

SHOOTING NOTES 1952

Saturday 18 October - Indian Summer with color at just past peak intensity. Leaves still on but falling. This is Puff's sixth season, my twenty-sixth with my Fox double gun, which I had refurbished - oil finished, rechecked, barrels smoothed, reblued - at Flaig's this summer. This, also, was to have been young Feather's introduction to grouse shooting and the more serious side of life but because of his hernia operation he must keep inactive for another few weeks. Kay, Puff and I drove the station wagon to the Brierley through miles of sugar maples burning on the hillsides under a blue sky. We parked this side of Summers' and hunted up the ridge in a mass of foliage. Once there we remembered what I should not have forgotten: that we'd tried this cover last opening day with the same full leaf condition. But we were here, so on with the hunt. We heard a grouse flush soon after we entered the woods but from there until we hunted up the first run from the tramroad and creaked down again toward Lick we saw no birds - nor heard them. We ate our lunch - with communion rolls Kay had made freshly for the affair - under the nododendron cliff above Lick Run. Stopping to speak to Mrs. Hardisty about some notices we had seen - she told us to go ahead and hunt - we crossed the road and hunted down the ridge keeping above the old Lick Run road. Coming out at Hardisty's Den we ran into four squirrel hunters coming down the road and just getting out to hunt. I asked them which way they were planning to hunt, pointing out that I'd take the opposite direction when we reached Pigeon Creek.

out they brushed it aside and assured me we wouldn't spoil
their shooting since we'd probably only put the squirrels up
in the trees where they'd like them. I refrained from
reminding them there was another angle to the affair.
We dropped back and turned below the road almost immediately
missing two grouse where Puff could have been pointing. One
bird came back on our heads and sailed up the road. Ray
marched him and after a difficult time I got Puff convinced
I wanted him to hunt back. The bird, however, flushed
from a tree and Puff had no chance with him. We went
on down to the juncture of Rich & Roaring and hunted
up the far side of Rich to some spectacular rocks from Colerain
calls. The Shipsey Rocks. They are enormous overhanging ledges
where a man of that name, so legend has it, hid horses he
had stolen during Civil War times. We had no action though
the evergreen cover is beautiful here, so we hunted down
Roaring Creek toward Jones. Just before we reached the
swampy bottom along the creek Puff ran into a grouse that
flushed away from us. We'd been hearing shooting down
that way and weren't too keen about moving into it but
we followed and I came on Puff on a beautiful point. I'd
decided to hold off and take only shots on points while
using Puff this year (or until I found it unsatisfactory) and
I walked into this point with special equipment.

praise rose from some laurel ahead of Puff and gave me about a tenth-of-a-second look at him. It wasn't enough. I think

+



I undershot him. I regret to say Puff broke at the flush which he had not done on the first rise.

We weren't able to near this bird again so we hunted down the bottom to almost opposite the Calfish Mine, where we saw a bird jump from a tree and dive toward the stream. Following, we came to nice hemlock cover near the bank and on the far side of a clump of rhododendron I saw Puff throw on the brakes and set like plaster. The bird lay for a few moments longer and then bored out along the ground like an overloaded jet. We merely felt him go out into the cleared space behind us. We circled and, tho we hunted carefully, didn't near him again.

Coming back to the same spot where we'd seen him first we cut up the ridge toward the tramroad. Partway, Puff made a lovely point that looked red hot and Ray, who was carrying an on-trial Retina II, got a picture of him that ought to be a beauty. I think the setting was \$4,100. We were tired, and rather sore

from our first day in the woods, so when we hit the tramroad we headed back toward June's, flushing #6 wild on the way. We finally found June and after some conversation I took a picture of June holding Margray (puppy out of Pearl). At last we broke away and headed for the station wagon, hunting the right side and

the point above the bridge along Roaring. We tried to near the birds at the Hardesty Dam but failed. As we pulled up

the noise I heard a sharp, crying sound and we looked up and
saw two or three dozen wild geese flying in a multiple
wedge formation toward the Tannery Bridge gap of Roaring.
That is the second flock we've seen this year (the other went over
our sugar maples last Sunday - about 45 of them) and we
heard of a third flock over Brandaville. They are a thrilling
thing to see and hear - their graceful wedge, their odd cry
goes to the core of you in a strangely exciting way. We got to the
station wagon in time to drive home in the last light, stopping
just out of town to look at the Breery Mountains, russet
spotted with patches of sugar maples like beams of golden
sunlight.

1 shot - no hit

2 products by Truff

12:10 - 6:40 (6½ hrs)

moved 6 - 9 flocks

Monday 20 October - Bright, cold, windy - after the year's first
sugar snow - with abstract purple cloud shadows on the russet
Chestnut Ridge as we drove out toward Brandaville, Kay, Ruff and I.
We were searching for cover with a few less leaves and so tried
the old Glorn place, approaching by the narrow dirt road through
borders of colored road-edge. We parked the station wagon at
the empty house and started hunting in the woods on the right of
the road below the buildings. It was promising looking,
half bare, with the fallen half of the leaves damp underfoot
and a wonderful smell of cinnamon fern in the cold air.
The only thing wrong was the high wind that tore at the trees

and kept us stepping - and the lack of birds. We dropped
into the rhododendron bottom into a quieter zone with
marvelous little gullies and perfect grouse cover but until we
had circled and started up the far side of the ravine we
found nothing. Suddenly Ruff, who was working like a
dream and extremely eager, ran into a bird that flushed
under his feet and went into a tree. From there I flushed
it up the ridge the way I wanted it to go. We got a second
flush from what could have been the same grouse, and another
bump by Ruff. Considering the violent wind, I can't very well
feel he was at fault for the scent must have been carried
off horizontally. We got a nice point that I thought meant business
but was no more a little further on. Working up the hollow of
Mason Run just above dense rhododendron Kay saw and heard
a grouse go out just to the right of me that I didn't know
existed. We followed and a bird (probably ~~the~~ #3) soared
down from up where Ruff was and plumed into the valley below.
This could have been a possible shot if I'd been looking for any last
shots - over - points. We worked up the valley to a crossing point
and back the other side moving #4, also down into the rhododendron.
We hunted all the bottom to the crossing of Mason Run then worked
back up the mail route road to below the house, entering the
first woods again and hunting it with good luck. We saw the
top. No birds. The weather is

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over my head in a nice opportunity but I enjoyed passing it up, though I worry on being "dry." I hunted back to Barnes and waited there, talking with Tom White and Mrs. Barnes. until Kay came about 7:00. Puff was very tired, having hunted well early, but slumped down later.



1:20 - 6:00 (4 1/2) mowed 4 birds
6 flushes.

1 productive Puff

Wednesday 22 October - This was Wilda's first day - after a long confinement due to being in season - and she was fit and soft, having had no work at all this fall. I took her to the Forest, skimming the Scott's Run country, leaving the car ^{across from} the mountain top beer place. Kay had stayed home to be with Puff who was bushed from his several days' hunting and yet miserable over being left behind. I hunted Wilda with her bell and for the first hour she mowed like the wind. Then weight and the heat wore her down and though she had the desire she just couldn't take it. During her first burst she made a nice flash point - not productive - that promises well for the near future.

We mowed nothing until we reached the point of the ridge well-down that is loaded with gophers where I usually find grouse. Here a single went out ahead (Wilda by this time wasn't covering the ground and so didn't get out there to find it) and I followed with no success. Doubling back and coming around the point at a lower level

#3 and #4 together. Following into the first main valley that leads up to the right from North Run I got two more flushes, taking a reflecting crack at me as it rose - missing. Since Wilder would offer no chances over points at this stage of her development, I was taking any shots offered by the grouse. Following we got no more flushes but working up to some lovely cover away by boulders we missed #5 and I missed a too-quick try again. This time I hunted



clear up the hill and doubled back down the valley to the mouth, then climbed to the



gaps cover again and hunted the ridge back to the car, missing #6 for two flushes well along toward the head of the valley. I, like Wilder, was well satisfied with the day's exercise by the time we reached the station wagon. The day was another of our long string of Indian Summer ones, clear, sunny, and hot with unmercifully dry conditions.

2:00 - 6:00 (4) missed 6 - 9 flushes

Thursday 23 October - Kay, Puff and I went back to the Forest today. The weather was hotter, clear, and that much dryer. We parked along the main road just over the top beyond the crossroads and entered the North Run Valley within a few yards - a much easier way to reach this area. Puff was working beautifully, having rested but had a tendency to waste effort by doubling in to me which I tried to prevent by whistling him out each time. As we climbed an old log road

152 #9
into the point of the ridge (west side of valley) and, ^{unintentionally},
some lovely new gaperine cove I had never been in, a grouse
flushed from in front of me. It wasn't one I didn't
try for it, though I doubt if it would have been a possibility.
We tried to follow it around the end of the ridge and Puff
made a point when I believe it had moved out ahead of us.

We continued around into the next ravine and walked into
a solid point that Puff had pointed tight. Unfortunately I
didn't see him pointing until too late to try but that is
all right too. The pleasure of this work was enough. We went
up into the ravine and covered it well with no results, either
further sight of the lost bird or any new. Puff was wearing
down rather too fast due to the extreme heat and we stopped
for lunch and then all day made a point of stopping to
rest him every 15 or 20 minutes, keeping him going busily
in short bursts. Finally after covering the top of the usual ridge,
big boulder and old mine shafts and all, we began moving
up the side of the ridge along grade, keeping just under the brow.
Just above where we often find birds in a small gaperine ravine I
came on Puff pointing nicely. I walked in and though the bird
was pointed and flushed not many yards from me I couldn't get my
gun on him for the foliage. Puff ^{pointed again} and
walked in and flushed another grouse, close but with no chance to

shoot. ~~It was~~ It was a fine piece of work. Since the second bird went down the ridge, we followed the first and heard it go out wild. We walked out the ridge and the number of flushes becomes a bit vague in my mind.



but we did move #5 wild about me and followed up the ridge but had no luck on a second rise. About the time we started out the hill again - and, I think, had heard ~~one~~ another grass wild - we ran into some shooting too close for peace of mind and started to veer back up the ridge. We only walked into the second shot that much closer - a squirrel hunter who had finished the magnificent job of blasting down a red squirrel - and we gave him his choice and went on out the ridge as started. We heard one grass from a chestnut log, to Puff's surprise, for the bird went out and roared over Puff's head. We got another flush from this point out of a sapling at the top of the ridge and saw him go down into the valley and out of our left. #7 flushed not too far ahead from some scrubby looking weeds and sumac mags but we only moved him once. Reaching the Chestnut Ridge Camp road (or near it) we turned and hunted back down the valley, keeping on the side of the ridge. We heard nothing on the way back although I shot ~~one~~ ^{one} grass at this level. Puff tired quickly ~~and~~ ^{and} the day was over.

and the fact that he hasn't hardened off completely yet. Because of the fire hazard the room was temporarily closed at 9:00 p.m. this evening until further notice. It is a good thing ^{used in 17} for days we've been breathing that peculiar smell like burning dust that accompanies the blue haze of Indian Summer and now there is leaf and wood smoke mixed with it and at times the haze is so dense the far ridges are obscured. We are uneasy about fire reaching our woods.

1:30 - 6:00 (4 1/2)

No shots
Herd 7-12 flukes

3 products - Ruff

Train

Tuesday 11 November - at last the season has been reopened after some mild showers but it is damp and the fire hazard is lessened. After getting Walker's Elmer started removing some bins I ate breakfast and took off alone with Ruff for the Breeris and the Sick Run country above Summers. Kay stayed home with the promise she would go along tomorrow with Ruff and Feather. The day was perfect clouding over after a clear frosty morning, the woods damp underfoot and the air cold. We parked the station wagon in the usual place and hunted up the tramroad in time to hear a blast of shots - squirrel hunters - up the ravine we wanted to cover, so we headed out the ridge, following the next valley up-ridge. Ruff ran into #1 partway up the mountain and I got a fleeting look at him but no shot or no second rise. After the frustrating experience of the long ban on hunting, I decided to revert to my usual rule of first bird-as-it-comes and wait for the second one a point. There is such a thing as

too many handicaps. ~~and~~ completely blowing up from

We hunted clear to the top and well out the ridge without any further birds, coming out north of the high field. Turning back down the ridge we followed the woods just below the field and Ruff began working more earnestly than he had all day. With no warning he stiffened and a grouse flushed ahead, quartering up the hill thru thick brush. I made a try that wasn't more than a hope and of course missed.



