


1950 SHOOTING NOTES

14 October - Saturday. ^{17#14} opening day of grouse season! Ruff's fourth, my twenty-sixth (I believe) and Blue's twelfth - and I am almost certain about the last day he'll have been out. The weather was cool and overcast with constant showers that kept moving over. Kay, Ruff, Blue and I left home about 11:30 our time and drove the new shooting trailer to Laurel Run at Gilsons. We ran into or heard squirrel chatters most of the day. Covered the first little hemlock prairie and the top of the knob with no sign of birds. ^{Other men in the woods?} Dropped over into the next valley too far up and came out on the wrong field (probably Scott King's) but soon located the ~~the~~ Falkeustien's pine and hemlock after climbing across the long ridge. We ate lunch under the old hemlock pine having moved no birds whatever. The rain worked hard ^{at being steady} while we ate in our fairly dry spot. Finally after lunch we decided it was a matter of hunting in the rain or not at all, so crossed the old field to the Hazel Run valley and I hunted the top edge around to the far side while Kay shepherded Blue across the field again. By this time he was getting awfully stiff and tired, but Ruff was traveling like a dream. After I had reached the edge opposite the Hazel Run valley, I walked into a grass that flushed to my left and quartered away from me. I made a quick swinging snap but missed as the bird melted into the thick brush. The leavers were as thick as muckmuncher with little chances to see any birds that might flush. Kay had entered the woods on the edge above and had seen another bird flushed near her as I fired. In the bottom on our way across to the first ridge a grouse flushed close to me from the edge of the path, but my shot was like trying to hit a target in a



face full of leaves. I saw the bird go on and might have had a
better chance if I had waited a second but had no way of knowing
I'd ever see him again. There will be no decent shooting until we
get a heavy wind and ^{autumn} storm to remove the leaves. They are at
a beautiful phase now - so either way, as you wish. We started
working our way up Laurel Run valley, keeping partway up on the
base of the ridge. Puff bumped one that I count #4 and later
froze into a staunch point beside the path and refused to budge
until I had tramped the surrounding area thoroughly. There was nothing.
He had made a lovely point along an edge of logwoods in the middle
of the Talkenstien field that was also unproductive. 
About this point old Blue began to tire badly.
not that he was ill but just plain worn out.
Ray worked to keep him moving but he settled down for a long winter nap
and I had to take over. While Ray carried my gun, I got Blue onto
my shoulders - fur neckpiece style - and carried him the
3/4 mile to the car. In the way #5 flushed across the path
but would not have been a shot. Puff froze into his third lovely
point of the day and I put Blue down long enough to walk up
while Ray worked the thick cover to try to flush the bird into a shot,
but again it was unproductive. I picked Blue up again and we got
into the car, tired and soaking. The rain had let up toward the end
but not till the woods was saturated. The birds seem to have been down
near Laurel Run today. We got home and I had a good hot bath and now
we're all four drowsing in front of the after dinner fire.

p52/100%



HOME IN
STYLE

Makaraiah

Moved 5 birds
6 flocks
2 shots - no hits
no productivis

Monday, 16 October - A beautiful October day, mild and sunny. Ray and Blue rode as far as Wotruigs and walked back home with the milk. Ruff and I drove up to the forest where we learned that grouse shooting there doesn't open until November 6th. It was nearly 2:30 our time when we started in the woods, leaving the car at the old Laurel Run road near the stream. I hunted down the right side, climbing straight up the perpendicular knob and keeping just below the upper edge. We saw two birds separately that dissolved into the hemlocks below, one flushed just before a young deer ran toward him. Further on, Ruff began scenting along the ground and soon trumped a bird that flushed up the steep hill. I whirled into the bright sunlight and tried for a spot above him as he bored into a mass of maple leaves - yellow against the light - but I missed and saw him vault into a curve and disappear. High up on the ridge I saw him again, flushing him well ahead of me.



The next flock was from Ruff and the grouse came back toward me, a yard off the ground and skimming between me and the edge of the open woods, some fifty yards away. I swung with him and fired but he went on. I saw where a double



pattern -- at least if any shot got around they didn't touch him. #4/30
after failing to run him again I ate lunch in the warm autumn
sunshine sitting on a dry log below the edge of the woods. After
lunch I eased down the steep hill thru beautiful bird cover -
hemlocks dark and moist but saw no birds until we flushed
wild and took for the top of the ridge. This was below where I have
started hunting other years, well below Gibson's house. I followed
the path and saw #5 and #6 together, both flushing up the hill
above and altho I soon turned and hunted the hillside back
I never saw them, but did get two nice points from Ruff. Altogether
he made three solid points today, more productive. (Yesterday now our
land he made two productives but I'm not recording them since they
were non-hunting). I crossed land above Gibson's and hunted up
the swamp to the church a school or what-ever and so to the
car. My two shots today were interesting - both possible but neither
connected.

2 shots - no hits
saw 6
8 flushes

Friday October 20 Kay and Blue stayed at home after our several
days of strenuous anti-road activity and I took
Ruff to the Hoy Miller country, leaving the station wagon at Kelly's,
the first house on Miller's road. The day was beautiful but too warm
and dry and with too many leaves still on. I hunted the entire
ridge along the left side of Little Sandy making 2 birds - one for a
second flush from a hemlock - before I reached the point between
the creeks. There, near an old spring, I tumbled down among

ran out apple trees with fruit stream over the ground, Puff
 put out a grove that he probably should have pointed. I felt
 dissatisfied with his work - he seemed too hot and didn't range
 well, keeping his nose too near the ground. He made a point in a
 narrow neck of woods where I felt the grove had gone but
 nothing developed. I imagine it had taken off again. I swung
 up to a peak of woods on top the ridge and he pointed again. This
 time after no flush I sent him on but later walked into a grove
 that flushed from under a small hemlock on the edge of a half-
 grown up field. I shot as I got a look at him but tho I tho I
 should have connected, didn't find him. Across the clearing Puff



flushed another grove, #5, and I promised
 him for chasing it. On top the ridge we
 moved my bird for 2 more flushes and then I followed and called
 into him again. The next flush came sooner than I expected but I
 believe it was the same bird for I had passed the spot earlier.
 Puff didn't get any suggestion of scent but I sent him in and we
 worked the woods along another clearing and then I found him on
 solid point, standing on an old log road pointing into a very thick
 cover. I walked in from the lower edge to get a good position and
 after a moment Puff moved in. I can't exactly blame him for it, for
 his points have been a little too long range lately and I encourage
 him to move in closer to win the bird - but this time he flushed it -
 I swung ahead of the quartering rising shot and dropped it after
 calling at Puff. He had it in a split second but just stood

mounting it as he occasionally does, refusing to retrieve, tho he
picked it up and dropped it twice. Finally after a lot of coaxing on
my part he quit and lay down beside it, panting and looking
difficult. I ~~was~~ ~~at~~ ~~his~~ ~~side~~, but controlled myself
and picked the quass up and paid him no attention at all.



* He realized his fault, I'm sure, but for some reason pulled this
gag periodically, usually when the weather is hot. I
suspect the fault is mine for not training him to force retrieval,

and I still wonder if I should do it. The bird, incidentally, was a
very young yearling with the broken band on the tail feathers. We left
this area and hunted back up the valley, dropping down at Mullis
house and many four more birds - the best 3 very close together
at an edge near the upper margin of this territory. The climb up to
the top of the ridge was longer than expected and it was after 6 o'clock
and when I reached the car. I heard a quass drumming in the little
woods above Kelly's house but didn't find him. Puff pointed #9, the

last of the group of 3 very beautifully and staunchly. In fact he had
made a too-long-range point on the first 2 but not definitely close
enough or not conclusively enough to credit it a production. The blot
on the day was Puff's refusal to retrieve - a bitter disappointment.


2 shots - 1 hit (over point)
near 9 Puff made 2 productions
16 flushes and refused a retrieval.
The hit was one of the points.

Saturday 21 October - Puff and I took a short hunt in the afternoon prior
to the Eiseles coming. The day was hot and very dry -
game bag and short weather - and we went to the Log House hollow.
It seems, from my experience last year and on this afternoon hunt to be

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a definite has-been. I would exactly one grouse there tho I did
get three flushes on him. After covering the valley rather well I
dropped over the ridge to Warm Run & horribly cut out last year
and in no way grown back yet - moving me grouse for 2 flushes then.
I ate lunch high on the hill across from the Wilkinson house with a
tremendous view of gold fleeced russet ridges to the west. I came
in about 4 p.m.

no shots
ward 2
5 flushes

Tuesday, 24 October - after waiting half the day for the district
road man to turn up - working *in* on the garage roof - I
L finally hunted up the jerk* who seemed about half articulate, and
after conveying him around and getting just about no place, I left
for a short while back on little Sandy. Kay stayed at home with Blue
who seems about normal after his low spell Sunday, and I took Ruff
to Faulkner's ridge. There didn't seem to be a grouse on the whole
hillside - though it's possible I didn't look in every corner but one sure
thing is, if they were around, they were certainly in damned few places.
I ~~spatched~~ spliced hill across the road and put #1 up from some
shotgun near the crest. Around the ridge above Sandy, I dropped
over the steep side and at the lower path a bird flushed from below a
humbler as Ruff appeared.  I swung with him
as he topped the Denver and pulled. For a split second he
showed no indications of being hit and my reflex pulled the second barrel.
Immediately before the second shot I saw the grouse start to tumble but
it was too late - the left wing off *reportedly* but I don't think it hit
*jerk: gentleman, brother, salt of the earth (new edition 1907, 8, 1907, 150)

him for he was dropping them. Ruff arrived in time to almost get him on the ground, and after several mouthings began to go into his act. I wasted no time today, walking up and forcing him to put his head down. I placed the bird in his mouth and ordered him to "Fetch". Then I turned and walked away and he carried it after me, sitting to deliver when I turned around at the last spot I had asked him to fetch to me. I'm not counting it a retrieve for it wasn't, truly, but I believe if I force him to do that instead of copying when he dabbles it may put a stop to this horse play. The bird was a beautiful large grouse with rather tall tail feathers that are enormous and large ruff. The tail band was a nearly solid one but still would classify as "broken". After examining the bird and encouraging Ruff, I crossed back to the Recroad side and hunted out the woods on Spiker's land, moving one medium-sized bird from the edge of the wheat field on top. I carried the area well and moved no more, returning to the shooting tracks at the bridge about 6:00.

