting. They have a longer tail than the hart, and more grease on their haunches than a hart. They are fawned in the month of June[2] and shortly to say they have the nature of the hart, save only that the hart goeth sooner to rut and is sooner in season again, also in all things of their kind the hart goeth before the buck. For when the hart hath been fifteen days at rut the buck scarcely beginneth to be in heat and bellow.

And also men go not to sue him with a lymer nor do men go to harbour him as men do to the hart. Nor are his fumes put in judgment as those of the hart, but men judge him by the foot or the head as I shall say more plainly hereafter. They crotey their fumes in diverse manners according to the time and pasture, as doth the hart, but oftener black and dry than otherwise. When they are hunted they return again to their coverts and fly not so long as doth the hart, for sometimes they run upon the hounds.[3] And they run long and fly ever if they can by the high ways and always with the change. They let themselves be taken at the water and beat the brooks as a hart, but not with such great malice as the hart, nor so cunningly, and also they go not to such great rivers as the hart. They run faster at the beginning than doth the hart. They bark and bellow about when they go to rut, not as a hart doth, but much lower than the hart, and rattling in the throat. Their nature and that of the hart do not love to be together, for gladly would they not dwell there where many harts be, nor the harts there where the bucks be together in herds. The buck's flesh is more savoury[6] than is that of the hart or of the roebuck. The venison of them

[1] I have followed the Shirley MS. in this.
[2] G. d. F. (p. 27) says end of May, which is probably the case in his southern country.
[3] They do not make such a long flight as the red deer but by ringing return to the hounds. G. d. F. says, "Car ilz ressaillent aux chiens moult de fois," p. 27.
[4] A line is here left out, which omission confuses the sense. The missing line reads: "by the high way and always with the change." See G. d. F., pp. 27 and 28.
[5] Gar = force.
[6] G. d. F., p. 29, completes the sense of this sentence by saying "that the flesh of the buck is more savoury to all hounds than that of the stag or of the roe, and for this reason it is a bad change to hunt the stag with hounds which at some other time have eaten buck."

BUCK HUNTING WITH RUNNING HOUNDS