#2

I followed the line of flight clear to the top, doubling several times but never did reach the bird. After eating

lunch on the bank of the Brieris, we hunted out the crest of the ridge to the big point of rocks, getting a second production that was on what I consider #3. I may see tracks of the points and flushes thru the balance of the day but I felt altho I got no chance to shoot for a long period, Ruff was getting excellent experience, for I managed to stop him at the flush by calling "no" on every one of his points except the first and last. On the first, I called him back after his headlong rush and punished him lightly and after scolding him, made him "stay" in position until I ordered him on. To return to the point of rocks, - we turned and hunted back north along the ridge, following a lower level of contour and Ruff soon made another production that gave me no look at the bird. Following #4 we got another production but the bird chased the ridge. The one shot from me. I decided to follow it and climbed back to the top many a

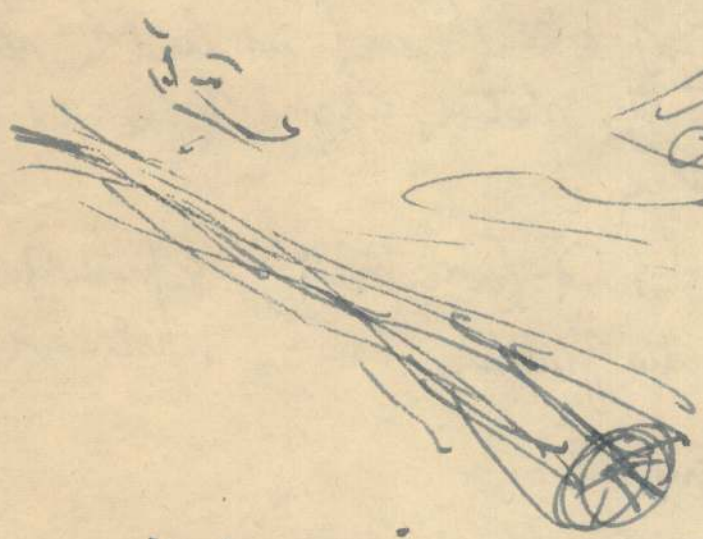
~~now another~~ ^{twice} ~~protective~~ ^{and} again, wild. This time it led us
 back to the point of rocks and detached us so we hunted back
 north, cutting down the hillside once more. At the little run
 that flows from the high field I turned down the ridge, intending
 to hunt it down the mountain but Puff walked into two
 birds that bored south. I couldn't pass that up and in

following, we moved #7 over another point (Puff's 5th) I
 hunted hard and long but never did find these birds. Returning
 toward the little run we worked a step down the ridge and I
 found Puff pointing again. This time I walked around him,
 picking open vistas and keeping upwind so the birds would be
 pinned between us. They weren't. Two of them flushed so
 Puff stepped in to establish his point and drove out the

ridge. I followed over the damndest terrain (the word is derived
from terrific) and in evening came that was like walking
a loose stone wall I got my feet tangled in a bunch of
 branches and went flat, taking the fall wide open to save
 my gun. I mashed my ear against a rock and even so,
 didn't quite protect the gun - barrels which struck a
 stone with a sickening ring. I dreaded to look and tho'
 I expressed myself in detail, I really was fortunate
 not to have flattened them. It made a scratch just in from
 the right muzzle but as far as I can see, no dent. After
 a rest - I'd been clumsy all day with knotted thigh muscles
 and had been having heavy going rocks under the net

leaves - we dropped down the shoulder and moved the
two birds separately for the 14th flush. I hunted after
the last one (the first left the country) but when I didn't
see it I took an old trail down - mountains for the sun
was getting low and red. Puff pointed #10 for his 5th
product. As I was disentangling myself from a bunch of
grapes and I wasn't quite ready to declare the day the
luckiest I'd ever known. However, I was still stopping him
at the flush on a couple of steps so the day had its points
but I was dead-crazy for a decent shot. Well-down toward
the shoulder that rounds into the large cutting where the
brush piles scatter around and down the ridge we were
working through some fine looking grapes and I was pulling
each foot out of the greenberries like stepping out of
taffy, at the same time asking for the bone. Suddenly, below
me I saw Puff, frozen again if it was possible. He was
pointing up hill into grapes but the cover in front of him
was relatively open. At least it had holes in it a man
could climb them and see a grouse ⁱⁿ if it flushed. I
checked to him to let him know I saw, and moved in,
keeping about and in front of him. When I was immediately
about him I stopped and let my heart pound and my
heavy glasses steam. Nothing happened. Puff didn't move a

thing but his eyes. I wasn't fifteen feet from him and he seemed to be pointing me. I stepped over a log and got my left foot ahead again as the grouse blew out of the ground a few feet from me, boring low and almost straight away. I found the spot and shot and the bird dropped like a stone not twenty yards from me. It was good.



RUFF HAS #11 ON HIS STN

I must admit Ruff didn't want to be ordered in but I can't feel too badly if he does that when he sees the bird fall. As it was, it seemed to give off no scent, for he almost stepped on it several times as I told him to fetch. He searched the area diligently and I had to call him back several times before he hit the scent as he moved down-wind and then he froze for a moment till I ordered him on. He prolonged the retrieval as he sometimes insists on doing but after all, I like to prolong my pleasures too - after he'd carried this to the point of delivery I ordered

time to fetch with no fadiness in the tone and he retrieved it and out to deliver - a beautiful picture. All this made a strange change in the way I felt. I became young again, my feet seemed to soar across the ground like cloud shadows over a ridge and I wanted to go on for hours. They seemed to share my metamorphosis, ~~but the sun didn't~~



THE SEASON'S FIRST BIRD

all this because a yearling pointer lay well to point and took the right way out. The sun however ignored our point of view and we had to step to get down over the ridge to the station wagon before old Darleens got us. What a perfect day.

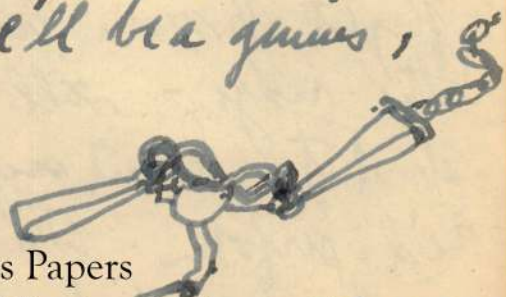
1:00 - 6:15 (5 1/4) 2 shots - 1 hit (over point) 8 productions } Ruff
1 retriever }
Yearling hen with interrupted tail and crop full of grapes, killed at 5:45 in grapes
made 11 - 16 flushes

Tram
Wednesday 12 November - The second day of the renewed season, cold but not as chilly as yesterday, cloudy and still slightly damp. Kay, Feathers, Ruff and I went to Homer & Amy Miller's to give the young hopeful his first taste of hunting under the gun. We got started late but since Ruff & I were tired enough from yesterday, it was just as well. Feathers showed great eagerness on the walk up the old road from where we parked above Homer's, tugging at the leash until he gasped and strangled but when I cut him loose, after the first long dash after the ~~gun~~ he ~~was~~ ~~some~~ ~~the~~ ~~best~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~lot~~

to his loafing amble in front of my feet. It's very discouraging, seeing the goal of a carefully mated breeding look like just any other raw pup, and not too handsome at that. Some day I hope he grows up to that chubby head of his, and, too, I some day hope to see him take an interest in something more than ten feet ahead of me. Last night he showed intense excitement over the grouse when I let him see and smell it, but today he showed no indication of trying that up with what we were doing. Ruff, too, seemed to be acting especially badly, coming back along paths and checking in with me every few or ten seconds and in general not moving out with decent range, altho he hunted widely while he moved. We swung thru the pecanier corner at the left of the ~~road~~ road and then circled and hunted along the tramroad, south - way taking the road and me taking the edge parallel above her. About the first little spring from a grouse flushed under Ruff's nose and he never saw or smelled it. We decided to follow, and swung up the ridge. In a few moments Ruff walked into #2 and shortly after, #3 went out with no warning from our boy. All went in the same general direction and we continued to follow. About a fair grouse flight I saw a bird flush to the left of me and go back the ridge - still with no sign of Ruff's knowing anything about it. I can't say why, for I know if the scent were there he'd perform. We finally gave up, considering the last flush as being #1 bird on the island.

road again. I'm pretty perturbed with the way Puff was doing his ground work - too close and too much looking back at me. I tried to control myself but it's difficult when you place so much emphasis on the way he travels. We went sitting in the entire lower end of fields and crossed the stream and ate lunch. After lunch it was much the same as we hunted up the left bank again - Puff keeping too close in and stopping to see if any hat was on just right or some damned thing. And all the time poor dumb little Feathers tottered along just around my feet. Having crossed the stream we were working up the path above the crossing when I heard Feathers yell as if he was being killed and saw him struggling with something down in the water to my left. At first I thought he was tangled with a poundhog or a coon and then I saw the trap - a double-spring number 2 clamped to his right paw. I got to him as fast as I could lay my gun down and squeezed the springs down, releasing his paw. It wasn't as bad as it might have been - there were no broken toes but he was a scared puppy. While Ray comforted him, I reset the trap - with a rock. If the son of a bitch who put it there ever untangles it he'll be a quiver, for I practically tied it into a knot.

After Feathers got settled we moved on and in a little while he was walking normally. We hunted up the right bank of the head water



of Dick but didn't find a sign of a bird - in territory which
 we'd mark half a dozen last season. It may be that the birds
 don't gather in here until the snow. Kay was a little tired
 and I suggested she and Feather rest and then walk around
 the shoulder of the ridge and meet Puff and me in the next
 valley after we crested the top. Soon after I left them I
 found Puff on point in a tangle of greenbriers - just about
 where we marked these birds last year. I walked in and
 the grouse flushed from up in the greenbriers, moving out too
 fast for me to get a shot. As it went around the hill the
 direction I wanted to go I followed them the opening where
 I dropped the bird in the snow last year where we took the
 color picture (that didn't take). On the way I saw a nice messy
 tangle of briars around a rock and succeeded to go thru them,
 just in case. When I looked up I was aware of Puff about me
 and called to him to go on. ^{He didn't, and} suddenly the place exploded and
 a bird rocketed up from my feet. My shot was almost
 entirely automatic - after a fumble with the safety ~~catch~~
 and I fired before my ^{chuck} ~~gun~~ was quite against the stack. The
 bird side-slipped in an arc to the left and I felt
 he fell not too far out. I called to Puff to fetch
 and he went after it so I ~~felt~~ decided he saw it fall,
 but there was no sound and when I got around the
 tangle and to the spot - no sign of either bird or Puff.
 I sat there a few moments




distract him with further orders - taking an opportunity to answer Kay's call and say I had one down. Then I ordered Puff to fetch, thinking he must be just out of sight behind one of the rocks - perhaps taking his time about bringing the bird in. After a few more moments, I began to have the nasty feeling he'd be coming in without the bird and that perhaps it had regrettably flown on. Then I saw him - far down than the thicket of pole saplings below us - head high with the grouse in his mouth and coming on the double. It was like old times when his sire Blue used to disappear and come back with a crippled bird from the far blue yonder. It was a yearling with the interrupted tail band. Both legs were broken and the neither wing was hurt I can visualize it - lit in the lower parts - keeping in the air enough to get down over the hill before it dropped - with Puff under it.



THAT WONDERFUL FEELING

Later we saw where he had found it - a scattering of feathers well down the ridge where I would never ~~have~~ ^{have} located it without him. He sat and delivered beautifully, and then Kay and Feather's arrived. At first when I heard the bird to feathers, Puff made a rough objection but he held his head and he calmed down and let me lay the grouse before feathers

who delighted me by picking it up and carrying it to me. After some more encouraging, I laid the bird some paces away and called Feathers to me. He struck the scent and located it, again picking it up and bringing it toward me, but this time he laid it down before he reached me. Nevertheless I was very happy. I thanked Puff again and told him what a small job he'd done. Then we left that section rather than disturb any further birds (we felt this was #5 and that #4 was out ahead someplace. Down the hillside we heard #6 go out wild. We crossed the basin that is the head of Rich Run and passed on the far lip where Kay took a picture of Puff, Feathers and me with game, perched on a large rock. Starting down the shoulder of the mountain for the last main lobe we followed Puff in a series of points where a bird must have been wading around a while before. At the farm road, after no action, I parted from Kay & Feathers who took the long way - and the charted way - back to Homer & Amy's while Puff and I plunged down the ridge below the farm road thru good looking grape vine cover with some thrilling signs of game in the form of a couple of good points but nothing materialized. At the bottom we crossed the very briery, brushy, rocky area and Puff jacked up again. This time a grouse roared and showed itself for a

fins against the sky.  For a moment, I
 hesitated feeling he was so far out over such
 tangled stuff that I'd never find him even if I hit him. That
 was long enough. I'd never know, but I feel now it was a very
 possible shot and I have no doubt Puff could have spotted
 him if he'd dropped. However, he's still there alive and after
 all, that's better. I came out at the top of the thicket not too
 far from the station brakes. Kay & Teathers were at the house
 when I got there and we had a nice chat with Amy & Homer.

2:00 - 6:00 (4 hrs) One shot - 1 hit (also point) } Puff
 3 productives }
 Yearling hen, interrupted tail and }
 crop empty, killed about 4:15 in open brush. }
 1 retriever }
 First bird killed with Teathers.

17#22

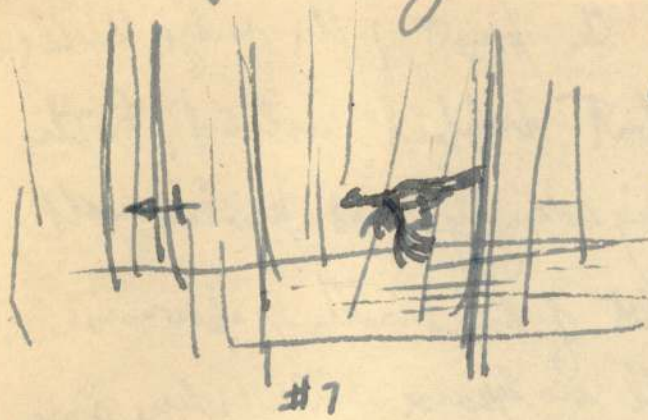
Thursday 13 November - Kay stayed home to console Puff who must
 rest every couple of days, and Wilde and I drove to the forest to
 find the season is unchanged and grouse hunting is open only on 3
 was Saturdays. We returned to Hazel Run and packed at the
 white pines, hunting down the right side then excellent hemlock cover.
 Ward #1 walked about the tram road. Soon, after climbing the ridge to
 the old Faulkner's roadway at the upper part of the slope Wilde moved
 #2 & #3 together. He later went into a tree well ahead and
 as Wilde moved in, covered down stone as I looked straight into the
 sun, yawning over my head. I turned and tried a quick one but
 couldn't get far enough under for a display flight. We searched -

or rather I did, & Wilda was gasping for air and no help -
 but I'm sure I missed clean. Around the point of the ridge Wilda
 made #2 wild. I didn't care to follow but dropped, instead, to the
 slope or steep hill that rounds above Big Sandy and hunted well
 along before stopping for lunch at the point of land with grapevines
 and hemblocks, and still no game. Saw where someone
 had skinned a deer not too long ago. After



* lunch we had gone but a few yards when #4 flushed
 from some grapes below me and went down over the ridge out of this world.
 I circled the hemblock dotted slope or flat below and around the
 point, moving #5 & #6, one of which went where #4 should have been.
 That must have been clear to the creek for I couldn't see them
 when I tried and having discovered that Wilda had torn her
 left foot below the hook with a rather bad wound, I didn't
 care to go down any further. Instead, since she seemed to be in
 no apparent pain I followed around the lower margin of the
 Faulkenstein's fields, crossing the old road that one time led from the
 farm down to Rockville. We went clear to the long point of land
 about the forks of Laurel & Sandy and still had made no birds.
 I decided to write this case off as one to retire for a year or so, and
 they began hunting up the west margin of the fields, keeping just
 within the woods. Not far from the corner Wilda moved a grass
 that quanted back and below me, ^{George Bird Evans Papers}
 and looking as long as a hawk with his by and by ^{West Virginia and Regional History Center} closed.