2 shots - 1 hit

Ward 3

3 flushes.

no retrieve or
productivity.




Wednesday 25 October

I left about 12:00 with Ruff - Kay and Blue staying home to pick up nuts etc - and drove back the old road to Cuygart and Upper Beaver, parking at the bridge. The weather was lovely - moderately cool and sunny. I worked the ridge upstream, passing up the cover on top and across the hollow from the Cuygart road until my return, and soon ran into sign of game. Ruff pointed for a short time near the old

point of the woods that reaches out into the hillside field, among
 marked grapevines. There was a brisk ground breeze blowing away
 from us and, after a short pause, he moved in and circled the edge
 and swung behind me and lower down. Apparently the breeze
 carried the scent away from us for in a few steps I walked onto
 a grouse lying close. It flushed low and angling up the slope.
 I swung to a spot above him and fired, hitting him squarely at about
 fourteen yards. I let the bird stop fluttering and sent Puff in to
 retrieve, which he did nicely, tho he laid it on the ground at my
 feet instead of delvering from a sitting position.



It was about I have considered a last year's grouse,
 judging from tail size and development of ruffs - tho the technicians
 may differ from my opinion. The tail band was incomplete. The
 most noticeable feature was the fact that it was very hard hit - it
 was limp. We left that cover with the gun in "safe" and followed the
 ridge around to the burned-over area beyond the field - a cover
 that I have seen develop in the last three or so years. Now it is
 perfect - in fact, it was excellent cover last season: burned logs
 and fallen trees, thick young sapling with lots of grapevines, and lined
 by several spring runs cutting down the ridge. The rhododendron
 along Beaver borders the lower part with an invulnerable escape and
 the steep ridge gives the birds a good temporary way out - and the
 old fields that border it on the upper and hillside edges seem to be
 just right. We flushed a grouse, #2, up over the ridge almost the
 moment we stepped into the cover and #3 flushed ^{further} around.
 Puff got in a nice third with a
 hot-looking point in the grape vine field on the upstream end but nothing
 materialized. I dropped to the ^{thick cover on the lower edge of}

the field and heard a goose flash as I approached a clump
of grapes hanging blue about an old stone well. Inside, as I
began hunting back, another goose flushed down toward the
stream and I couldn't tell if Buff had pointed a rivet to him.
I worked the ridge back downstream, lower down, and turned
at the place where I had undertaken excavation activities last
year and hunted it back the original direction - this time
holding midway. We moved #6 that seemed to keep rather
ahead but I never moved it again. I hunted all the way up
the cove to below the little house where Madeline and Ray Roster
used to live and ate lunch in some beautiful rhododendron
cove near a ^{grape} vine hanging full of fruit. After finishing, I
worked them some greenbrier, having a moment with my fine-
feathered pal, and angled up the ridge to the upper edge of the
cove I'd been hunting. Partway along, just ~~under~~ under the
top edge a goose flushed from a tangle of vines below me and
started back the hill. I held my fire for a second and found
the right spot ahead of him and pulled - tumbling him onto the
leaf-covered slope below me, where he fluttered and rolled down
the hill. I called Buff in and he took over very efficiently,
retrieving the  bird, holding him by the aft parts and
head down. Altho he didn't deliver to
hand, I'll have to credit him with the
retrieval.  When he laid the goose on
the leaves it made another effort to
escape  fluttered down the slope a few

50
11
feet till I caught it and killed it. It was a matched mate to
the first in size and age and had the right wing broken nearly
after sitting down to admire our two birds, we
continued along the ridge and flushed ~~a~~ a
bird that I count as #2 on the second rise.
I touched the edge of the nice cover that tops
the ridge above the car but didn't want to tear

H.



ONE COMES
IN ALIVE.

Brush too much so worked down and called it a day - a damned fine one.
2 shots - 2 hits 2 retrievers by Ruff.

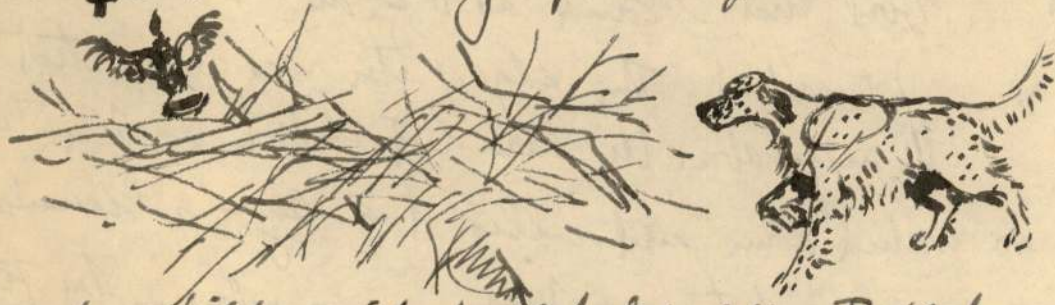
March 7

8 flushes.

Thursday 26 October - This was a perfect day, except that Ray stayed
home with Blue, - promising to go with me tomorrow.

I took Ruff and left the shooting brake at Gibson Park in Deep Hollow,
crossing Muddy Creek and walking some distance upstream before I could
find a place unsteep enough to pull myself up the ridge. I located an
old road and dragged ~~up~~ up about a 90 percent grade to the
upper edge of the hemlock cover - working up toward the mine. A little
above it I came to a badly slashed cutting which had left nothing
but brush heaps. I hunted up toward the top of the ridge keeping to
the edge of the woods. As I passed around a hemlock and grapevine tangle
a grouse roared out behind some rocks and bored up the hill. I marked
him and worked Ruff to the place I thought he had to be. After a
short delay Ruff froze on point, headed toward a pile of brush and
logs just out from the woods. I walked in while he held splendidly,
and when nothing happened I tried my voice. No reactions. I decided

I'd have to climb in and had almost taken the first step when I heard a crashing and the bird boiled up over the edge of the tangle and quartered up the hill. Points scare me to death and half the time I'm tense as a harp so my response was blind. Bang bang - and the bird disintegrated into nothing up the ridge. I didn't begrudge the grouse his break - more power to him - but it was such a lachry point with such perfect opportunity



to make a hill over it that I hated letting Ruff down like that. at the top of the ridge, just within the edge from a big flat field, I came on Ruff pointing again. This looked like another chance, and I walked in while Ruff held. This time it was a false alarm - I believe the grouse had gone out before Ruff came on point and the scent was hot. I worked him along the edge to the left, keeping inside the brush heap area. A short point flight away the bird went up - cutting back of me in a reverse direction. I wheeled and sawing ahead of him, I forced, and saw him go down in a puff of feathers. I called Ruff and sent him to fetch which he did very nicely except that he dropped the bird on the ground. It was a yearling bird, hard hit.

I moved into another piece of woods and found a wonderful corner to eat lunch in - a lazy Indian summer corner with an old apple tree and thinning woods against a shoulder of the Dreary Mountains, and Ruff and my pass on the leaves at my feet. I sat there in the sunshine among yellow apples, flecked with calico red, strewn all around me and drank it in and wished for Kay. The old apple tree had wrinkled bark that folded around its gray roots like the hide on

an elephants' foot. a few yards away a clump of ironwood saplings showed dead colored in the sun, looking like separate bundles of two or three stems wrapped under one bark with their odd-shaped ^{sections:} ~~diameters~~.

I ate a juicy sweet apple along with my ham sandwich and watched three yellowjackets swarm, cider-drunk, on another apple on the ground. It was a day in late October.

After that, I hunted out into a point of the woods, skirting an old farm house over the rise of field, and soon Puff froze into point at a clump of alders. It was a perfect woodcock cover, damp and cool and woody, out in this neck of woods. I walked in and no quail materialized. Puff still held with his head tilted into the thick stuff, his big eyes rolling hugely. I knew it was a 'cock and I had said I wouldn't kill another after last year and still it was one of those points I couldn't let down. So when I walked ~~him~~ up and he arced over the brush I had to try for him and that was all. He never knew he was hit. He dropped in a handful of feathers and didn't move. I sent ~~him~~ Puff in to retrieve and after some searching we found the bird lying orange breast up in the leaves but after nosing him he refused any dealings whatever, so I didn't force him.



We cut across the edge of a cornfield and a buckwheat stubble and headed for the walk across the steep road into Deep Hollow.