I tried for a wing ahead but they seemed to be too many saplings.
He went on. We went back and he moved
out wild going in the general direction
of some place else. As I returned I
walked toward a promising looking
knobloch. Why it looked different
from the others I couldn't say, but

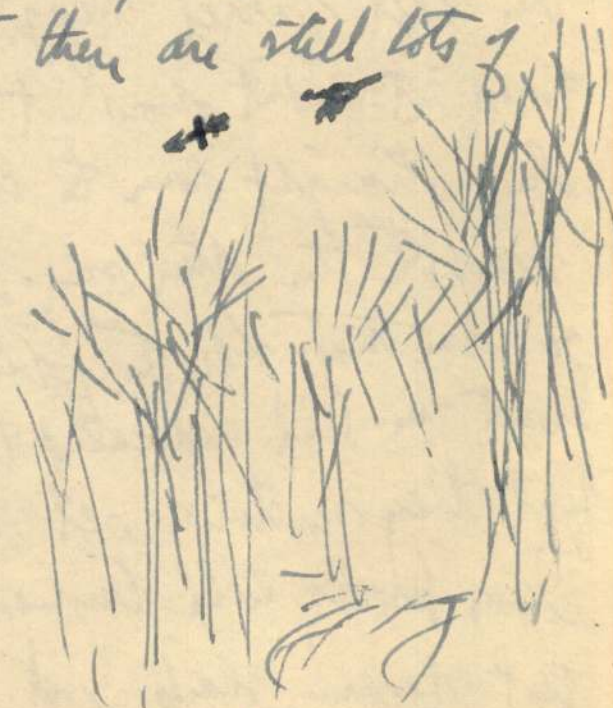


it did, and in a moment I heard the patter of feet on dry leaves
and a quack, #8, went up the slope, taking off low like a
bomber. I missed him too, in a quick wing ahead before
he went behind some saplings. I couldn't raise him or record
try so once again began to hunt the margin of the fields toward
the house site, rearranging my plans to classify this covert.
At a nice tangled little corner on the edge of the woods I
heard one take off and snapped at his silhouette as he made
the clear edge and turned up the margin of the woods. Then
another flushed, and didn't turn but kept straight across
the old field toward the ground up road at the top, following
a brushy ravine and getting out of gun range before I could
spot him. Then I heard another go, and another - making it
12 birds to date. I followed the first one, and I shot, the last two,
but only missed one on the edge of ~~some~~ a brushy thicket out from
the woods itself. This one cut across the ~~field~~ and disappeared
beyond the old roadway. It was ~~seen~~ and ~~seen~~ and I was

tired, but I doubled back to where I'd flushed the quail and
crossed in the path of the second bird to the road and followed
it back to the house site, but no birds. They must have gone
all the way across to the far woods - the two that didn't
stick to the first woods. I took the old road from the house
pins and stuck to it clear to Hazel Run. Just at the sharp
bend around the point of the valley, Wilda put her head up and
climbed straight up the slope to the left and all the way to the
top. There in a few moments, I heard the rustle of a bird moving out
and saw it high, high in the fading light, sailing out over the
path behind. I swung my gun ahead of it and found
the left barrel trigger and squeezed. If it reached the
ground it didn't show it other than to fold its wings and power
dive straight down to the valley far below - and probably
across to the other side. I tried to decide if I should push off and
go down that slope to follow and make sure it wasn't hit. Nothing
about the bird indicated that it had been touched (other than the
fact they sometimes set their wings and carry off a load of shot).
I was pretty well bushed, it was late - well after six - and
fast becoming dark and the tangle of hemlock and rhododendron
knew was at the bottom was pretty discouraging. I thought again of
how healthy that quail looked, ^{and} ~~hopping~~ ^{down} the hill, I voted against
the idea, hoping I'd missed it.

bird #2 of the first pair I was just beyond where Wilder
 had flushed them. I stuck to the old roadway - till it crossed
 and left the tram road and I took the latter out, making
 #13 & #14 from a tall tree top along the tram. It was about
 dark when we made the car. Somehow today was one of those
 days. Either the birds just weren't offering my kind of shots
 or I couldn't get with them. Anyway I had fire less shells
 and there were fire wiser but still having grouse in the woods. It
 was a wonderful thing to make so many in this cover. I had been
 hounded by other hunters on other hills - one person emptying
 a pumpgun several times - obviously at grouse. One time
 as I left the old pines on the Fulkestone place I heard
 the voice of one man fairly close - but there are still lots of
 birds there.

5 shots - no hits
 1:15-6:30 (5 1/4) made 14-18 flushes



#2 (LATE EVENING)

Friday 14 November - Kay, Ruff & I set out on another

gorgeous Indian summer day (fairly cool) to explore.

We turned left at Mt. Carmel church atop the Brieries and drove past Mrs. Bruce Cramer's (her own Scott lives there now), turned right at the crossroads and up a horrible stretch of rocky trail, parking at the crest and hunting in what could have been good flat cover if there had been birds there. Since there didn't seem to be, we drove back thru some awfully cut-off roads heavily posted and parked at Cramer's, circling the lake near their house. This proved too open and in the pole stage, so Kay went back for the station wagon and Ruff and I hunted out the ridge and met her on the road. It didn't look as if a grouse would be caught around there dead. We decided to try hunting some promising looking hemlock-hardwood slopes in the Roaring Creek gap we'd passed on our way up and so stopped at the Ray Kelly and Harry Kelly farms (the Kelly stock farms) and received permission to hunt. Parking at the bend of the hill we started hunting about 3:45 in brilliant hemlock and large maple and beech woods and flushed a large pair almost at once that moved out low and silently and in the direction we wanted to go. At the brink of the next ravine it moved out above us and flushed back toward the car. From where we stood, a month-watering view of vast hemlock dotted wonderful grouse cover lay before us in several shoulders and valleys nestled against the right side of the gap and

we plunged in. Just over the hill in the first gully #2 flushed
ahead of Puff who was moving fast and handsome today. The
bird followed the valley upstream and we dropped on a nice
log road and went after him. Less than a gorse flight
a third bird went out after Puff threw his head up and bored
up the steep slope and I'm almost certain he deserves a production
credit on that one. Altho the grouse went to the top, we passed
him by for the moment and continued up the valley, hoping to
meet more to keep him company. Shortly, Puff, tearing down
the hillside above me, or myself put out another grouse that
also quartered up to the top of the ridge where we hoped he'd
wait until we hunted it back. At the forks of the creek -
the headwaters of Rowing - we took the right branch, doubled
back and followed the other ravine then cut across and
headed back down valley and climbing. #4 soared out
up where Puff was tho' I can't say he had a point, and settled
into a tree along the steep slope. I marked it and walked
in that direction and heard it was from one tree to another
but never put it out. Gaining the top of the immediate slope of
the valley wall, tho' the real top was up around Craver's
house and the big open woods, we hunted along the level we
expected to find our birds but moved nothing. I suggested that
instead of following me, Key go ~~down the hill~~ and Puff and I

would circle and try to mass the birds out of the dense hemlocks we had skirted. I had scarcely left Kay when I saw Puff cock his ears and a quack flushed. It was keeping low to the hillside and I took a quick swing ahead and fired in a short space between trees and lost sight of it. I stood for a moment as Puff disappeared too, then heard the flop of wings and I knew Puff had it and I called to Kay. He got there in time



to see Puff sit to deliver after a beautiful retrieval up the hillside with the big bird in his mouth. By the time we could get the camera focussed Puff had dropped the bird and sat panting from excitement and the exertion and nothing we did could make him hold the bird again. Finally we took a couple of snaps anyway and sat to gaze on our beautiful bird, a lovely big-tailed fellow with an interrupted tail band, the largest this year. He had a wing broken and a leg shattered and I imagine is hit in the body, but he had required finishing off, which may or may not have caused Puff to refuse to sit with the bird in his mouth beyond the time I should have received it. We hunted back the top edge of the valley not too anxious to kill any other but alert for any shots of Puff insisted on trailing. This he did, below an old mill race, but the bird was not

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without offering any view of himself, #5. This country is
a delightful discovery and looks like acres of beautiful
grass woods with lots of abodolendron - fine for some money

day when I don't want to take the car on side roads later on.
Puff worked beautifully today.

4:00 - 5:30 (1 1/2)

1 shot - 1 hit

2 products of Puff
1 retrieval

Adult male, interrupted tail band.
crop: beechnuts, grapes, few leaves.

heard 5 - 8 flushes

& beech trees,

killed at 5:00 in hemlock cover, flushed from hemlock and log cover.

^{17 #23}
Saturday 15 November - Puff & I went alone to the Forest and
parking beside Kinsey Tifer's pickup, ~~at~~ ^{at} the small log house on the
Cooper Rocks road, began hunting down the valley. The day was
warm and sunny after a thunderstorm early this morning. The
leaves were drying underfoot except on the slopes toward Scott Run.
I crossed to the left side of the valley and hunted the shoulder on
that side coming to some limited grape cover at the point of the ridge.
Here Puff moved in as a bird flushed, boring straight up and
spiralling back over my head. I think I passed up a possible
but instead of trying as he rose over my head I turned and was too
late for a shot as he moved out of sight. We followed back the
shoulder and moved him wild. Returning to the site of flush, we
hunted a bit lower into some giant rocks but heard a shot just
below us. Deciding to steer clear of that, we moved across a little
ravine to the left and began hunting the next ridge. Around
the point we came into the beginning of what appeared to be an
extended paper pine cover, well up under the brow of the hill.

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We moved a group of three grouse, ~~one~~ ^{one} we had come, the
other two out ahead. Again Puff seemed to have no idea

they were there until they flushed. On following - about two hundred yards - I creiled back lower, feeling we had come far enough, and Puff hit scent and moved into a paperum and flushed what I consider one of the two birds. Since it left the country in the direction of the stream, I worked back up and nearly walked into a bird that flushed from a low sapling - again passing up a channel on a straightaway I wasn't quick enough for. I saw this bird appear to land against the hill without topping the ridge and I took a few steps in that direction. Gross began flushing one at a time to my left until five more had gone, leaving me with an open mouth and a fully loaded gun. One topped the

hill, the others seemed to go back around the shoulder but I couldn't be certain where. Following the one I could spot I moved the first one up and went after him, flushing him again at the flat on top. Instead of going on his trail I returned to try to flush the main group but had no luck until I got around the shoulder rather well when a bird went out and I think from his position that Puff had a production. We followed up the ravine and I heard Puff bark below me and I knew he saw one in a tree. That would be flush number 17. After creiling back over to the main slope with the paper (stopping partway around to eat lunch) I came on Puff pointing below me into a nice paperum tangle. I creiled and came in below him, walking clear up to the side of him but getting no results. I backed off and creiled below - nothing but silence and a dog like stare - and one more was flushed.

when I was within a few feet of him with the gapewings between
us, I reached out with my left foot and kicked the tangle.

The effect was ~~instant~~, ~~the goose exploding~~ as if I'd kicked
a load of dynamite. The goose tailed up between Puff and
me and took the clearest way out — straight into the sun.

I held off a moment and then fired at the spot above him
and again as he melted into the sky. It was a shot I should
have made by waiting a moment a bit longer and taking him
as he slanted off less acutely. I heard a second bird go out
beyond our immediate area and saw him pile over the skyline
like the first. I have to count one of these #10. It was the



only real shot of the day and
Puff produced it on a silver
platter. I followed and the
bird flushed wild twice on the
top. The second time I poked a
shot at him that wasn't much more
than hopeful — and missed.



1 MUFF RUFF'S
BEST.

After some more fruitless efforts, I decided to go across to the
next ridge and by what I thought were the gaps I'd reached
on my last hunt in North Run, resting these young birds
until I came back on my way in. It was about 5 p.m.
and getting dark down in these valleys but I made the best
spurt further from the car. ~~On the next ridge, which I did not~~

look natural, we moved three more groups separately, one over a
 productivis. One went to the bottom, and I tried for the other two
 who'd gone all the top. Tho I didn't find them I came out on
 the paved road, near a "25 mile speed limit" sign - entirely
 wrong according to my idea of where I was. I think the top
 maps are off on the details of this section for I can't reconcile
 them with this situation. I plunged back down the ridge to
 get back to my huge group of birds and recognized a raven
 I'd hunted into the day a couple of winters ago when I'd worn
 out my leg muscles making deep snow hunting in here.
 Back on my lovely ridge I finally made one of the birds but
 couldn't find any others. Crossing to the first point where I'd
 made #1 this a.m. I ran into a pair - one of which could
 have been #1, the other had to be #14. Altogether I'd had 30
 flushes today with only 3 productivis and I fault Puffo's
 ground work for not reaching out and pinning down a lot of
 those birds. He definitely was not in form today, tho he could
 hardly have been tired from only a couple of hours hunting yesterday.
 However, he was extremely dry and overheated today and it may
 have had a lot to do with it. Just the same, I wasn't
 happy about his work - or mine. I found Kinsky waiting at
 his pickup for me when we got in. He hadn't had any luck either,
 tho he'd made a lot, he said. 3 shots - no hits 3 productivis } Puffo

1:30 - 6:30 (5 hrs)

Monday 17 November - Kay, Ruff & I drove down to Allegheny
Mountain to hunt the Dolly birds, stopping at Davis to buy a Forest
Stamp and driving up from the forks of Red Creek. On the
way up we passed a group of bear hunters strung along the road
for a mile or more but on top we had the place relatively to
ourselves. We began hunting on the left side of the swamp at
Fishers Spring Run and almost immediately moved birds,
but so wild they were merely sounds. Not getting repeat flushes,
we dropped into the spruce trees along the cranberry swamps
but made nothing for quite a while. Finally, as I stepped into
a small mossy clearing a grouse flushed from my feet and
bored thru a hole in the spruce not twelve feet from me. I
missed and cut a pattern of spruce tips just behind him as
he turned but didn't connect. It was the only shot of the
two day trip and I don't think could have been taken a split
second later and so I can't regret the miss. That bird was #6 and
the last we saw for a long time. After eating lunch we returned
to the station wagon and drove back the road toward the tower but
peeked at the rise above the swamp and plunged down the slope to
the west, trying the beech and scrubby thickets so highly
recommended. We made absolutely nothing all the way down to
the little run that comes down from the swamps and so we
crossed and climbed the far side toward a kind of spruce trees.
Ruff gave us some nice looking points but nothing materialized.
At the top we rested and then moved out into a big plateau
of grasslands and spruce clumps.



ONE SHOT IN
TWO DAYS

a fruitless circle we started back since it was late and the car was far away on the distant skyline. We came on Ruff yacked up in a nice point between two clumps of spruce and when I walked in to the left, he turned his head and froze the other direction. I moved around behind

him but not soon enough, for a large bird bored out low and yanked across the open to a far pile of rocks and spruce.

We moved him wild again, after I misjudged his strategy and that was the only second flush of the day. On the way

back Ruff pointed but moved on before the birds flushed wild to the right of me. We finally worked our way up the ridge and

after going much further than we had realized we had to go, came out on the road above the Fisher Spring Run trail ^{comes out} ~~crosses~~.

Just below, in a fringe of Rhododendron, I saw two birds, and calling Ruff in let him freeze a point. When feeling it was time to

move him on, I insisted that he go on, and a bird flushed that he'd been pointing, crossing the main road. I followed and after

no results turned back to the car and walked into 2 more. This sounds like a lot of action. Really, considering the birds we'd

moved in here last year and the area we covered it was very thin. We drove out the ridge toward the south with a flaming red sunset

burning up the sky behind black spruce forests and it was worth the trip for that alone. Dark was falling and we walked to the east

side of Allegheny but we could see Toke Mountain and the
Fore Knobs far below. We stayed at the Hermitage Inn in
Petersburg and ~~that~~ ^{in the} evening I discussed possible covers with
Jerry Couhard at the hotel.

1:00 - 6:00 (5)