I BREAK A RESOLUTION.

It was one of those unreal days when anything could happen and if I had found time set back fifty years and had walked into a covey of quail or seen a flock of wild turkeys move out of the corn I wouldn't have been too surprised. The moment we stepped into the big woods on the far side of the road, a grouse went up into a hucklebush and sat there silhouetted against the white ball of sun, piping down at Puff. I stood ready and waited for him to take off. ~~He~~ He did, zooming out into the tall trees and diving back and down the ridge. I hunted on, keeping below the old lane that follows the hill. I saw Puff go tuss and hit scent, then wheel and point into a tangled grapevine below him. Almost at once, a grouse rolled out cutting to my right and a little toward me. I found the spot ahead of him and pulled and he went down. Puff spotted him and was in there trying to keep the limp from sliding from his mouth. He brought him to me nicely and I tried to prevent his dropping the bird by ordering him to sit. He sat and let it drop in an operation. I put it back in his mouth and then accepted it and thanked him. Then we sat on the cool leaves and laid our mixed bag beside us and did a little gleaning. After that we walked down to the road and back up to where the station wagon was parked. As I say, this was a perfect day except that Kay stayed home.



→

4 shots - 2 hits (1 on point) 2 retrievers by Puff
 1 woodcock shot - 1 hit 2 productions with 1 kill.
 moved 3 grouse (over point) 1 production on the woodcock
 5 flushes. with a kill.
 moved 1 woodcock

Monday 30 October - I left Kay and Blue with Corda Rojahn who is visiting us and took Puff to explore the country above Clifton. The first road at the barn was disappointingly open a little ways up. I returned and drove to the next road that passes the deserted house with the pine trees (the Caton place). At the third house out the road I stopped and asked to leave my car and was told their name was Wolfe and that I could hunt in the hollow back of their place. It was dense redbrush cover and looked quite extreme and very promising. I followed a little run for a piece and then crossed and Puff pointed in some thick tangled stuff. He moved in a bit too close and the grouse flushed. I followed and soon saw ~~two~~ ^{three} birds (one could have been #1). I tried to locate them in some horribly thick cover but didn't see them altho later I saw one I call #4 on the far side of the next hill. The country is too thick for decent shooting and yet is vast. Not too much food but wonderful protection. I ate lunch on the little run and while I sat there I thought I heard the wings of a bird landing but never was able to see him. After lunch I hunted down to the next valley and then followed it across a road well up toward the head and still didn't reach the end. I thought Puff acted as tho a bird flushed wild ahead of him but didn't count it since I wasn't sure. The woods was as dry as a month-old funeral wreath and my feet made so much noise I can't be certain a lot of birds didn't go out wild. Toward five o'clock I had hunted back into the cover where I'd saw the first bird and walked into him again. It was a reflex snap shot that didn't connect - the only shot of the day.



1 shot - no hit
 saw 4
 6 flushes
 one production by Puff

Tuesday 31 October

after Corda left, Kay and Puff and I drove to the forks of Sandy country and left the car at Bob's Bunnys. Soon after we started behind their house a bird went out wild and we merely heard him go. A short quon flight further on Puff swung into a sudden point in a little

ravine along a spring run and nearly immediately the quon came up - at first seeming to go away from me, but then,



against the day, he seemed to loom larger and larger and I realized he was coming my way.



I tried for a lead ahead of him, I've drawn, but either I wasn't there or the bird turned (which I'm pretty sure of) and he went up the hill - crossing in front of Kay. She marked him well, and when we went up Puff froze on another point. The bird flushed before I could walk in close enough and I saw him cross an open field and bore into an edge of trees on the far side. We followed but never found him. Returning to the first ravine, we hunted it down rather far before we moved #2.

He went out of the stream bank under Puff's nose and headed for places unknown - a big, strong-flying bird. A little owl flew into an oak and sat scolding at us as if we ought to know this was Hollow'sen. We hunted back toward the top of the original ridge and walked into two quons that flushed wild from near a best hole for coal - one must have gone around the ridge (I saw him take off) and the second one skinned a foot or two off the ground, straight up the hill.

I thought we'd find this one but never did. That's the way everything seemed to go today. I suppose it was partly the Indian Summer heat - terrific under a burning blue sky. And if the woods was like a dried funeral wreath yesterday, it was just that much ~~drier~~ ^{drier} and noisier today. We started back up the ridge again and the Puff had been near, he missed #5 and #6 in a little gully where they lay quietly till I was above and then went out with no chance for me to shoot. We didn't try to follow, but kept on up the hill. At the top edge Puff put me out that I count as #4 on the second flush. Later Puff pointed solidly but no bird was there. He had made lovely point after #5 and #6 had gone - so solid that I had to walk in to convince him. I wish now that we had stayed in that first valley for I think there would have been more action there. As it was, we hunted the entire top of the ridge around the point of land and heard one woodcock from a ditch and two quail that went out wild in a nice little woods. They were #7 and #8. I flushed one of them further on as I called to Puff who was inclined to keep his nose too close to the ground due to the difficulty in scenting.

On top the hill under a big spruce and surrounded by a carpet of myrtle that is spreading all thru the woods, we found an old burying lot with headstones dating from 1833. The family names were Armstrong, Collins and Childster with one ~~Christian name~~ ^{Christian name} that occurred with each of the family names, Eliphallet, and I don't know if it is a man's or girl's.

1 shot - no hit
 mark 8
 12 flushes
 2 productive by Puff.
 He hunted hard today, tho he was very hot and tired.



STONES UNDER A TREE.

Thursday 2 November

Yesterday I stayed home to rest ~~the~~ ^{both} the gunner and dog, but with developments on the road situation - letters from the governor - only the dog got the rest.

Today I got an early start before the promised rain and took Ruff to Dick Benson's where I left the car and hunted the ~~hill~~ ^{creek} back toward Braxton. It was beautiful bird cover, plenty of feed and about 300 acres of Benson land to roam on but the high wind and impending storm had the birds locked up tight. I dropped down to the creels and hunted it downstream to the hollow that runs down from Dick's, crossing three some hellish briars and climbing the steep bank on the far side. Near the top, above ~~some~~ ^a crab thicket, I heard a bird go out - then saw it loom up toward me and come directly over my head, slowing a bit as tho' to land. I whirled about and then ^{seemed to} ~~became~~ aware of me and picked up speed. I swung to a spot ahead of him and fired - dropping him in a cloud of feathers. Ruff came in at the shot and I sent him to retrieve, which he did nicely. I didn't give him the chance to drop the bird, but held out my hand and forced him to keep it and sit to deliver.



The bird is probably a yearling, tho' a good-sized one. I still haven't learned the mysterious method of distraction the technicians use, so go by size of tail. About this time it began to rain and I got fairly wet. However, I went to the top of the hill to see what the cover was and Ruff went into a point of woods. When I was ready to leave I called him and then saw a quail go into a low shrub and take off down the ridge to my left in perfectly open range. I, of course, wasn't interested in another shot in this cover so left. At the head of the hollow, and back on the far side near Benson's I flushed a big quail that made a deep thump as he took off - so large he was that it

airborne! I followed him around the ridge, a bit higher than my first
time today but couldn't seem to spot him. On my return circle, lower
down I called Puff and the big boy went out below me. Puff moved
in several yards as he flushed so I believe he had him on point.
after that I found no further signs of birds tho I'm certain there
must be a number on that ridge. The weather gave way indication
of behaving but I was wet and Puff was becoming sluggish. His had
too much hard hunting and should be rested. I went to the car
and drove home.

1 shot - 1 hit
mowed 3
4 flushes

2 productions by Puff
1 retriever by Puff

So far I have mowed 56 ~~praise~~ grouse for 84 flushes with 7 kills.

^{17#15}
Monday 6 November - The weather took care of last Friday and Saturday
but today was perfect - cold and clear and
sunny. Ray and I left Paul Stone to entertain Mother and the
"nitters" and drove with Puff to the forest for the first day of grouse
shooting up there. We got to the fire tower about 2:00 pm. and
started along the ridge on the east slope. We finally reached the good
grape covers, with loads of fruit hanging there, but found no birds.
Having covered the country just under the brow of the ridge and a
bit below, we switched to the bottom; still no business. After
lunch down along the stream - clear and crystal cold and
drinkable - we hunted on down the valley, Ray keeping along the
tramroad and I taking the steep hillside above her. As we approached
the grapes a grouse flushed from below and came back my way -
like one did last year - only this time it crossed and quartered up the

drops about me, settling just out of my line of vision over the
 brow of a little declivity. I followed and sent Puff up the hill,
 taking the stiff drag a little slower than ~~my~~ my belton friend.
 As I neared the place something exploded from beside a log and
 cut along the hill a ~~few~~ few feet off the ground - straightaway.
 I recovered from the flinch and settled a lead on him and fired, dropping
 him in a cloud of feathers. I called Puff
 up and sent him to retrieve which he did,
 nicely. It was a young bird, but very
 squarely. I tried to let Ray know what had
 occurred but she was too near the full-