1 shot - no hit

2 products } Puff

ward 13 - 14 flyers

~~~~~

Tuesday 18 November - after talking things over last night we decided  
to try Allegheny Mountain again - a mistake - but armed with  
Couhard's map we drove up thru dense fog to the spring at the  
top of the mountain, certain that we'd really find birds today.

I followed directions and ward mostly nothing but a deer in the  
area around the spring and below the beacon light, so having hunted  
from 11:00 (couldn't have started earlier because of fog) we drove  
out to the knob with the coal mine. Parking we hunted down into  
the rhododendron, <sup>at lunch or a drumming log,</sup> and ward nothing till we'd got well into the  
patch. Finally a big grouse flushed and I think now I  
would have tried for it, but I'd been trying for more positive shots  
and passed it up. Couldn't refresh the bird so worked to the left  
along the little branch where we want a woodcock (only one  
I've seen this year) and later #2 grouse which I saw start off  
the ground. Getting tangled up in the rhododendron we forgot  
our way out and got on the



I'd had enough of Carver's suggestions, so we returned to where we  
 ended up last night, hoping to wear some of those birds, I left Ray  
 in the car and creaked below the road in the rhododendron where  
 we'd flushed 3 last night. Usual. Crossing to show the road, I hunted  
 around to about 100 yds and she called and said a grouse had flushed  
 wild ahead of me, crossing over the car. I followed and then I didn't  
 see that bird as much as I did ahead of Puff. Both of the last birds  
 were probably last night's and not new ones. (I have another mention of  
 another cove in another of Carver's favorite woods which I took while  
 Ray rested in the car. It was just as sterile as the other coves.)

Finally about 4:00 or later we drove to the far side of the Fisher's  
 Spring swamp and tried to do it in a last determined effort to  
 move some grouse but altho we went clear down to the big  
 opening we didn't see a single feather. Returning to the road  
 completely tired and discouraged I creaked the east cove  
 while Ray went to the station wagon and changed clothes and  
 in there I flushed two - one a mere whisper of sound as it took  
 off from a tree over my head, the other - a distant rumble  
 as it flushed ahead of Puff. I feel the recent fire on the Roaring  
 Plains about 10 miles south of this ridge has done something to completely  
 upset the birds, either driving them out of the country or making them  
 exceptionally wild so that they don't respond to ordinary hearing. We  
 at least had the pleasure of the last bird which was a



It will take me some time to get over the feeling of frustration and  
let down that I took away with me. Puff worked poorly the  
first half of yesterday but all day today he worked hard  
and seemed to be determined to find grouse by sheer effort.  
We saw the mountain ash with its loads of red berries for the  
first time in any numbers and those black spruce trees as a  
sight at any time. We decided instead of returning via Red Creek  
and Davis to keep north the mountain and drive down to Jordan  
Pine. It was an experience we're glad we had - the mountain became  
more and more bleak and forbidding looking as we drove out, finally  
turning into vast barrens of grass and rocks and low scrub with  
only occasional spruce clumps for any. The fog had settled in  
with the dark as we dropped down the steep side - I'd stopped to  
change clothes at the top near the Bear Rocks - and by the time  
we came to Jordan Pine Valley we scarcely could see the folds of  
Big Star Pine to our left. Climbing again to Allegheny Trail  
we hit 50 at Mt. Storm and drove to Backstone mountain here  
where we had a country home dinner and then drove on home.

11:00 - 6:00 (7 hrs)

no shots

ward 6 (4 new) 7 flushes



Wednesday 19 November - Leaving Buff at home Forest with Kay, and since Will's foot has not healed enough to take her out, I took Teathers out for his second quose hunt, leaving in not very propitious weather. Decided to go to the Wilkison place and by the time we parked and started up the valley toward the Granddole power line it was raining nice and mean. I put on my plastic raincoat (fine for dragging thru briars) and kept Teathers on a leash till we got halfway up the slope. at the top, I started out thru the popovers where I usually wear birds (left 10 quose in here last year and the year before) and worked out toward the far edge. Just before we reached it, a quose went out low and sailed down the hill, the front of Teathers. I don't think he saw it but in a moment he hit the scent and everything went crazy for him. He wailed and tore around and then returned, burying his nose in the good rich aroma. I encouraged him and let him get his bill and finally he was willing to move on. Moving each likely spot as carefully as if I'd had no dog, I searched, hoping to wear more but didn't. Then we went after the one bird but couldn't find him. Down in Mason Run (about the bridge) a group of trigger happy drips was blasting the side out of the hill - either with more power than ever existed or with a crew of quail. I tried to keep away from them and many birds of the hill, many a rabbit



run out ahead of me. I watched to see what Teathers would do when  
he crossed the scent and he nearly went nuts. I finally got him  
away and worked back around the ridge toward Rudy. On the far  
side of the small power line #2 went out wild - I haven't had a  
decent chance at a grouse for days - and Teathers went through  
the same wildly enthusiastic routine. I had no luck reflecting  
this bird either so pushed on, making nest under the sunset  
from steaming and bounded by the sound of bursts of 2 and  
3 shot volleys from the hopefuls in the valley behind me. I  
mentally cursed them with my roundest and moved on, finally  
moving a 3rd bird near the big power line so wild I didn't even  
hear its wings - just a clatter of leaves as it shot thru and the  
fact that Teathers hit the scent and tore the place up. Between  
birds he's very sluggish, wading along at my feet a just  
ahead but the scent of grouse pours the adrenaline into his  
blood stream and he can really move when he gets going. If  
only I could have shot one of those birds ahead of him I would have  
been priceless benefit to him. We quit about 4:30, soaked,  
further frustrated and sore about the fods up the hollow who  
were getting into balls of birds. I counted no less than  
33 to 35 shots fired and they were still at it when we left.  
2:00 - 4:30 (2 1/2)



Saturday 22 November - Kay, Ruff, & I - after two restless days of rainy weather - went back to the South Run section, leaving the station wagon on the Cooper's Rock road at the speed limit sign and hunted the country I'd been in last week. I expected to see loads of birds at once and altho we didn't see the group of five, we did get into birds almost immediately. In the first ravine a quail flushed as Ruff ran into it and flew down toward a bit further, a second bird went up, which I should have found. The stream. I scolded him and we followed, with Ruff freezing into a nice point that I walked up without a shot, this bird also going to the creek. It was the first bird we'd seen, but since they'd shot for the absolute reason we gave up after a short pursuit. Climbing the ridge I walked the nice quail case and that we'd see the covey but only flushed one bird around the point of the hill. It too, should have been a point. I felt, and said as much to Ruff. Failing to see it after doubling over the top plane of the ridge we hunted across to the next ridge, downstream above the big table rock. As I walked along an old path just above the boulders, a quail flushed from above me - from Ruff - and came scoting along about two feet off the ground and looking as if it were going to land below me but this side of the large rocks. As I watched, a second bird came bell-bent thru the tree tops and I took a swinging lead and fired, seeing the quail fold its wings and plummet down on the cliff. We couldn't tell if it was hit or just diving but we hurried



to a spot where we could get over the steep rocks, meantime checking the place the first bird had seemed to land but finding nothing.

heard one of them Ruff, who seems to be birds, and it went to the bottom. As I searched the line of flight to see if any shot had done business, Ruff joined me and after a bit of preliminary feathering up, stuffed on point into a clump of rhododendron among some led footing in rocks. I wasn't at all certain the bird hadn't gone out but walked around the point at ready - my safety catch having broken from the shock of the first shot and making it necessary for me to hold the safety in position. The grouse took off with a roar and zoomed out low, offering me a short look as it cut across an opening and curved away from me.



Below the rocks we go out ahead of bumping too many



I shot a quick snap and saw it go on, rising above the trees and making the

ridge we'd just hunted. I left Kay to rest, and Ruff & I followed among two birds, one of which could have been this one - the other flushed from the old feeding station at the brow of the hill was, I think, the bird #3 we'd flushed and had failed to shoot.



Kay and we hunted on downstream below the table rock and its companions, missing another bird which Kay heard go out. I have missed several of the distant flushes and guess my hearing isn't as sharp as it once was - much as I hate to think of it - but Kay hears so many birds that to me are lost in the rumble of distant planes or the crack of brush under my boots. I would consider this a new bird from the one I heard last Saturday at the mouth of the next valley we stopped to eat lunch on a rock near two sandstone piles and while there we heard a shot on the ridge beyond us we think was King's Fish. After lunch we crossed the double ravine toward that ridge and again Kay heard a grouse flush that I failed to notice, another new one. Since we didn't see it we couldn't follow, so went on as if it started. Hunting to the top of the ridge King's had shot on, we creaked thru good cover but failed to see a bird until we dropped back down toward the stream with dense evergreen cover along it. Here, I saw and heard, a grouse go out of a hemlock and cross the creek. We turned back and began our hunt toward the car. The nice sunny day had changed to cloudy and back at the lunch place it began to drizzle. We waited it out under an accommodating hemlock and saw the rain turn to light hail. In twenty minutes or so it stopped and we hunted on thru idally wet cover - taking the ~~in~~ valley up toward the McCallum place, but crossing and climbing ~~back~~ the ~~valley~~ ridge!



We dropped across to the upper paperine ridge and stillward no  
birds. By this time we were pretty well-blessed and decided to  
move to the next ridge up the hollow. Just before we left the  
paper case Puff, who was working ahead of me, swooping up the  
hill at my hand signal and landed right on a bird and  
flushed it with no sign of having any idea it was there. I  
gave him a severe scolding and shaking, and we went on,  
hearing another bird go wild. I count these the two we first saw  
today for they were in the same ravine. Around on the next ridge  
I hunted out a low point of land they felt was where one of the  
birds had headed for but no doubt was true. In the big rocks  
on this ridge I saw Puff suddenly stiffer and I think two  
birds flushed, one I saw - the other I thought I heard go from  
the branches. Soon I heard and saw another pair flush,  
keeping low as if it didn't plan going far. We followed this bird  
up the hollow and along the ridge, and soon Puff feathered up and  
then solidified into a tangled paperine, rolling his eyes at me  
as I walked in. The case was such that I couldn't come around  
on the point so I did the best I could and slid past him on  
one side, but the bird has too claws and took the back door out.  
I got on it top the trees. Ray & I were both tired and it was late  
so we shut for the head of the ravine and the car. We had arranged  
to meet Daisy Fife at the checker station for our dinner



writing for us. He offered to take my gun stock to a gunsmith in Logan town and have the safety repaired. We drove on the next day, Sunday, and picked it up. The gunsmith, Spibble did a nice job, replacing the spring and the broken lug or point on the safety catch as well as cleaning the lock and smoothing down a worn screw head. The Ogden, who'd come for Hunters, went with us.

11:30 - 6:10 (6 hrs, 40 min) 2 shots - no hits 4 productivity { Puff

heard 9 (3 new) - 18 flushes  
About Scotts Run tributary we heard the familiar cry of 20 geese in V formation. I later 3 more, trying to join the flock.

Monday 24 November - After another dark day yesterday, today blossomed

raining and clear and perfect. Kay, Puff and I took off on an exploration trip full of high hopes. We drove to the Musley Woods where I'd wanted to hunt for years. Taking an old road down into gorgeous hemlock and rhododendron cover we found a very nice person - a man in his 70's named Garner back at a farm house - just coming in from rabbit hunting. He was very cordial and said we were welcome to hunt on his place which included the good care along the South Branch of Snowy Creek. We parked near the stream and started hunting along the sunny left bank on the edge of the thick cover. Almost at once Puff stepped into a point and almost immediately a big quail tore out and into the dense trees. I was too slow on my reflexes to get my gun up. In fifty yards or so #2 flushed from the left and down for the rhododendron and hemlock - which seemed to rather matter in both



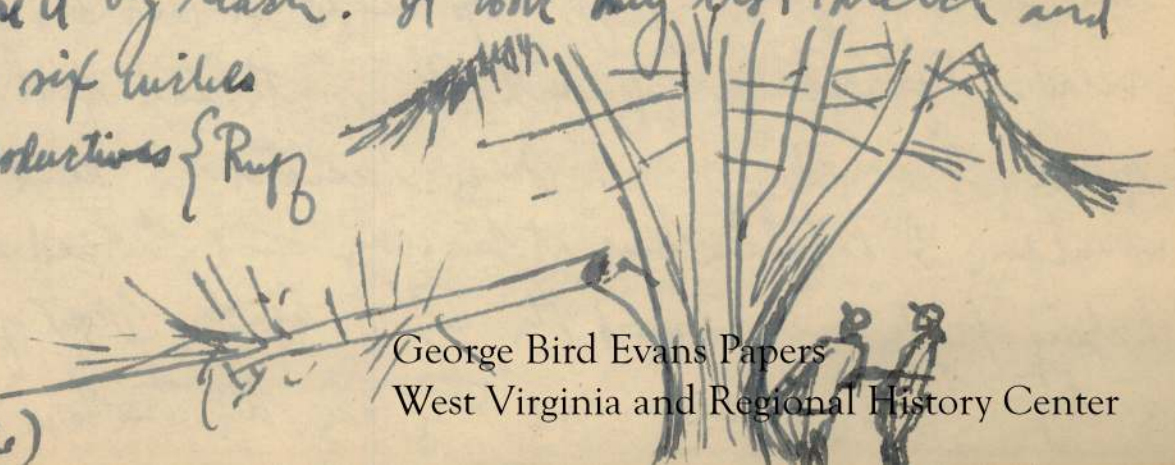
as far as I could see. Following a nice old foot path through  
- early cove I saw Puff feather up and Kay said she heard  
a bird flush shortly before, that seemed to go out the ridge.  
We moved on and flushed two more, one low down at the  
edge of a swamp and the other (a repeat on # 3) that went  
beyond the cove end of our hunting land. Turning back low  
down on the edge of the swamp we heard a bird flush from Puff  
and saw it go up to the top edge of the cove. Following, we let  
Puff hunt ahead and he bumped it, I think, and I saw it  
coming at me, a foot or so off the ground. It moved enough to  
get past me and nearly hit Kay in the leg and curved back  
into the lower edge of the dense cove. I held off because Kay was  
behind <sup>and Puff was right after the bird</sup> but I doubt if I could have connected. Following down  
we came on Puff on a nice point at the edge of a swampy opening.  
As I approached, the bird groomed up the low ground and  
disappeared, with Puff after it. He had been behaving outrageously  
about breaking at us, so I called him in and gave him a  
round talking to and a shaking up. We couldn't follow in the thick  
cove, so hunted up the other side of the cove, stopping for lunch  
and also for me to talk to Mr. Farmer about hunting up on the  
land but found it was posted for soon acres back in that country.  
The rest of the afternoon was spent <sup>in talking to</sup>



people to get permission to hunt. Lockridge, Seis, and then  
 coming back and finding no birds in the covers. At last we  
 hunted back on the same piece and covered this a.m. seeing  
 a bird almost exactly where #2 had flushed, from Teaberris -  
 this time ahead of a nice productive point. It went out of  
 this world so we hunted on down to the fence and came back  
 along the upper edge with a pair of grouse flushing ahead of  
 Ruff. Whether he had a point on them I can't say but he surely  
 chased the one I saw go out. I called him back and gave him  
 a good scratching and more of the shake treatment and I wonder if  
 I can ever get my idea across. We reached the car and Kay  
 stayed there while I took one more try at the other of the pair that she'd  
 seem to lack the ridge. I finally missed it - ~~at the~~ off the tip  
 of one of the high humlocks and missed down to the bottom. This  
 case was beautiful but unhuntably - and disappointing after the high  
 hopes I'd had. We enjoyed it all but it was more parascand-  
 country than grouse hunting cover. We did find a giant humlock in  
 the front - a multiple trunk type that spread rather than towered.  
 We tried to measure it by reach. It took my best stretch and  
 two of Kay's with six inches  
 to spare - 3 productions of Ruff  
 No shots

March 7-12 flushes

2-6:30 (3 1/2 actual  
 hunting time)





Tuesday 25 November - after yesterday's disappointment and the long stretch of foul luck, I had nearly reached the point of thinking of grouse like the natives who can't hit them as "them bastards." Nearly. So when today came, cloudy and warm with a promise of rain tonight, I took off with Puff & the Brieris and the Lick Run watershed, feeling I could count on action when most needed. We parked in the usual place along the road and hunted up the ridge to the tramroad. This time there was no one shooting up the first ravine and I moved up in high hopes. I wasn't disappointed, for above the first paperwies, along the little draw with nice clumps of grapes and greenberries, Puff stiffened into a point and I walked around him. The grouse flushed well ahead and moved north along the ridge, away from my planned hunt. Instead of following, I moved Puff on up the ravine and before long #2 flushed, going our way. We kept on and in a thick tangle a pair of birds moved out, one north, the other east up the ridge. I felt neither was the bird I had flushed below and had moved only a few yards when Puff pointed and another grouse flushed and crossed ~~the~~ in front of me, showing a nice view of his barred underparts but too far out for me to shoot by the time I could get my gun up. I count this the #2 bird from below. I followed on up and then south and feel it was the same grouse I moved again. Since I wanted to hunt north along the mountain I let him have at his way and turned up the ridge, keeping pretty well toward the top. At the head of the next hollow a big bird flushed and took me the top into the back



basin. I believe this was one of the birds I shot near at the top  
 last time, but I count the first four as new birds. Perhaps,  
 remembering the grouse we'd heard flush below these four on opening  
 day in the heavy foliage it would be more conservative to call  
 three of these new. I hunted over to the old coal mine but didn't  
 refresh the big fellow so hunted up to the farm on top. Here, too,  
 I failed to run anything and so hunted on out the mountain,  
 keeping higher and further around than I usually hunt. The cover  
 along the next little run is very brushy and some Laurel but no  
 visible food. It might be all right in snowy weather. In fact, I  
 remember flushing two birds and killing one in here last season.  
~~the year before~~ I had about turned thumbs down when I saw a grouse  
 amble along the ground ahead of me and flush with a  
 very distinct sound. All I saw of him in the air was a quick look as  
 he topped the sphynx. I followed and missed him again - out of  
 range. It was 2:00 p.m. and I was here to get some shooting - not  
 count flushes so I made a solemn decision to be in the lower  
 reaches of the gorge by 2:30 and stay there. Crawling down  
 the mountain I got into some of the roughest damned cover in the  
 District - loose rocks underfoot, thoroughly mixed with a  
 mass of dead twigs and branches that flew up knee-high  
 as they snapped under my steps. Still in the same stuff, I was  
 trudging along lower down, taking long steps to make time when a  
 bird flushed ahead, very suddenly and directly above the



low splings. It could have been a shot if I hadn't got fouled  
 up with my safety and couldn't get on him. Following into  
 a shoulder ahead I stopped for lunch and to rest Puff, who  
 hadn't been covering the ground wide a fast enough to pin  
 these birds. I hate to see him slow down like this and hope  
 it is because he is tired, not feeling his age. At five and a  
 half he shouldn't. After lunch I dropped down the shoulder &  
 try to pass my bird and found a huge group of boulders with  
 rhododendron growing all about it - a lovely place. Around the  
 left end the bird flushed from Puff (whether he had a point I  
 can't say, for like several times today the birds flushed and I  
 found him there where a point was very possible) and crossed  
 below me, going back the way it had come. I decided to follow  
 and started below the rocks, climbing them then into wonderful  
 looking corners with vines. As I pulled myself around a big  
 rock a young goose exploded from the base of the boulder a few  
 feet from me, with the first loud  
 flush of the day and bored quartering  
 away from me. I had to shoot rather  
 fast because of intervening trees and  
 threw two loads at him with  
 no effect at all. Since both  
 birds had gone in relatively the same direction, it looked hopeful but  
 we were found useless. Finally



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hunt the lower grades, I was crossing a little ridge in quite open woods and got the impression of a quail flushing somewhere. As I looked up I saw it coming my way rather high and offering me a good chance. I felt some trees about me and waited for the bird to get past, surging ahead of him and firing. All I got was a piece of splintered wood from a small sapling that absorbed two-thirds of my pattern just a yard from my gun muzzle. This thing of focusing on a spot ahead of the bird has a way of backfiring, in that your eyes ignore objects in the foreground.



I GET A TREE.

I turned and followed that bird, also with no success. It was getting on toward four o'clock and I could see another day ending like all the rest and it didn't do anything for my mental attitude. Dropping down into

the paperine and open woods cover where I'd shot my first bird this year we flushed a quail that moved out ahead. Then just a bit below this, a bird flushed between Puff and me, and followed the same direction, toward the first ravine I'd hunted today, crossing the back hills clearing. Puff moved out the area and hit the scent where it had been, then stiffened intensely, and almost immediately a second bird bored out of the same spot, going the opposite direction and crossing to my right. I made a very quick swing in an effort to get ahead of him and shot,



seeing the bird fold up and fall down over a little slope. Puff was there without any prompting and had the bird which he took a few minutes in gathering up and then retrieved ~~it~~ with a relieved expression on his face as tho he felt, "Thank God, at last." I voiced similar sentiments and we did a spot of gloating. The bird was a yearling with interrupted tailband, and very good to look at. We finally went on, since it was about five, and found we had lost the bird just above the turnout in the second ravine. Dropping below the road we found ourselves now out of good



care and so crept up to the road and then started up the first ravine to try to near some of the original birds. Puff was working out a bit further after the stimulus of the kill and I was alone when I heard a grouse flush to my left and start out thru the woods. At first I nearly passed it up, then found a spot above the bird as it rose gradually and fired. The bird was not more than six or eight feet high but angling away, and the shot seemed to collapse it but not tumble it. I saw it come down still fluttering and I called Puff and ran up, searching the fairly open floor of the woods but

George Bird Evans Papers  
West Virginia and Regional History Center



sign of it. Puff was quartering a few yards ahead trying hard to locate scent and for a moment I wondered if the bird could have run after striking the ground. Then, ten feet or more below me, I saw it lying immobile in the leaves. Watching it carefully for some movement, I called Puff in and after a few efforts he struck the scent and went for it. The bird fluttered and for a moment he had to go after it with mouth and paw but finally he got a good grip on it and brought it to me, a very small yearling with interrupted tailband. One of the smallest grouse I've shot.



That was our day and after some happy examination of our two birds, which brought a broad grin to Puff's face, we moved down to the station wagon and home to Kay with the good news. It was also good news to Feather and Wicks, both of whom were hysterical. I had decided to forego my record-shit-or-point limitation for the time being until I began feeling normal again.

5 shots - 2 hits (1 over point)  
 made 12 (6 new) - 17 flashes  
 4 products } Puff  
 2 retrievers }  
 Both birds flushed from same grapevine, both yearlings with interrupted tailbands. Shot at 4:55 & 5:10  
 Females (dissected)  
 Crops: grapes in both  
 (hunted 12:05 - 5:35)  
 5 1/2 hrs.



Wednesday 26 November - With weather forecasts of rain, I started out in warm, windy conditions - taking young Feathers and his mama Wilka and leaving Puff at home with Cay to rest, both of them. I drove to Luggart and down to Upper Beaver and was pleasantly surprised to see the improved road - not yet stoned. Parking at a wide place above the bridge I plunged down into rhododendron and hunted up the slope above the old fields on the right of the stream where I used to find birds. Neither here nor in the ideal thicket of grapevines even upstream did I see any grouse. Dropping to the lower margin of cover along the creek - good rhododendron clumps and grapes and rocks, we moved grouse #1 which went out of a piece of rhododendron after we had passed, and soared up the ridge - weaving and dipping like a jet plane. I left what may have been the last shot today and followed, hunting up a densely grown draw full of grapevines and grapes ~~but~~ but never saw him again. Hunting back down the valley I kept just under the lip of the hill, out of the intense wind I could hear roaring about me. There was no further action until I crossed the Cherry Grass road and hunted the cover on the right side of Beaver, going downstream. Well around into the head of the tributary, a big grouse materialized out of the path ahead of me and came at me, roaring up into a vertical climb to clear my head. I wheeled under



him, stumbling on the uneven footing and threw my right barrel at the correct spot below him



but he didn't know about that, for he zoomed on toward the creek and the road. I let him rest till the return trip and hunted around to the lower road and walked into #3, that flushed from some

roadside brush and gave me enough of a look at him to make me anxious. I marked him with John Kelly's band on the left bank of Beaver but the Wilds hunted the area nicely, not did not miss him. Crossing the dense hemlock down the creek I

came out on Eya Kelly's and heard a grouse go, disappearing into the heavy evergreen woods. Featherless got enough of a reaction from the sound to get him moving for a few minutes, but mostly he just waddles along in front of me or near my feet. He

can move - and fast - as when he's off on a scent and gets separated from me. Then he really burns it up finding me. I have hope that someday we'll get into enough birds to realize what it's about and mark out. Just now he's a six month puppy.

We hunted all the way back to the piece of woods between the roads and finally missed #2 from near the creek but had no look at him.

Coming the far side of the creek on a return walk we topped the knoll and hunted there some excellent cover, near where Buff had his first kill - point the last day of his first season, but missed nothing. Crossing the main road I cut into the thick abododuck

along the little run and hunted up into the hollow, hearing me move out ahead of Wilds. Featherless got the sound



and lured up. On top we all stopped for a breath. Wilda had torn her tongue early in the afternoon and had bled profusely from time to time. The wound on her left leg also had been opened and bled a bit so I felt she could do with rests from time to time which I gave her. Feathers, who hadn't moved enough to get overheated, panted and gasped as if he'd been working hard and, like Old Man River, George just kept rolling along. Finally we hunted the last lap back into the hollow and moved - I think - another bird, judging by a faint sound and by Wilda and Feathers' actions. That made #6 for 7 fleas. At the car I looked up the valley and saw the tops of the ridges on either side of Beaver brown in intense red where the sun had broken through the overcast and just topped them with bands of light. Stars with the trip. So was the sunset as we drove thru Cuyart and toward Centenary - streaks of red fire in the sky, centering in intense orange light like embers, over a clear lake of green gold - all above purple hills of the distant Chestnut Ridge. It was wonderful and I know Kay was seeing it there at home.

1:15-6:00 (4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>)

1 shot - no hit  
 Wound 6 - 7 fleas  
 ~~~~~