flowering stream to turn me so I hunted on down the ridge at the same
 level and let her keep to the tramroad. A few yards beyond where I had
 shot my bird a second grouse flushed and I realized that Puff was
 on the spot and, I'm sure, was pointing it. I found no others on the rest
 of the way to the end of the ridge. So dropped down and gave Ray the
 good tidings. We decided to return up the other side of the same ridge,
 then coming over the top at the low point and hit the good grass covers
 about sunset feeding time. As we climbed the point to go around the
 end Puff made a small point but it wasn't productive. However, a bit
 further on a grouse flushed from him - I think it was downwind - and
 topped the crest of the ridge. We swung around the point to pick up
 any others and came into a very probable range to find the bird.
 Puff soon froze into a lovely point and I waded over a mess of
 dead snags and stuff and flushed the grouse, missing a quick try

as it dodged up thru some trees. We count this the same #3, tho it didn't have to be the one bird. We tried to follow and at the correct place Puff pointed again but this time the bird wasn't there. It could very well have moved out ahead of us for the leaves were quite noisy in spite of the heavy rain last Saturday. Not far along the ridge, a bird flushed from Puff and sailed ^{left} down over the slope, settling just at the limit of my scope. I count it #4 because it certainly didn't act as tho it had been flushed before. I left Kay up high and sent Puff down, following him. I had decided after shooting the first grouse that I would limit my subsequent shots to points only and so I was particularly thrilled to find Puff solid as the big boulder he was stretched beside, pointing down and around the corner of the rock. I stepped in, passing him, and cutting in front, but nothing happened. I looked at Puff and then took another step. For a moment all was quiet, then a burst of



sound and the grouse began climbing into the sun. I got ~~to~~ ^{at} located and found the spot and fired, dropping ~~it~~ ^{it} with a stream of feathers like a jet exhaust. Puff moved in when I ordered him to fetch and retrieved ~~beautifully~~ after a moment's difficulty gathering the bird up into his

years. It was a beautiful cycle of performance and certainly justified the idea of holding all shots after the days first bird until points. In that way, I believe a lot of birds that I'd normally have killed will fly or to escape - others will be possibilities over Puff's points - for he can't point birds that have been already killed. I propose to take my point shots regardless of place instead of refusing shots because I have just taken a bird in that particular cover. I doubt if it works out to change the situation too much, but it would seem too severe a handicap to impose both restrictions. I don't believe I'll stick to all point shots from the first of a days opportunities for there's something in the unknown possibility that can turn up any moment that is too great a thrill to sacrifice, but until I feel otherwise, I'm going to make all second kills over points.

This last bird was a large one but unfortunately all but two of the tail feathers were shot off, my spot marked + not being quite far enough forward. We took our game back up to King and after some discussion, followed the ridge all the way (and I mean it was a long way) to the fire tower ^{and flushing #5 span after we started.} We checked back with the game technician at the station and learned that 3 other quans before mine had been reported. It was a lovely first day in the forest and we drove home in a beautiful November sunset.

3 shots - 2 hits (1 over point)
 3 productives } Puff
 2 retrievers }
 moved 5 [redacted]
 7 flushes

So far my shooting hasn't been bad. Because of woodcock 20 shots - 9 hits 45%


Tuesday - 7 November - A hazy day, clearing to hot and sunny with a little wind. Ray and I left Blue at home and took Puff - stopping in Brandonville to vote - then driving out to Dick Benson's where we parked the shooting brake. We hunted down the hollow to Big Sandy valley and crossed to the opposite point of land across the little run, mowing nothing. Up on top and around the hill from where Puff pointed a bird on my other trip, we heard a terrific commotion just in front of us and I saw a grouse tearing his way out of some thick crabapple stuff, landing on a low one, then moving to a higher one and perching there a moment - then flushing back over my right shoulder. I turned and tried for a shot as he crossed, missing, and then found the spot in front of him as he quartered away - dropping him hard-hit to the ground, my first hit with the left barrel this season.

retraced nicely. It was a feather and a solid band, hit very squarely.



I sent Puff in and he big cock with large tail

After sitting in the old field, out a piece from the cover, and gleaning over our luck we moved on from there - keeping to the field and hitting the top edge of Big Sandy hillside (good looking cover but no birds just there). We came to an old house on the hillside and when we went over, found it was empty. We ate lunch above the old springhouse and soaked up sunshine and tried to forget about our worries over the road situation. (Incidentally we learned later that the farm was Dick Benson's homeplace and belong to them). After lunch we hunted the ridge down Sandy valley to Hazel Run, keeping well to the upper edges but found a lot of it too severely cut over. We dropped down the deep hollow to Hazel Run and crossed to some lovely big hemlock woods along the lower part of the hill. So far we had made only the one grouse I had shot, but as we worked up the valley with Puff canvassing the steep hillside above and in front of

heard two grouse go out not too far from each other, #2 and #3.
 We couldn't spot them well enough to follow so kept on up the valley,
 nearing the paved road at Summer Elliotts. At possibly a quarter of a
 mile below the road we stopped to rest on a log and then continued, Kay staying
 on the old tramroad and Puff and myself taking the cave below it. In a little
 while, ~~we~~ I heard Kay blow her whistle 3 times and I realized she had
 heard something. When I got to her she said two grouse had flushed
 from the path, one cutting a bit below and the other sidling above it.
 About then Puff hid the hot scent and pointed for a moment. I sent him
 on and followed, coming on him shortly, pointing on the side of the steep
 hill above me. I walked in and flushed the grouse, missing as it swung
 out into space and away from me. I ~~anticipate~~ ~~for~~ I believe I
 the trajectory were to be  This is a difficult shot to
 usually during as the
 straight out and up - but
 the grouse banks and curves out of my swing. Anyway, we went on.
 We worked around the ridge, finding ourselves on the hill above the road
 and across from Sumner's cabin. At a rather long flight length I
 found Puff, frozen again. This time I had to charge, head down,
 then some tangled crabapple to get to a decent spot to shoot, but
 nothing happened. I took another quick step from behind a white oak
 and the bird went off, some piece above me and keeping low to the
 ground. I fired once, and then again as he soared and dove into the
 sun. This time I knew he had to land at the end of the cave out
 ahead or go clear across to another woods, for we were nearly at the
 road to Scott King's. We were almost all the way through the woods and Puff
 showed no indication of game. I walked ~~back~~ ~~toward~~ a paper mill ~~trough~~

in the upper corner of the woods, at first he gave no sign, then seemed to hit something vague and then feathered up and went glassy-eyed. I still had the sun to avoid and with only a few yards from the point to either edge of the woods. Casing the chances for a rise to the upper edge and back the ridge I coiled around in front of Puff and came in from below. There was a scurrying and then the flush, low and crossing to my right. I shot quickly and a little jerkily, but it tumbled him hard through the barbed wire along the edge of the clearing above the house on King's lane. Puff went in without my order and after a little difficulty getting the bird into one mouthful, retrieved him.



It was another big cork, solid tail band and a perfect match of my first one. It was a gratifying thing to kill it over Puff's point. He had given me 3 chances over his points on the same bird. I've never shot over a dog that gave me as many opportunities to kill over points. He cut down to the road and walked it back to the station wagon, about 45 minutes walking. We took a snapshot of these two grouse the next morning. My shooting was a bit more ragged this day, but I still consider it all right for me.

6 shots - 2 hits (1 over point) 3 products
 5 (4 new) 2 retrievers } Puff
 8 fleppers

November 8 the good news!! The road is settled. Now we can get down to business and hunt.



Thursday 9 November Fifteen years ago today old Speck died.
 I took Puff to the forest but the weather was ^{forecasting} ~~forecasting~~ - increasing strata of heavy gray clouds. I left the station wagon at the administration building and hunted over to the ridge on upper Quarry Run where I had found birds last year. I hunted the ridge from the end, along the upper side to nearly the gap where the Chestnut Ridge Camp road crosses, then down into the hollow and back the east ridge to the car and not a single bird did I hear or see. The rain developed at the furthest point from the car and settled into a driving mass. I was out about 3 1/2 hours.

no shots
 saved none

17 #16

Friday 10 November - I took Puff back to the forest and this time one of the game technicians, Bob Wingard, asked if I'd mind if he went along. I drove to below Pigeon and we hunted down the Scott Run valley, moving one bird wild. The weather was excellent, quite cold and cloudy and the woods damp - a condition when the differential between the body temperatures of the birds and the air must cause ideal scenting. Too, Puff hunted beautifully, covering the ground in a loping gait that he didn't let up all day. On the far side of Scott - the cover seemed unproductive on the east slope - we came to some good looking poplar and log situations and almost immediately Puff swung into a frozen point. When we walked in a grouse flushed under Puff's muzzle and rose, straight away from me. I shot with not enough lead and missed, but as the gun went off a second bird tore out from the same spot and started after the first. I dropped it with my left barrel and Puff moved in to retrieve.

getting a drink
 fluttered down the



For a moment I thought he was and then saw the bird had slope and Puff was trying

To pick it up. It was still alive when he brought it to me - a yearling.

We followed the first one to make certain it hadn't been hit and Puff pointed exactly where it should have landed, under some large boulders piled into a natural arch, but the grouse must have moved on. We hunted around the ridge into some marvelous looking cover and Puff pointed again. This time I had Wingard walk in while I stayed near Puff and three grouse flushed, one at a time too far out for shooting. We moved two of them ahead of Puff but lost them down over the ridge.

In the next hollow we stopped for a rest and a bite of lunch and then hunted down to Scott Run and hunted up the far side of the same tributary. When we turned and covered the top of that ridge, a grouse moved over the top - #7 and in following #8 nearly flew into me and cut over the cliff. I could have made a try for it but wanted to save my second attempt for a point. We failed to make either of the last birds and so decided to hunt for the top of the ridge and the Cooper's Rock road. On top we came to a good gravelled road that must have been part of the old CCC Camp, and hunted along the margin of the valley where there was wonderful cover. I walked into #4 that would have been a fair chance. At the top of the valley we came onto the paved road and walked about $\frac{3}{4}$ a mile to the checkering station where Wingard got his car and drove me to the station again. There was excellent new cover and a place I want to hunt again.



RUFF NAILS 3

2 shots - 1 hit (over point) 2 productives } Puff
 1 retrieve }
 moved 1
 11 flushes

Train
 Saturday 11 November - Ray, Puff & I drove to the Prerics in hopes that we could dodge a few of the Anniversary Day mongrels, stopping at Dick Run from sheer amazement at the condition of the road. We hunted up the right bank of Dick and heard a bird drumming to the left, across the stream. Puff made #1 up along the first tributary - barking and indicating that it had track before us. We didn't follow it

but moved, instead, on up the little ravine to above the tramroad crossing, which
is being used as a new logging road. We worked parallel with the tram
and at one point I left Kay and ~~went~~ hunted up a shoulder of good
paperine oak, moving # 2 well. I followed and Puff located him,
pointing above me, but the grouse flushed very wild out of gunshot.
I had heard Kay blowing a triple signal and returned to her as quickly
as I could. She said she had flushed a pair of birds that had sailed
down the hillside and we started down. I was below Kay and near
a little spring run with hemlocks and rhododendron, listening for Puff
who was calling somewhere below me. Suddenly one of the birds flushed
from a hemlock branch and dodged around the hill and almost at once
the second one roared out of the clump of rhododendron nearest and
bores up over the trees and out of vision, keeping behind a couple
of tree trunks all the time. We followed and not very far around the
hill Puff pointed. As I walked up, a gray squirrel moved from in
front of him and nearly ran into his face, finally taking to the trees
beside him. I sent Puff on with a mild scolding and he poys again.
This time a grouse (one of the last pair) moved out below him. In a
few hundred feet Puff pointed again and pinned a big-sounding
bird in a paperine tangle - but it got out the back door and I
couldn't shoot. From the location, I count this # 5. These last two
seemed to go along the main creek so we followed but had no luck.
Hunting up the next ravine Puff made a bird that I followed and put
out of a rhododendron along the run. This bird seemed too far away

from the last time I saw #4 so I count it #6. I met Ray
 after circling and we sat down for lunch. The day was lovely though
 cold and clearing to spots of sun but never comfortable to
 still very long. Ray would like a dream, moving fast and well.
 We heard a couple bursts of shots - very distant beyond the
 Lick Run bridge but none in our country at all. After lunch we
 were a bit uncertain as what to do and decided to hunt up the
 high shoulder of land. Before I had gone far I flushed a grouse from
 a tree above my head, trying for a shot as I got him against the
 sky, but I missed and he dove on up the ridge. We moved after him
 a few yards and another exploded beside
 me and bored away from me. I settled
 after the initial shock and pulled on the
 spot above him and saw
 him tumble in a mass of



brush. I sent Ray in and heard the grouse thundering
in the dry leaves and then heard it flutter as Ray found it. After
 several tries he got a grip on it, bringing it in still alive, with
 the right wing shattered on the end. It was a huge cock - solid tail
 band and a beauty. We followed the other grouse I shot it to be
 sure it wasn't but that couldn't find it so I feel sure it must have moved
 on. I count one of the last two as new - making #7 with a good
 possibility of being ~~seen~~ more. This was new country to me and very
 good looking cover. I think we'll have to hit it again. It was past
 4:00 so we hunted back over much of the same territory (too much the
 same I feel now). The country back of Sumner's house was unproductive
 till we dropped over the ledge into ~~the~~ and almost at once we heard

a bird more out ahead of us. Puff worked into the thick rhododendron along the cliff and pointed and three more got out one at a time, but I had almost no view of them. We marked three of the four as going toward the car and on our way saw one of them flush across and top the cliff to the flat above where the other old bird had gone. We followed up over and Puff marked both of them, probably one points but since I couldn't be certain I'm not counting them. We followed the one that flew toward the brink of the cliff and Puff says, when I crawled in the bird was gone behind him and dove for the rocks. When we went on to hunt it a grouse flushed from along the stream ahead of Puff but we only heard it. I have to count it a new one but one of the first group of 4 could have been #1 this a.m. so the count is consequently up to #11. Just then the bird we were looking for blew out of a scraggy hemlock above my head and then we followed we never saw him again. We returned to the car and drove up to John Feather's in a beautiful pink glow under the November sky with the Brieries massed against it. There was no fox hunt scheduled for the evening so we ate our supper things with John and Madeline and then drove via Coal Dick, stopping for a very pleasant visit with Jack and Dora. I want to try a hunt in the country behind Jack's some day this season. Their house is awfully interesting and in a charming setting. We get home about 1:30 after a lovely day in the good old Brieries that never let us down!

2 shots - 1 hit
 marked 11
 24 flushes.

5 productives } Puff
 1 retriever }

Monday 13 November - a cold, windy, sunless day with premonitions
of a storm - Ray and I hunted the forest,
going to the Enchanted Valley. It seemed almost "the bewitched" before we
found it and when we did we immediately marked a bird that I am crediting
Ruff with a shot productive on. We followed it to the corner of the forest
and the Greenville road but believe it went out ahead of us the way I
think a number did, covered by the sound of wind and dry leaves on the
ground. We ate lunch - having spent too much time getting into what we
thought was the right place - in a lovely grape cover that seemed in a
way, to be the grapes I was looking for near the big flat-topped rocks
and at the same time, somehow, not. ~~After that we~~ ~~went~~ ~~down~~ ~~the~~
valley, ~~but~~ I heard a grass flicker on the big boulders above me, I
followed but couldn't find him, then ~~climbed over the rocks and~~ ~~reached~~ ~~at~~ ~~finally~~
~~we~~ ~~stopped~~ ~~to~~ ~~eat~~ ~~and~~ afterwards hunted downstream where Ray flushed #3
across the run to the other side. We followed but couldn't find him ~~at~~
no second flushes today) and then we decided to hunt up over the ridge into
the "Middle Valley". As we climbed up the good grape cover near the flat-top Ruff
pointed ahead and to my left but worked in too closely and flushed the
bird, chasing it. I swung to a spot ahead of it as it cleared the tangle
and fired, dropping it a long distance ahead of me.
Ray ran in and retrieved it, still alive but
shot thru the head and eye and with a
leg wound. I can't count this as a kill on his
point for he wasn't near enough to holding - but I'll have to credit him
with a second productive. At the top of the hill a fifth grass warbler
saw. When we dropped over the brow of this "long ridge" we discovered that
we were at the lower point of the valley where the "Firefacer Ridge" ends.
We hunted up the ridge and dropped over to the Middle Valley, following
the "Short Ridge" ~~well~~ ~~down~~ ~~at~~ ~~its~~ ~~base~~ ~~until~~ ~~we~~ ~~reached~~ ~~the~~ ~~level~~



and the Greenalls Road. On the way we saw two birds separately,
#7 over a production point. It was later when we climbed up the
grade under the tower and reached the shooting brake.

1 shot - 1 hit
ward 7
7 flushes
1 retrieved by Puff
3 production's

17#18

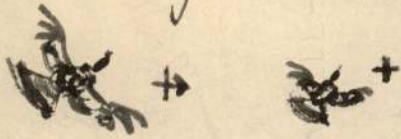
Thursday November - Howard Com came over having written a card we received
last evening when we returned home - and I took him and
Puff to Laurel Run hunting down the left side. Ward #1 at the little
cabin but no reports. No other birds till we flushed a wild one
inside the edge of the old Falhousstine clearing. The nest was around
on the far side above Sandy Valley. Puff froze, pointing into a
tangled mass ahead of me. I sent Howard in alone and moved up
when I was one I'd put the bird out toward Howard. Puff was stretched
out, tail up and solid. The bird surprised me by rocketing out into space
to my left. I shot at the top of his climb and both saw that it
acted hit, but it dived down over the ridge and Howard saw it cut
back into the hill. While he waited for



me, Puff and I circled
the side of the ridge
and after a long
cast walked back at
the right elevation
and cut low

and saw the plover explode to my left
and fast away from me along the slope. I shot
too quickly with the right and the plover dropped

with the left in a good long shot that reached out and tumbled him
 near Puff. Puff found him and picked him up, trying to work
 his way under a thin some fallen logs - then decided to circle below
 when I noticed him that way and brought him to me, sitting
 and dropping the goose on the ground. It was an enormous cock, the largest
 I've shot this season. Jan 14³/₄" wing spread 21",
 with very glossy black ruffs and a solid
 tail band. I carried him back up about



Howard was sitting and we ate our lunch. Puff made several nice points
 after we hunted on around the hill but there were no birds there. We crossed
 Laurel just below the old train bridge (one log is still there) and almost
 immediately started seeing birds. The sun had just dropped below the
 high rim of the valley and it was about 4:00 our trail. Puff was frozen
 on point when I found him and sent Howard in for the shot. After Howard
 had walked up, Puff made a fifty yards and froze again. This time
 Howard flushed the goose and shot - then I walked into a second
 one (#5) and Howard turned and missed it, too. We hunted up the
 valley, seeing geese at almost regular intervals. Howard shot at 5,
 and Puff made his third production. Together we saw 11 on this
 side of the creek, most of them not far above the railroad and all in
 shades. Across from Hibbs' house we missed the last 3 separately, and
 most of them flew toward the top of the ridge. We returned here to a
 good blackhead cake dinner over the open fire, which Howard seemed to enjoy.