This cover seems fairly barren. It may have been the weather.

Tram

Thursday 27 November - Thanksgiving Day. Ray & I took Ray's
 try the long-proposed hunt up on the Crane school road above the
 Tannery bridge. It was a long climb up a narrow road, part
 promising looking paperonis and over ghostly rocks, scarred and
 marked where cars had dragged bottom or scraped running boards
 or bumped fenders. There was no place to turn (or even pass if
 another car had come along) so we kept going till we crossed the Laurel
 tributary of Roaring and reached an old road or lane marked in dotted
 line on the topographic. We parked after turning and hunted back the
 old lane, planning to reach the other prong of Laurel and hunt down
 to the forks, returning up to the road by the second prong. After
 a long stretch of fruitless large timber or "openish" cover we got anxious
 for the good paperonis we'd passed along the road and cut over the
 flat to the road prong, reaching some big rocks and rhododendron
 and hemlock cover along the stream. Nothing materialized so we
 kept climbing the right side till we got into grapes and hunted
 along the ridge until suddenly we found ourselves in sight of the
 Brandonville Pike in the distance and came out on the road we'd
 just driven up. That would have been fine if there had been grass,
 but there was none - not all along the road back toward the
 station wagon or up the ravine along the prong above the road. Very
 sterile country. At the car, we got in and started driving back,
 eating lunch as we hopped down from rock to rock. At the best
 paperonis, Ray let me out with

meet me at the Tannery Bridge. Ruff, after his long rest yesterday, was hell-bent to produce game and he really worked that hillside but it did no good. Following the grassies where they grew on the upper side of the road we soon got into signs of scent and after walking about me I saw Ruff show more game signs. Then I heard what I think was two quon's flush from him and go up over the mountain - and I really mean up. Moving back down the ridge toward where Ray was waiting for me, we hunted to just above the road and then Ruff almost flattened out on an intense point in very open forest floor covered with leaves and dotted with a few small humbals under the slender pole timber.

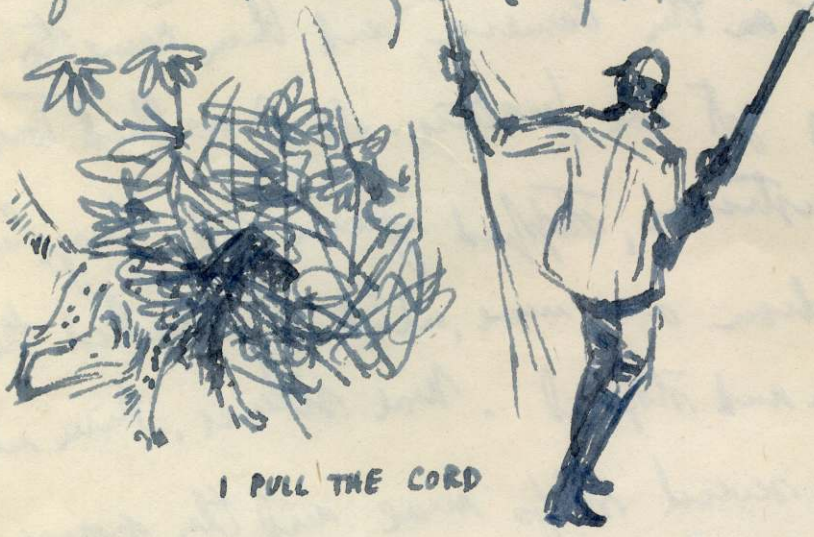


In a moment, before I could wear up into gun shot, two quon's were in the air simultaneously and sailing down the

mountainside - one crossing the ridge to the far side and the other disappearing into the humbal cane along Roaring Creek. The last one was a beauty with very prominent black ruffs. I climbed down to where Ray sat in the station wagon and told her what had happened. We decided to follow the bird that went down the stream. ~~Keeping~~ Keeping low along the creek we crossed to the right bank and soon, in an isolated fringe of rhododendron we came on Ruff, solid again with his eyes fixed on the

clump of rhododendron at the stream edge. I walked around and moved in to the front of him but nothing happened. I knew it was going to be a slim chance but I had it to do, so I stepped in and waited. Still no reaction. Reaching up with my left hand I tugged on a ropevine hanging like a bell-pull from the ^{went out from Puff's nose but} ~~of~~ sapling beside me and that did it. The bird was yards from me before I saw him - a dark streak zooming down the stream.

We followed, crossing to the left side again where the gorges had gone, Kay taking the tram-road and I taking the cave above. The gorges flushed wild this time, from in front of Kay and kept straight down Roaring Creek. I expected



I PULL THE CORD

him to make a try to come back upstream about the next flush for we were some distance from the original point. At the junction of Laurel tributary with Roaring I decided we ought to be somewhere not too far away, and pushed them the dense rhododendron to the edge of Roaring. Puff plunged in ahead of Kay and me and then stopped, solid on point in the middle of Roaring Creek, pointing into the high rhododendron on the far bank. I walked around to a spot just below him, also standing in the water and trying to keep my eyes on the stream in both directions

at once - about the only clear vistas I had, since the growth
on the bank was too high to see over. Kay moved up with her
camera and I realized she was going to get a picture. Puff
stood there immobile except to roll his eyes around and
turn his head toward us once while Kay focused and I
could see his nose twisting ~~from~~ ^{to} first the right and then the
left as he tried to spot his bird. I got a bit impatient as
I saw Kay twisting a knob on the camera and then came to as
she told me she'd already got the picture. As I walked toward
the bank Puff turned downstream, stopped again and froze headed
into the bank of rhododendron once more, while I climbed thru
an opening and moved in and stopped. Near silence. Then with
a lack of caution I took several steps more and the grouse
exploded, coming straight up from in front of me into a small
piece of sky where I found the spot above him and pulled. He
hung there, spinning for a moment and then dropped straight
back the way he'd gone up,
landing on Puff. In a wild
moment both Puff and the
grouse rolled down the bank,
first one on top, then the other
till Puff pinned him with his



see the bird fall and was there beside me long before Puff could bring himself to retrieve it and put the final touch to a wonderful ~~day~~ ^{day} of dog work. The grouse was not as large as I'd expected from its wild behavior and was a bird from summer before last according to the pinion feathers.



ONE IN THE MIDDLE
OF ROARING CREEK
(PICTURE SHOULD BE ABOUT LIKE THIS)

After our session of Thanksgiving, we hunted up the Laurel run and crossed back to the car, being careful not to disturb the other bird of the pair. It seemed rather bad to break up a pair - I like that boy-and-girl stuff - but I felt we gave the bird its chances and unless you give

up grouse shooting altogether this was as sporting as anything could be. Certainly the dog work was superb - three productives on four consecutive flushes and what points! The weather cleared to crystal perfect and on the way home we stopped to count the ravines in the Brierley as the sun lit up the contours back of Fenner. A day to be thankful for and a dog to be alive! Puff really earned the good today.

1:30 - 5:00 (3 1/2)

1 shot - 1 hit (over point) 3 productives } Puff
1 retriever

made 4 - 7 flushes

according to theory and shot. Hen by direction. tail feathers thin should be a hen. crop. gapes & legs interrupted tail band but not extremely so. flushed from the Gold Mine rocks and crossed the creek and watched it clucking at it till it flushed out birds madly pull such a maneuver.

Came home to Thanksgiving dinner of Buckwheat Cakes (Crepes Appalachiques) & sausage. On way home a grouse was perched in a big tree. We stopped to see it. It was a very fine specimen. I shot it. It was a very fine specimen. I shot it.

17 #24
Friday 28 November - Very cold and partly sunny, but with wind. Leaving Kay at home to corral the ducks and

Ruff. I took Wilde and young son Feathers to the Crab Orchard, parking on the Deep Hollow road and climbing the steep back trail to the knob or ridge, noting beech trees heavily loaded with nuts on the way. Wilde took the steep country apart and Feathers caught the spirit for a short time and hunted out ahead unobtrusively, but by the time we got to the top where I was anxious to have him "out", he was slowed down to my closest companion. We worked the brim of the ridge above Deep Hollow with no results - cover where I'd marked lots of birds last year, leaving 14 birds. In the center of the blackberry briar hell, I saw an old deserted house I had never known was there, grown up with briars and quercus and complete with a nice stone fence laid up by hands that stopped working years and years ago. At one especially inviting-looking corner I felt I heard a grouse flush - a mere suggestion that was corroborated by Wilde who came up and stiffened into a very pretty point. I ~~left my gun~~ moved up and hauled and stroked her and then after letting her stand a bit sent her in. We could only hunt by instinct and that didn't produce the bird. We carried the entire top of the ridge all the way to above the other inhabited house and to the road up from Deep Hollow and even the hemlocks fooled us - the first time in my experience. Cutting up to the top again we ate lunch on the edge of the pipe line right-ferry and nearly froze. After getting my knees frosted on by the gauger part of my companion I moved on, trying to warm my hands by squeezing them and moving fast. Wilde was working like a dream today and was carrying

the slope below me that runs down to Arch & Richard Penn headwaters.

I heard a flush and saw a grouse crossing in front of me in what would have been a possible shot if I'd had fingers. The bird went low over Feather's head - thanks the buck he was out in front far enough - and it made him cock his ears and think it over.

I marked it as landing just over the crest above me and all the way up, Feather would move a few yards and stop and peer where the bird had gone. Before we reached the place, the grouse moved out and dove on across the flat toward the old deserted house. Wilder came up and froze on the spot in a very nice point but moved in after she decided it was empty. I

had marked the birds flight by a large tree spread out against the sky and that way we hunted, following the old stone wall well past the tree. Corching, I came in

below the old house and to where the first flush had occurred but found nothing. I decided to cross hatch the corner and plunged in, fighting some nasty briars. Just as I approached an old chestnut log the grouse took off - not high, not loud, but off. I patiently marked the direction as back to the

first flush and started after it. Not more than a third of the way a bird flushed without Wilder a Feather's knowing it - keeping very low to the ground and cutting off at 90° to our line. I couldn't be sure this wasn't a new bird, but it could have been the same one and so I took the certain course



WILDER
WITH A BLOODY TAIL - AFTER THE
BIRD HAD GONE.

not a complete pass flight - in an old field grown to ~~the~~ pole
size stuff - a bird flashed well ahead of me and rose. At first
I hesitated about trying the shot but as the bird angled up
and rose more steeply to make the tree tops I pulled about him and
fired - and saw him drop. I ran up, trying to find a sight a
sound of the bird and called Wilda. Feathers ambled in and then
I saw it, lying toward me on a small pile of stones with saplings
and briars growing ~~around~~ around the edge. The bird was crippled,
one eye bleeding, the other blinking and watching me and I
couldn't be certain it might not start running & take off. But
I decided it was important for Feathers to find it and I tried to
get him headed toward it. At last I lay my gun down and
tried to push him in between the small growth in front of the
bird but he resisted and tried to back out, not getting scent
of it. Wilda came onto the scene and I knew she'd get to the
bird ahead of Feathers if I didn't take matters into my own

hands - matters being Feathers whom I
literally pushed toward the bird. Suddenly
he either saw it or smelled it or the bird
flushed - I don't know - but he piled in
with eagerness and grabbed it and brought it
out, struggling. I probably should have taken
it from him and put it out of its suffering but I

think it was best for Feathers to let him keep it and as I did. He
held it but wouldn't bring it to me ~~though~~ ^{perhaps} I thought that he



was going to. Wilke made a pass at the bird's tail but feathers
 got it off to himself and once when she was up, he marked and
 drew her off. Several times he picked it up and each time instead
 of delivering it to me, he'd shake it and all in all he was fairly
 rough with it, but it was a good experience for him. Finally I
 took it from him, with a lot of prying in the jaws and a mental
 note to use the mailed drumming on him. The grouse was a yearling
 I think with an interrupted tailband (as all yearlings seem to
 have). There was some question in my mind whether this was the bird
 we'd been following but it could have been - even could have been
 the first bird I heard flush from near the old house. Since the
 coincidence is too great I'm compromising and calling them
 two grouse for these six flocks. After all the excitement we
 swung around again to the slope above

Oak Orchard and there Wilke flushed a
 big grouse that I let pass in front of me
 without a try because I wasn't keen about
 shooting another so close. We swung us thus
 around to the point above the car, so plunged down the steep side,
 passing a beautiful big beech loaded with ants that some low brow
 had cut down for a few combs of dirty honey, killing several
 pairs of bees lying dead in the hollow. Also found a couple
 of dead falls set in the hillside, that I missed. Flushed a grouse from
 the car below the cut-down beech and saw it rise across the air to the
 next promontory and over the top.
 Did not at 4:30 in trees & open pole timber.



FEATHERS RANGES
 ON TO ONE.

Saturday 29 November - The last day in the Forest of grouse. Ruff
and I drove upon the coldest day so far, well bundled. There was
no snow, unless a few grains behind an occasional log counts. We
parked on the Cooper Rocks road near the speed limit sign and began
hunting at 1:00 p.m. We made our first grouse from the path along
the second or main hillside and saw him go up over the top. We
decided to let a few of them flush up there and pick them up on the
way back. Down the path fifty or a hundred yards, Ruff stiffened
up and pointed, headed to the left. As a bird flushed, Ruff
moved in and as I ordered him to stop, four birds, in all, went
out singly - two out the ridge, two down into the valley, none
with any chance for me to get a shot. I kept on down the path
and, soon after, came on Ruff on point again. This time the bird
flushed wild, well below me and also hit for the bottom. I
failed to move my two out the ridge point so dropped into the
bottom, hoping to locate the gun that had flushed down them. I'd
been hearing a fusillade of wild shots over on the ridge across the
hollow, but too far down the point to have been my birds, or
at least I hoped, altho I was close enough to hear the voices.
However, our paths didn't tangle and I did not see one of my birds
on the far side of the hollow where he'd flushed across the fringe
of rhododendron along the run, but he went out of the laurel like
a frightened quail - faster than which there's aint. I began
to retrace my original ridge to hit the birds and just

below the path I walked into a gorse that flushed low up the hill from the other side of some paperine cover. I shouldn't have tried for I didn't have a chance but I took crack at him and missed.



ONE I SHOULDN'T

While I was at this end of the ridge, I decided to hunt to the station wagon and have my hot lunch, so topped the hill and went out the crest - a longer way than I had expected,

amoving nothing in the way. The lunch was one of those luxury touches on a bag like this - hot soup in one thermos, hot chocolate in another - with blackstrap molasses codons and

it was worth the walk. After our rest, Buff and I cut back into the woods and hit the ridge to the left of the ravine - the one with the big boulders we usually get into at twilight. We missed two birds - one I heard, the other I saw sailing back up the hollow just below me and at treetop level - a possibility of my damned new modeling glasses hadn't been steamed. That is a handicap I constantly face - the excitement causes me to "ket up" and the lens steam. I worked up onto the top of the second ridge I'd been hunting ~~this first part~~ before lunch and then we hunted the length of it and didn't move any of the two or three I felt were there. Around the point, however, just as I approached the old remains of the feeding station, my old friend flushed for ~~me~~ and went "down air". I had planned to hunt the next ridge of them

permitted and tho it was on toward five o'clock I started
anyway. We made nothing till we climbed up above the
table Rock and then we moved the old favorite two - one
up on the top - the other down the side. I followed the first and
failed to find him so returned, and tho it was now getting
darker, I pushed down the far side toward the double
mountain hills. Below me I heard a quail flush and saw
Puff moving around. One after another he bumped the second
and the third of a group of three. His ground work had been
beautiful today but I felt this demanded attention, so I
made him stop and punished him. Then in the half light
we pushed after the birds. Below the old road that rounds the
point above the photoduckan I heard one of the birds flush
going out of the wood on the bank. Walking on out toward the
tip I was aware of a flush to my right and saw a bird
being at me in its flush from Puff - who may a many shot
have had a point on it. The quail veered enough to miss me
at worst level and as it shot out over the drop-off I fired
but it seemed to curdle out of my shot or I didn't get on the
right place - it wasn't much of a chance. What got me was



Puff's mad dash on the bird's tail, keeping and
prancing stiff-legged like a deer, head high in
an effort to see it. I yelled at him but he
might have seen me. George Bird Evans Papers
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I yelled some more - nothing. Just noises. Then I ordered him in, no result - finally I demanded that he get the hell in and still got nowhere. At last I blew my whistle and after a lot of that he came in, very reluctantly, head and tail low. It was ugly but I had it to do and I did it - hard. After that little incident we went down over the side in near darkness and along the bottom, or what seemed to be a newly cleared out trail a path near the stream. Some Buzz standing ahead of me and looking back. I couldn't call it a prong, so I sent him in - and two birds flushed, one down stream, the other up the hill. I can't say they were new tho' they could have been. I finally admitted defeat down at the point of the valleys and crossed the bridge to the two condor piles and then crossed the one by which I had eaten lunch near, a week ago. I tried to start out up on the rhododendron point but it was a mistake, at that time of evening. I flushed one of the grouse from a rhododendron clump but only heard him. Finally I got around the rocks and up the hill, falling and stumbling in my scramble. The walk back was a real drill. At one time I'd thought of taking the hollow up to the McCallum place and walk the road but since I'd discovered that I had to really travel to get out of the woods before completely dark I turned toward the west Virginia and Regional History Center

any way in places. The last ridge was longer than any ridge
could have been but I finally wobbled out onto the hard road
not too far from the station wagon, and hadn't missed a
bird on all the drag back. Somewhere I seem to have
wounded a bird and several flushes.

1:00 - 6:30 (5 1/2)

2 shots - no hits

3 productive } Puff

missed 15 (3 new) - 23 flushes

Monday 1 December - The first real snow of the year. Enough to
affect driving. The day was cold - less cold than Saturday - but the
sun shone brightly. I decided to give the roads time to melt off a
little and so worked on sking the kennel till 1:15. Eating some
soup and crackers, I postponed dessert for the woods and took Puff to
the ridge back of Valley Point. In certain places, I am convinced the
grouse live under a protective spell. This hollow just off the
main road is one of them. Last year I hunted here more than
once, moving - according to my notes - 14 birds for 19 flushes on
one trip. I had countless shots that normally would be my meat.
I left empty shells scattered evenly over most of the area - and
I didn't bring out a single grouse. Today, with a good covering of
snow on the ground, I hunted down over the side of the hollow and
within a few minutes wound two birds from the little gapvine
corner on the right side of the run - both going upstream. The
second bird dropped into the woods rather short - unless it was
a third bird I flushed here - and on second flush also went farther
upper reaches of the valley like #1. I located #1, a rather
Puff did - couldn't see if he had a point - but the edge of the

cleared land and I took a too short lead and missed as it crossed to my ^{# 71/} left. ₅₂



This went too out of the ordinary but it was a shot that could have been made nicely. We followed to the edge of the cover facing the main road and then Puff found him again (point?) and the bird left us by flying across the road ~~and into~~ ^{and into} the cover back of the church. I went back to mark #2. Hesitating between hunting back downstream and going further up into cleared territory, I reasoned that #2 had flushed further upstream on the last rise than #1. #1 had just been marked so #2, if its flight had been the same length, must be higher up. There too, I am often inclined, I think, to underestimate ground flights.

This was correct on this occasion, for among some brushpiles ahead of me I heard a quail piping and saw it flutter up to the top of one of them. It perched there watching Puff, somewhere behind it, and in the warm glow of the sunshine its neck and wings were reddish orange. I was standing in the middle of a log road with only a few clumps of crabapple scattered around. The bird had to give me a pretty fair shot, no matter what it decided to do. It certainly saw me, striking up in the middle of nowhere, but it made up its mind and did the very best thing it could possibly have done.



Giving me all possible warning by pivoting toward me, it took off and leisurely came straight at me, clearing my head and planing straight down the open space behind me.



I wheeled and carefully laid my head on the bird, giving it plenty of time and distance. The shot was made as I pulled the

right barrel but the bird went on. Feeling absolutely certain I put the lead a bit above the now smaller shape and fired again. The quail sailed on beautifully, disappearing into the woods with an unpleasantly long view of it after both shots had died away.

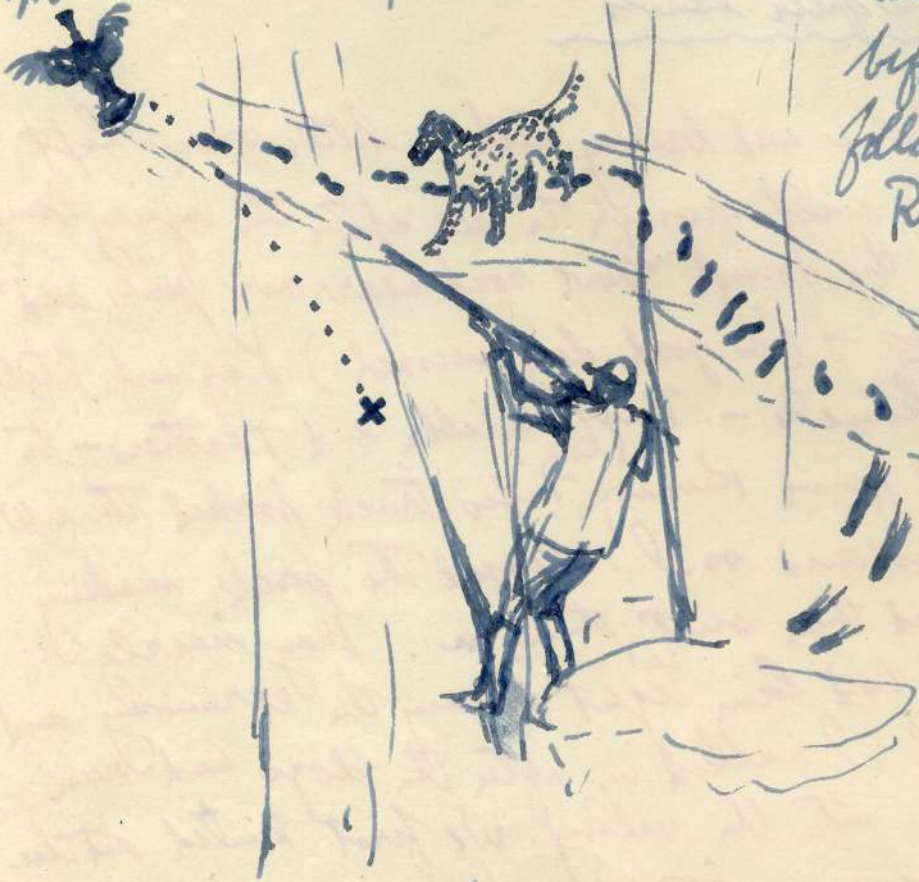
If Ray had scooped a clay pigeon down the driveway at home and I had taken my time and fired twice at it, I couldn't have had a better chance - tho I suppose I'd probably have missed it too.



I possibly undershot the bird, feeling it was not rising at least I didn't let it get me as I've often done.

It was such a definite bower and after all it was one up for the quail I couldn't help laughing. I was unable to move it when I hunted downstream, so crossed the run and began hunting the far slope. Well up the hill I made #3, putting it down into the valley, and crossed that part of the ridge before dropping down to follow, taking my crimson rocks on the way. Also jumped three dogs ahead of me. Once more in the bottom, on the left side and thirty feet or less above the run, I doubled downstream and came on buff on a lovely hot point, standing in a little path and pointing down over the steep bank, legs ears cocked and his nostrils working. I raised my hand to let him know I saw, and moved up. There was no way to come in below him on the snow covered slippery bank and had to simply walk to him and hope. Nothing happened and I edged behind him and felt my way along the path, turning as I went. He was pointing into the woods where

with a few saplings and a log or stump in mostly snow and I felt I'd see any bird under his point. With no sign of action and Puff still telling me there was one there, I began letting myself down over the steep bank and, stopping myself against a rock, I dug my boots into the soft snow and started working my way back and below Puff, holding my gun in my right hand and using my left to support myself against saplings. I'd just said - possibly aloud - that I couldn't get a shot in here if there was a bird when the grouse rocketed up and bore for the tops of the trees. I caught him as he almost made them, and he dropped into the snow with Puff on the spot a moment after my order "Go fetch." The bird was wing tipped and gave Puff quite a scramble before he cornered it and then followed a long period during which Puff tried again and again to get a grip on the bird without hurting it. Finally he delivered it alive but without a single tail feather. It was a large red bird. I think the one I had missed double.



The sketch is very poor but it shows what happened, roughly. It was about 3:30 and I decided to get out of the woods to where I'd

moved the large cover last fall, but tho I caught it well I couldn't find
 a bird. They are stripping that area and it may have something to
 do with it. I hunted the entire top ridge all the way around and
 dropped back on the original strip section and almost at
 once made two grouse #4 & #5. Puff had been guilty of the
 sin of roosting the tracks and my correcting him put out the record.