3 shots - 1 hit
 missed 14 (10 new) 1 retrieve
 16 flushes 3 productions } Puff

Thursday 16 November - I took a late start for the forest and hunted alone. Bob Wenzel was leaving for Romney - he'd been to our house last evening - and I tried the old Pigeon fields I'd heard so much about. The weather was entirely bad - wind and spells of rain that finally settled into a driving downpour that sent me out to the car about 4:30 or 5:00. I mowed one grouse but found excellent spruce cross bordering old fields that were planted to thick pine and in good weather should yield birds.

Ruff
no production
mowed 1 - 1 flush
no shots

Tram

Saturday 18 November - ⁵⁰ Last day of the first - and longest - portion of the season. Yesterday was miserable and we couldn't hunt but today was perfect: cold, clear, with sun and a light touch of snow that melted as the shadows dissolved. We left Blue in the cellar and took Ruff to Homer and Amy Miller's, starting up the old trail we took over the mountain to Orr. A little above where I thought the old tramroad crossed, I began hunting north and Ruff pointed in the thick greenbrier tangle just beyond the fence. I pushed my way up to him and we heard the grouse flush, and then - after a moment - a second one roared up. I couldn't see to shoot but could hear another, peeping out ahead and that the first one had flushed to a tree but Kay told me later that it had flown. When #3 went out in front of Ruff I took a quick try thru the tangle and saw the shot slow it down to a faltering flutter but it didn't drop. I was certain it was hit and so was Kay but when we moved in to follow, #4 flushed and went the same direction as #2. Ruff ~~pointed~~ ^{pointed} ~~got signs of wanting a bird just~~ about where I expected to find my grouse, wounded, but he moved ~~in~~ ^{where} and ~~after a few moments~~ ^{where} a grouse flushed from a tangle ahead of ~~us~~ ^{us} and I ~~circled it~~ ^{circled it} and it was the one



I'd shot at and told Kay we could be sure there was nothing wrong with that bird. Since most of them had gone the same direction, we moved on for further action and had gone a few yards when I heard a grouse flutter and saw that Puff had got hold of it out ahead. I knew, then, that the last bird had been a new one and that this one Puff had found was my crippled bird. He retrieved him to me alive but with one wing shattered and I ~~had~~ killed it immediately. A good part of the tail was missing (so couldn't judge what its sex was) but decided from the wing tips it was a yearling. We decided to move on without molesting the others and, having heard a regular barrage back on the ridge toward Sick Run, we proceeded in the opposite direction with the idea in mind of going to the Hemlock swamp in the valley above Clint Reckert's. On the way Puff made a nice production and the grouse circled back in the very rough country we'd just agonized our way thru. The big blow back in '44 laid half the big trees flat and it's still almost impossible to walk them part of this country, tho it will be wonderful for grouse when the logs begin to rot. Dodging the little red-roofed shack that's near the road, we headed for the next valley and heard a grouse #7, that bored into the thicket we were moving thru. We didn't find the grouse again but we did find the valley cut to the bone with square miles of shoulder-high blackberry briars and only a huge pile of mudst to suggest what had happened to the big hemlocks. They say it was cut four years ago but it doesn't look as tho it would ever come back. We turned away and hunted back the ridge toward the over trail, this time higher up. Altho we made thru some good libery ~~and~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~bird~~, at the

trail we crossed and tried to find the little valley where Lick begins.
 It took some time but finally we hit the stream a piece above where
 the tram crosses and Ruff made a point some after I that I'd heard
 a bird flush wild. There was nothing ahead of his point and I think #8
 had moved out and crossed the run. We stayed on our own side, however, and
 covered it all the way to the tributary that comes down from the left, where
 I left Kay at the tramroad and covered both sides of the head of the
 branch - making nothing. When I rejoined her I said I couldn't
 decide what to do. It was about 4:00 and we either had to hunt
 back along the tramroad or over the far side of the creek and
 then take the tram. Just about then a bird flushed from ahead of
 us as we headed the stream - a big bird and from his location I thought
 he might be #8 we had moved earlier. That took care of our decision
 and we followed. On top of the small rise - less than a good grouse flight
 from the creek - Ruff froze and I called in and flushed #9 back downstream.
 We moved on to hunt the big grouse and just over the brow of the
 hill Ruff found him. I had the impression Ruff was whirling from
 one point into another. This time he was headed toward me and I moved
 in Ruff rolled his eyes and head gradually around, discounting each angle of
 territory as I eliminated it. Suddenly he decided the bird wasn't that
 close and made a quick move in front of me, darting in as the grouse took
 off and flushed out the ridge toward the north. I had to scold Ruff for
 flushing it tho I really prefer to have him get too close to a few
 instead of bother on old scent. While I did this another grouse, #10,
 moved out below us and followed.

Puff and ourselves were all we could catch and we followed in the same direction. at the edge of a small cutting and in a perfect place for one of the grouse to be lying, Puff pointed. I went in, quite sure the bird was there but nothing happened. after a moment Puff corrected his first position and stopped below the brush heads, pointing into the pile of logs and brush and freezing solid. I walked in, directly into his face. about the fifth step the place exploded and the grouse tore out beside my right arm, boring down the opening away from me. I shot too quickly and missed him with the right barrel but tumbled him in a cloud of feathers with a long overtakeing left-barrel shot.

I sent Puff in to retrieve and he brought him to me, in a long difficult passage over logs and briars sitting to give him to me; a big cock that never knew what hit him.



OLD REDEEMER REACHES OUT OVER RUFF'S 6TH PRODUCTIVE

It was a wonderfully good ending to a good day. It was Puff's 6th productive and the second kill over his points today. Once again the old Breery Mountains had come thru. We walked back the log road that follows the old tram and went down the trail to Homer and Amy's where we had a delicious dinner

3 shots - 2 hits (both are) 6 productives } Puff
 made 10 points } 2 retrievers }
 13 flushes



RUFF BRINGS IN NUMBER TWO.

at the end of the first five-week part of the season my shooting average is 37 shots - 17 hits (7 Nelson points) made 113 36 productives } Puff
 17 flushes } 2 retrievers }

Monday 18 December - after the long interim - deer season, deep snow since the day after Thanksgiving - the last two weeks of grouse season has opened, with still more snow and very cold. I finally decided to try it today in spite of deep snow and little weather. Harry put chemis on the station wagon yesterday I was all set, and drove to the Bowmaster bridge. Ray and Blue, ^{had} stayed home but Puff and I didn't know any better, so we crossed the bridge and plowed up the hill above the old Clifton road. I saw where a grouse had spent the night under a log in a hole in the snow but he wasn't at home. Aside from nearly knee-deep walking (I had worn Ray's ski pants and they were fine) I encountered a heavy coat of white clinging to each twig - until I tried to pass, when it transferred to the back of my neck. In the next valley, nearer the Darby place, I finally came onto two sets of grouse tracks and finally made both birds in a piece of cover in full snow foliage - getting no more than a suggestion of their movement as they went out. They had been in a small declivity or sinkhole where the ground was bare - probably looking for gravel. I covered all that area in the next valley and worked back around to the stream, moving nothing. It took me about 2 1/2 hours to cover what I'd normally do in an hour, and both Puff and I were "bushed" by the time we reached the car - he with balls of ice formed on his pads and flanks - I with a soaking wet shooting jacket where the snow had piled on my shoulders, but it was fun.

no shots
 none 2
 2 flocks

Thursday 21 December - The last two days have been somewhat
marked by frustration on the part of a
certain shooting man and his settle, but the
snow has clung, unchanged to the trees and brush and the footing
stays the same - with little change in the mercury, except when the
sun baked them for a while off and on. But today I had to go out,
and Puff and I headed for the forest. As I neared Laurel Run I could
see it was no go - the closer I came to the big ridge, the more snow I
found on my path. At Laurel Run Bridge I turned and headed
back toward Brandanville where at least some of the cover seemed
less smothered. I went to the foot of the hill at the Boardman
Bridge and left the station wagon where I had parked it
Monday, walking to the far side of Mason Run and started
hunting up the cut on hillside on the Wilkinson Place. About
two-thirds of the way up I came onto grouse tracks which I followed
and tho I didn't catch up with the bird, I found at least two
more sets of tracks leaving the snow for quite a distance. I followed
them for some time - leading in and out of tangles of brush and rocks -
and then had to admit I wasn't certain which end of the line
I had reached. Why is it that no matter how you come on them,
grouse tracks are always going in the opposite direction? I had
walked back to an old grown-up log road when I heard a bird
go out and marked him as heading around the ridge toward the old house.
I cut up the tote road to the field at the top - I wasn't far from it -
and followed the upper margin, heading back in the woods at the

Brandonville power line. I soon moved what I considered my bird - seeing
 him leave a tree and head back where I first had flushed him.
 I decided to cover the very nice papering cover in this upper corner
 of the woods where I found myself before following the grass, and
 worked around the ridge toward the house. On the far side of the
 power line I saw a few faint tracks - days old - then later, a few
 more. I ate lunch, sitting on a rock but after my sandwich I
 moved on eating my candy bar and I went. I nearly abandoned this
 area to follow my bird but something made me hunt out to
 the edge of the woods toward the road. As I approached, I came onto
 fresh tracks of at least 3 quons and followed them toward the
 edge of the woods. Suddenly I heard a quon rise above me,
 and then another and another and another and another. First, three
 of them gave me a look at them as they were flying fast too far up
 the hill for me to shoot - young birds as nearly as I could tell. I followed
 and missed two of them - one over a long-range point of Puff's but
 had no chance to get my gun on him. I doubled back to try to
 pick up the others but took the top edge three times working back
 toward the old house. As I neared the edge, just above where I
 had put them up, I was walking in the top field. Puff pointed and
 then moved on as I walked ahead. Suddenly from the very edge
 of the field in front of me a quon flushed and cut down the
 hill, just outside the hillside and of the road. I pulled around of

him and fired thru cover, losing sight of the bird at the gun's crack. Puff moved from nowhere and darted down the hill as tho the bird had fallen. I hurried down, feeling sure w'd find him if he had fallen in the snow. When I had covered a few yards I heard another one take off from a tree at the edge behind me and



whirled to see him flying crosswise to my left about twenty yards out in the field.

I swung ahead of him and pulled, seeing him fold and arc into the snow where he fluttered a few times and lay still. Puff had come back empty mouthed from below me - I had seen that he didn't have the bird before the second flush - and I sent him to retrieve the dead bird. He spotted it and darted into the snowy field, picking up the grouse and retrieving it beautifully, held by the under side with the head and feet dangling - a gorgeous low-key color against the snow.



It was a small yearling, very small for this season of the year, and I should imagine, a late hatching. I paced the distance of the shot and found it 31 yards. That number 8 - 3 drams load surely is effective.



We gazed over our bird for a few moments and then followed down the hill to be sure we weren't leaving a cripple after the first shot - but found no sign of him. I left this cover and retraced my steps to the field to the

log road where I expected to find some of the first things I
 had tracked. We did, in about the first two minutes after we
 started down - one flushing from Puff on the right side, a second
 going up at my left elbow, just inside the cover. I didn't try
 for him as I was holding shots on #2 until a point. I decided to
 follow the bird that flushed back toward the house end of the
 ridge, reasoning that I might come into the first bird I had
 moved back this direction earlier this afternoon. In a distance
 of fifty yards or more I saw a grouse take off a tangle of
 grasses and brush and snow - a good look that would have
 been a rather fair chance if I had been shooting. While I stood
 there thinking this another grouse flushed from the same place -
 then they started going out one at a time until five had flushed.
 I called Puff in and we started following in the direction of most
 of the birds. The traveling was rough, big boulders, brush heaps
 that had a way of turning into knee-deep holes when I stepped
 on them and masses of blackberry briars. I had little hope that
 Puff could nail them in this stuff, particularly with the foot
 condition he had to contend with. But when I came out on a
 promontory path I found him, frozen solid and headed down
 hill into a pile of logs and cutdown treetops. I walked in
 but nothing happened - tho I could see they were not about

the bird being there. As I eliminated ^{the cover,} a foot by foot, Puff moved to his left a few feet and this caused an explosion in front of me. I tried for the grouse as he neared the top of his climb but he went on and I found the spot ahead of him as he leveled off for his glide down the ridge, folding him with the left barrel and seeing him drop into a tangle of briars. As I started down, a second grouse went out and bored down the hill.



→
R



→
L

Puff went in at my command and found the bird, retrieving it to me nicely, sitting to deliver, as he had the first one. This was a large bird - not enormous, but an adult and a cock with solid tail band. They are beautiful against the snow - this one had dropped breast down, with big tail fan spread, dark and rich against the white. We followed the old path to the hillside field along the power line and down to Mason Run, then by old log road, crossing the ice on the stream and down to the car. It was a wonderful day, cold and unexpecting, tiring and stimulating at the same time - and above all gloriously surprising to find this cover that seemed barren the last few years so full of grouse - two separate hatchings and some old ones for good measure.

4 shots - 2 hits (1 on bird) 2 (propagators)
 March 13
 20 flushes

Wednesday 27 December - The holiday and the Christmas snow have prevented my being out since last Thursday. Today, after putting Mother on the bus over at Wheelers I stopped off for a short hunt at the power line above Earl Nicolo's. Kay stayed home with the first symptoms of a cold. It was 4 when I started into the woods and the slanting sunlight on the powdery clean snow was striking. The snow is deep in the woods with most logs covered but the footing isn't too bad until you hit an airhole. Ruff made a productive soon after we started in, and two grouse flushed too far ahead for me to shoot. I couldn't locate them or any others in that woods so hunted down along the power line and found two more high on top the knob to the left. Got several flushes but no points (productives) or any chance to shoot.

No shots
 heard 4
 6 flushes
 1 productive 3 Ruff

Thursday 28 December - My 44th birthday and a beautiful cold, clear, sunny day. Kay's cold is developing in schedule and I had to leave her at home with Brad. Ruff and I got to the forest and began hunting at 2, leaving the station wagon at the barricaded entrance to the Cooper's Backs road. The snow is deep everywhere but packed enough to support a man's weight most places. We hunted out the road, moving our bird walk to where I had ended the day with Bob Wingard. I hunted about several miles with lots of grouse tracks - mostly old - but no grouse. Finally I heard #2 when Ruff ran toward him without any sign of wanting him and in following some of the huge rocks that

form an arch, and I knew I had been hunting the wrong ridge.

However, this one had the most birds this day. Winged and I hunted and I covered it well but didn't see any more until I had rounded the next shoulder when #3 flushed from a tree. #4 went out wild below me on the way back to the car - and the way back was long and tiresome with the deep snow and poor footing. Puff seemed completely backed toward the end and stayed under my feet. As I walked the road a bird I count #1 flushed from the top of a tall tree in the woods at my right but like most of the flushes, was too far out to even get a try at.

No shots

ward 4 (3 new)

6 flushes

~~~~~

Friday 29 December - Back with Puff to the Wilkinson place - on an overcast day with snow just at thawing point and temperature about 30. I went directly to the area where I had marked so many birds last week and soon saw tracks in the new snow as had last week. I marked two grouse singly, one by sound, the second one I saw - as he sailed around the ridge toward the old house - I marked him as going about where I'd marked the second bunch of 5 from the windfall last week. but didn't see him. Further around #3 went out wild but in the right direction. There was no action until I reached the end of the cover and when I came to the last of the grapes without tracks of birds I was puzzled. Suddenly I heard #4 go out below me and away from Puff and, I believe, cross the field for other parts. I doubled back, taking a lower course and almost at once saw Puff go into his first point. It was a little spring run and so good

grass there. Ruff, however, made the mistake of moving in too close and four grass went out, one at a time, I going around the ridge and said "they were going my way" I followed. I got two more separate flocks but no points or shots. They were the rest of the batch of young birds I had killed one from last week and flew fast and fancy. I searched carefully, and so did Ruff - he was working nicely at his old pace, now that the snow was soft enough not to ball up in his feet - but we didn't make anything. Finally I doubled back and at the small power line flushed one that I feel Ruff should have nailed. It bored into the section where we'd just been hunting but we followed nevertheless. In about a short grass flight I came on Ruff, solid and looking as though he had the bird under his muzzle. Nothing developed when I walked up, so I had to lunge into the piled up snow-covered brushheap and all at once the bird exploded under my feet.



RUFF HAS ONE UNDER HIS NOSTRILS.

I swung around of him and pulled - knowing he would fold - but he didn't though a few feathers fell and I tried for him again as he curved into cover of a loose patch but that time he turned out of my shot and I didn't see him fall or go on. I sent Ruff in, half thinking the bird was down, but I had searched after searching carefully and went on in the direction of the bird.

at about the right distance I came to the windfall brush heap  
 where I'd mark 5 before but Ruff could not find any sign. I  
 circled once and was almost ready to go on when there was a  
 rush out of the wood almost at my toes and the bird bore up and  
 away as only a small young bird can take off when he is frightened.  
 This time I laid the lead at the right place and fired, dropping him  
 into the large windfall where Ruff found him and retrieved him  
 nicely.



It was, as I had thought, a yearling, but  
 hard, and after my wild double miss  
 over Ruff's beautiful point, a very

welcome item. We ate lunch with the grouse lying on a branch  
 beside me, and then moved out of that camp and around the  
 ridge toward the big power line. Not far along I came into new  
 tracks of at least a pair and soon flushed one wild - a large bird.  
 Ruff came in and pointed seriously into the place, and when I  
 moved up, a second bird - another large one - went out some few yards  
 out and too far for me to shoot. I tried hard with several circles  
 then brated birds that played hell with my new shooting jacket which  
 I should never have worn today, but never did wear either grouse again.

On my way back I missed another one, probably one of the first birds I  
 had flushed today, and got two more flushes from him but all too  
 far out, making 18 flushes for the day. I found it was late and  
 Ruff found I was both tired, so we cut down the ridge to the station again.

3 shots - 1 hit } Ruff  
 3 productive }  
 18 flushes }  
 mark (George Bird Evans Papers)  
 West Virginia and Regional History Center



Train

Saturday 30 December - The last day. Kay's cold is still too much a threat for her to walk so we took Ruff and drove to Jack & Dora Feather's, Kay staying at the house - which was deserted but unoccupied - while Ruff and I started out toward the crest of the Roaring Creek hills behind the house. I spotted some good looking cut off Territory with lots of popovers and brush heaps and yet with a good quantity of standing trees left, reaching out and around a point of land from a nice basin - altogether what the doctor prescribed. At first there was nothing doing, but about the time we reached the point of land, I heard a quon's pipe, and saw one flash from Ruff, perch on a partly fallen tree and then go into a quiet glide around the hill. We followed and soon saw a row of rocks - a sure sign the bird was somewhere close. Still nothing happened till we hauled into an open slope with crabapples and rocks and brush piles and then Ruff walked right into a grass that took off with a sound like going up on the top of the hill. As I called to Ruff to hold him for the lower a second bird flushed from a boulder above and behind me. I turned, waiting for a glimpse of him as he disappeared behind another rock and then took a quick try as I got a short look at him, but he went on, topping the cleared crest and going out of sight. It was a fair chance and I should have used my left and taken a bit more time, but I didn't.

Follow.

I SHOULD HAVE  
USED MY LEFT.

On top, I made certain I hadn't lost  
him and then circled for both birds  
in some likely looking spots but  
turned up nothing. Finally I came on

Puff on solid point, just over the edge of the hill, frozen and staring  
into some big boulders and logs close where we'd flushed the first bird  
originally. I could tell from the set expression on his face and the  
way he rolled his eyes at me that it was business, but when I circled  
around and below him, nothing developed. I walked in behind him  
and then I saw the quail, huddled in a crevice at the base of the  
rock, head pulled back into its neck feathers and trying to look small,  
eying me with one shiny dark eye.



IS HE CRIPPLED?

There was an excellent chance he was winged and yet I held back an order to  
fetch. After a few seconds - I forget if I shook a bush or just used my  
voice or merely stood there - the quail extended his neck and did a  
"jato" takeoff straight up. I fired as he topped his rise, but as I did  
he crashed and dived over the top and out of sight. Puff rushed up

and again, I hoped he'd find the bird but this wasn't my day for miracles. After through searching on the hillside and begun again, this time further down and almost immediately Puff flushed a bird from a grapevine that was probably my customer, this time it sailed down and down in a long flight down the ridge. I followed but on the way saw Puff flush another one from a pile of stuff to the left and I count it bird #3. It went around the hill as the very first one had done. I eliminated all the territory where the he might have landed further down and then returned to follow #3. At the end of the case about a hillside field I heard it go and saw Puff following as it darted down the hill then some crabapples and out into the field. As it cleared the fence I tried a long shot with my right that never touched it and the bird went on across the open field and into the thicket on the lower side. As it reached the case I saw what was either another bird or the same one wheel into a side spin and arc over to the left and disappear - looking as tho it had eaten but the wire fence and gone out of control I have flushed another bird. I followed and found some good cover, thicker and better than a long drop down to



TOO DISTANT FOR THE RIGHT BARREL.

There was no feathers so feel the bird wasn't hurt if he had but the wire. I finally saw Puff near the end of the case, then it went out the north. The next time he flushed

It, I saw it go all the way to the hummocks along the creek. I don't know what was causing Puff to miff so many good chances today, not that I hadn't missed a shot over his one good point - but it seems to me he flushed too many. I can only imagine it was the soft snow underfoot, causing him to break his usual hope that normally lands him on top of the birds and pins them down; but today and yesterday he was reduced to a walk that seemed to encourage him to roid up on them. Whatever the cause, there is no excuse for a dog like Puff to perform the way he did, and I like to think it was the reason for my ragged shooting - a sort of reflected irritation that carried over into a tension on my part. (A usual alibi) As I returned up the steep hillside, following a gradual log road I heard a grouse flush and wheeled to see one go out of some half open cover about me. It was too far out for the right, but again I tried and missed and tried again with the left and missed again - as the my shells were loaded with birds. At the second shot, another bird - #5 - went out of the same place and up the hill. I followed, climbing back into some small gaps and brush cover and getting Puff headed right. As I reached a log road about me and started out at a grouse flushed from a tangle and started back the ridge above me. I



~~turned and waiting~~  
turned and waiting

thick spot, many

ahead and found the spot and fired - and saw him fold and  
tumble. It was wonderful and about time! I sent Puffin to



retrieve and he brought it  
through a thick tangle of branches

and out to deliver, nicely. It was a young bird, hard hit, and I  
felt as tho I had achieved something tremendous. Six shots to  
hit one bird! No I will say for myself that most of the shots had  
been either tricky, or too far to try for. After eating lunch (about  
4:30) and looking across and down the valley and to Brown Creek  
forming in the ice way below, I hunted on up the valley, seeing a  
grass flush from Puff and watching it bob at me and then down  
the hillside in plain view - a good chance for a shot but it  
went over Puff's point. I believe it was #2 that had darted down from  
the hill top on flush #3. I hunted all the way to and see John's  
did smell out, to within sight of Johnny's fields but didn't  
smell a thing, so returned, covering the point again but all the grass  
had been mowed out. Puff made a nice point and I did see tracks of quail  
in the snow but not the quail. It was almost dark as I left the  
view of the Brieries - "they never let us down" - which boiled up into  
the north, higher and higher until they were just a few snow white cloud  
fields floating in the misty dark, to return to the house where we  
had a nice creamed chicken and biscuit dinner with Jack & Dan.

These good last day to ... but it  
was rapped with the part of ...

had been exceptional for me, but this afternoon's performance really fixed my shooting average. This is good cover to come back to, and Jack tells me of 4 woodcocks they flushed on down the valley.

~~March 5~~  
9 for 13 flushes.

1 productives } Ruff  
1 retrieves }

The vital statistics for 1950 are:

1 WOODCOCK SHOT - 1 HIT

26 DAYS - 140 BIRDS MOVED - 236 FLUSHES - 50 SHOTS ÷ 21 HITS = 42%  
(5.38 PER DAY) (1 TO 3.25 BIRDS MOVED)

RUFF: 43 PRODUCTIVES (8 KILLS-OVER-POINTS) 19 RETRIEVES - 21 KILLED OVER.  
26 DAYS

Compared with last year's record, I moved fewer birds in the same number of days but killed more with fewer shots, improving my own record. The best day this season rivaled what was a pretty good shooting average: 45.45%.

Ruff's record is way up this year compared with 1949 but it must be remembered that in '49 he did not hunt every day of the 25, so did not have a chance at the large number of birds I moved in every case - Nevertheless, his 1950 record does show more productives per bird moved, I believe - and I know his kills over points is up, largely because I have my new gentlemen's agreement with the grouse, not to ~~shoot~~ <sup>kill</sup> any second bird except over points.

Unfortunately Blue hunted only the opening day this year and I don't think he'll ever have an opportunity to better or add to his record as of 1949, which is one we all are very proud of. Blue was a real grouse dog in his days - and they were happy ones, I am sure.

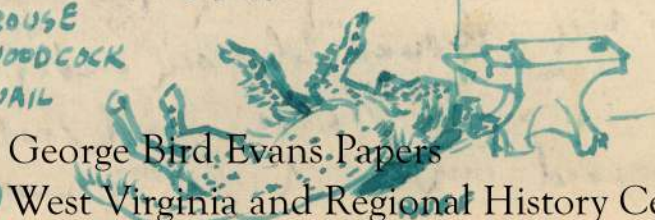
140 MOVED 236 FLUSHES

22 COVERTS 6.36 bird/coveit

RUFF'S LIFETIME RECORD '47 '48 '49 '50: 142 PRODUCTIVES (17 KILLS-OVER-POINTS)  
54 RETRIEVES - 83 BIRDS KILLED OVER  
103 DAYS

GEORGE'S KILL (1939 - 1950: 203 GROUSE

6 WOODCOCK  
24 QUAIL



Finis 1950

1950

22 counts (6 new) 6.36 b/c

LAUREL · 014 · 5.6.0 / 016 · (6) · 8.0 / N14 · 14(10)16.1

HOY MILLER · 020 · 9.16.1

LOG HOUSE 021 · 2.5.0

LITTLE SANDY 024 · 3.3.1

FALKENSTINE 024 · 0

UPPER BEAVER 025 · 7.8.2

MUDDY CREEK 026 · 3.5.2.1

KELLY 028 · 6.11.0

WOLFE · 030 · 4.6.0

FORKS OF SANDY 031 · 8.12.0

→ DICK BENSON'S N2 · 3.4.1

2. → COOPERS R. / FIRE TOWER N6 · 5.7.2 / N13 (7) · 7.1

→ HAZEL RUN N7 · 5(4) · 8.2

- COOPERS R. / GLADE N9 · 0

- COOPERS R. / SCOTT N10 · 9.11.1 / 028 · 4(3) · 6.0

LICK RUN N11 · 11.24.1

- COOPER'S / RYAN N16 · 1.1.0

HOMER MILLER N18 · 10.13.2

BOWERMASTER BRIDGE D18 · 2.2.0

WILKINSON D21 · 13.20.2 / D29 · 10 <sup>new</sup> · 18.1

POWER LINE D27 · 4.6.0

JACK FEATHERS D30 · 5.13.1