I decided I had enough in here and doubt of return this season,
 tho there may be more birds in the first hollow.

Bird shot at 3:30 in
 hardwood and some grape cover. 4 shots - 1 hit (over point) 1 production } Puff
 no tail feathers to judge band. made 5-10 flushes 1 retrieval } Puff
 by the I found about 10, one of
 which was a small new feather just growing in of interrupted type.
 Adult.
 2:00 - 5:45 (3 3/4)
 Description: male
 crop: few green leaves

Tuesday 9 December - Warm and balmy with a little snow left
 in a few shadows. My eye well enough to see after the injury Sunday
 while mowing brush up on the Forest Gate road near our pines and
 yesterday's forced lay-off - (a good day missed.) Kay and I took
 the entire Old Hemlock kennels - Puff, Wilds and Teathers - to
 the Roaring Creek gap and found Kusing Tife's truck parked there. We
 decided to hunt regardless and so I released the packs, making
 them stand to "stay" and then sent them on. They nearly
 trampled a grouse that had lain tight during the ceremony and
 actually didn't flush till I walked in, after the dogs had been
 past it. The bird dove down into the valley. We first hunted out the
 top of the ridge and Puff ran into (?) a pair of grouse, one of which
 went over the point of land - the other came back my way, offering a

pass shot five or six feet off the ground, and possibly a little too close. Anyway, I swung past and fired between intertwining trees - and missed. This grouse



went in the general direction of the first, so we backtracked and followed down over a rhododendron hillside to the edge of Peary Creek. Working downstream I let Ruff and Wilda work the cove and soon came on both of them, frozen solid. It was a lovely double point not a point and back point and it was Wilda's first productive this season. Feathers scrambled down and Wilda moved into the rhododendron mass and the bird went up the steep hill, too far out for a shot. Before climbing to follow we



WILDA & RUFF
PIN ONE DOUBLE

hunted on down the creek for the other bird and got a wild flush from it that took it on business elsewhere. Climbing the steep ridge I left Key just below the road and crossed to the little patch of cove on the upper side of the right of way.

There, while my beauties ranged wide and handsome in the best tradition, covering the open woods far ahead, young Feathers and I almost stepped on our bird just above the road. He got away with no shot from me.

Battering my party, I got us all started back along the top of the ridge and began hunting the hillside just halfway up the sides. We missed a bird from the first ravine out of dense hemlocks and hunted almost to the next hollow with no success. Just before we reached the shoulder, two grouse went out wild and bored over the crest of the

hill. Following the second bird, we pulled ourselves up the
drag and had just leveled off in the hardwoods about when
it flashed to the left of me and cut straight away and low.

I fired, using the left barrel subconsciously, and didn't know
I had hit it till Kay called that she saw it flutter off the
ground and go down again. By then I saw that Wilda was
doing the honors. When we got there she had the grouse but wouldn't
retrieve it to me. It's rather a shame I haven't trained her to retrieve
and I must do something about it. I have felt all along that we
weren't keeping her and so wanted to concentrate on Feathers.
He ran up and tho he was excited and interested, he wouldn't pick it
up.



By this time Puff had come in but was only
mildly interested. In fact, he seemed to be
trying to look tolerant but actually was
pretty disgusted. Trivially with my

~~coaxing her to retrieve, Wilda left the bird amid a pile of feathers
and when Puff went over and nipped it, I ordered him to fetch.
at first I thought he was going to pass, but he finally picked it up
half-heartedly and brought it to me. Kay had her camera
ready but Puff didn't go thru the motions of sitting to deliver. He
dumped it at my feet. It was a lovely big bird, but, like my
last week's grouse, entirely without tail feathers. I wish to
Christ I could bring in an entire specimen, especially when
they are these nice large birds.~~
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booked, Kay decided to go to the car and drive up to meet Mrs. Kelly, arranging to return about six to meet me. I got my trio headed in the right direction and we parted. At the head of the ravine when I expected to find the other bird, I missed it and passed the shot - a rather nice one, but I didn't want to game the area too closely. Following, we flushed a new bird, #7, and the other bird again, but they disappeared down into the valley. I hunted along the ridge thru beautiful hemlock and finally dropped into the bottom where we flushed #8 back up the hill. At an old sawmill set in one of the hollows, Puff pointed and Wilda, instead of backing, moved in ahead of him and froze solid. I couldn't do anything but walk up behind and the bird went out well ahead. I tried a long left-barrel shot but couldn't get far enough ahead of it and missed.



WILDA STEALS ONE

It was an exciting point, another double production, and tho Wilda should have honored Puff's point, I was pleased to see her nail one directly - her second for the day. We missed what could have been this bird again, from a rhododendron well on a shady hillside with lots of snow to keep it damp and cool. Moving

down the valley - it was getting late - we hunted along the upper margin of the same slopes and Puff pointed a new bird, #10 that flushed too far out for me to shoot. We missed another bird until we had got back down to the first hillside, just up from that

ravine. Then, we put two out wild and followed them up the head of the gulley. Above the hemlocks I heard one flushed from the settlers and saw it crossing ahead of me, low amid ^{an} interesting pattern of trees and I tried for a cross shot and missed. I think the bird flew a bit unaturally but still called it a miss.

+



When Puff jacked up on another point just a short piece ahead I felt he might have the

bird crippled, but as I walked up, it flushed and dived down the hillside past me, very much alive and in control of matters. I tried another crossing pass shot and saw a beech tree take most of my pattern. I probably should hold off a bit on these crossing shots and take them as the bird quarters away from me, requiring



I GET A BEECH

less lead and therefore less space to shoot, but I love to try for them. They're such a thrill when you make them. And I'm not used at the birds. More luck to them. On the way back down, the other grouse flushed high from

the top of a hemlock and dived for the bottom. I washed back to the road, found Kay not returned, and plunged back for another circle. Down around the shoulder of the first ravine, Puff made another point into the hillside and I dragged myself up the sheer hill, only to get a fleeting look at the bird as it topped the crest. Somewhere along the way I have overlooked a few flushes and a couple of Puff's points. Altogether there were 28 flushes and Puff made 20. I had a very good day with Wilds making two. When I got back to the road, Kay was

Saturday 13 December - again more snow yesterday to prevent
 hunting so we went to ~~the mountains~~ ^{the mountains} for Xmas shopping. Today I
 returned to the Poverty Creek Gap - driving up the hill in real
 slippery snow - using Ruff and Willa. Hunted down the old
 road - woods were literally lathered with snow and impossible
 to hunt them - and crossed over to far side where Willa
 made a nice production from the old road. Ruff, who has never
 had a dog yet to the bird and point before he nailed it,
 didn't know the rules and failed to honor her point and my
 calling to him flushed the grouse. I walked around that
 lonely cover in the heaviest snow I've ever seen poured over
 a woods - like hunting in a Christmas card - and above the
 snowfall net had the pleasure of seeing a lonely double point
 by both hunters. Whether Willa was backing or getting the scent
 I cannot say but it was nice.

I got no shots altho I marked
 eight birds, none new. This
 snowy weather is beautiful but
 driving me crazy.



BOTH SOLID

7:30-6:30 (7 1/2)

no shots
 marked 8 (none new)
 9 flushes

1 production { Ruff

Tuesday 16 December - again yesterday^{at} was snowing and we
 took the day to dropping in Morgantown, late afternoon & early
 evening, returning home in time for dessert. Today I took
 Puff and Feathers to the Hazel Run - Old Farm country
 and again I plunged into the sort of Adirondack Winter scene
 you see on Christmas cards. We made nothing till mid
 hunted half way along the western edge of the old timberline place
 when Feathers bumped a grouse from a small hemlock. I only heard
 it but it did work for Feathers' enthusiasm. In a great
 distance Puff nailed one in a nice productive but I got no
 shot. Hunting toward Laurel, following these two - I started
 flushing them from the tops of hemlocks - a nerve-wrecking
 ordeal but I couldn't even try for them. Finally
 abandoning that valley after eating lunch standing in snow,
 I swung up to the south end of the old clearing and
 Puff hit one long distance that flushed ahead of the point
 without giving me a view of it. Made several others as I ^{grounded} ~~traced~~
 the ridge above Big Rudy but had no shots. Finally ^{tears} ~~tears~~
 lashed and gumpy, I heard one coming up and saw it rise
 from Puff on the steep slope below me above Hazel Run and as
 it came across the sky I made a try at a crossing overhead
 shot, missed, and missed again as it loved away. Could
 have been made - and then was a line when I'd been the



one to make it but not in my present state of mind after all these days. On the way around the ridge Puff pointed another bird that flushed well ahead, from a small hemlock - the same procedure several of them followed. About dark, almost up to the car, as I was walking under a medium sized hemlock, stooping to avoid shovelling snow into my collar, a grouse exploded over my head and power-dived into the stream. I missed a "feeler" shot that hardly was possible.

2:00-6:30 (4 1/2)

3 shots - no hits
 saved 12 (2 new)
 16 flushes



3 products } Puff



Wednesday 17 December - I took Wilder to the Lick Run country and found to my disappointment that tho' the snow was breaking up lower down, there was a lot left higher on the ridge and for some reason, the birds were not yet feeding. Neither were they anywhere we could see. I hunted up the first tributary of Lick as usual and didn't make a feather. Stopping about half-way up the ridge because of deep snow, I decided to hunt lower down and moving out ~~the ridge~~ as the third

little run, traveled down to the tram road just west of the
 ravine itself. Wilde made #1 from the nice specimens just
 above the tramroad and it went up the mountain. Following the
 tramroad up the valley I rounded into the next basin well
 above any country I've hunted for a number of years and in
 good looking cover but didn't find even a track in the snow.
 The Wilde hunted diligently. Dropping to Sick Run I found I
 was almost at the intersection where Kay & I hunt down from House
 & Amy Miller's. Crossing Sick, I hunted down the far side to
 the road at Hardisty, moving a second grass that I only heard
 walking in the car. I was to the point above Summers and hunted
 up above the tram road to the Cold Mine rocks, finding the cover badly
 slashed and mean for traveling. No birds so I cut back on the
 ridge to the knob of rocks above Summers and just as I topped
 them into a bushy cut over piece a bird flushed from a low
 sapling and quartered away from me - awfully fast. I was too
 "stoned" for careful shooting and poked both barrels at it.

Hunted after



1:15-6:15(5)

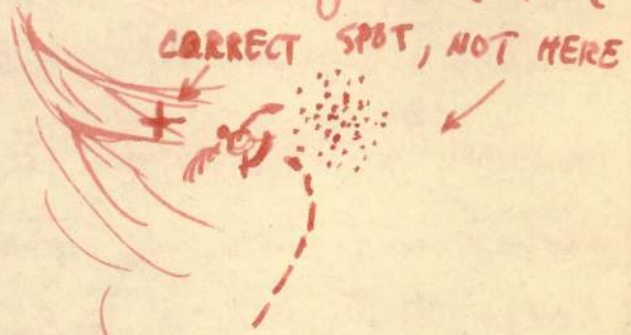
2 shots - no hits
 made 2 (2 new)
 3 flushed

time to the first tributary of
 Sick where I'd started today and
 had to quit, following the tram
 road back the ridge to the car. Below
 the car, that I heard 2 flush but I
 was just being reliable so do not count

Thursday 18 December - With determination and philosophical
mind-set sticking at all over me, I set out for the Roaring
Creek trap with Puff and young Feather. I'll sum the day
up briefly - the worst shooting yet but good for the pup.

Parked up the lower road and hunted up the first branch into
the dense hemlock cover on the ridge near the sandstone pile.
Saw the two birds wild. Saw a third wild from the ridge
when we shot our first bird ⁱⁿ this cover. Saw no more till I slipped
into the forks of the creek and walked into 2 from under a hemlock.
Following into the forks another flushed and I tried for him as he
curved around and out of sight.

Another flushed, making fear from a
close area. Followed onto the point of
the triangle between forks and Puff
pays as he passed a rhododendron with Feather at his shoulder,
taking it all in.



The bird got out and
away without giving
me a chance and
bowed down the valley.



FEATHERS SEES HOW
IT'S DONE.

In a few moments Feather
who was wildly excited by all
the action put out another down the path (one of the first pair).

We hunted down into the stream
waded the creek and came out at the
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Puff had been away for some time and I knew the symptoms, so when Teetters came back alone I started up the path to find Puff's point. Suddenly I heard a peeping and saw the quail materializing into the air in front of me, and, trying for an approaching shot, I selected the spot ahead of him and fired but he came on, over my head, and I swung around and ~~shot~~ swung below him and fired again. He still went on. All this in a wide open path. My God.



as the echoes died out I heard one of the other quails flash down near the stream. Wiping the fog from my glasses, I cursed fluently and then we moved after them. On the far side of the stream and down the valley Puff pointed ~~in~~ in a dense hemlock thicket and two birds flushed, one back and the other down the valley. Following, Puff soon pointed again - in less than a quail flight - and held as Teetters moved in and flushed the bird, again down the valley. Following around the ridge into a new valley to me (below the school road) Teetters moved around below us while I wiped the damned glasses again and put out a quail. We went up the new valley following the bird, ~~up~~ and well up I found Puff pointing again - with two birds that went out before I could get to him. Back on the ridge,

tree, another top to follow with no luck, almost on the steep
 hill above the snowfield. After lunch we went up the hollow
 to make one bid. Coming back to the scene of battle, in case some
 had returned I walked into a gully that blew out just
 as I was making down the little stream-path. I was
 sure of this baby as he climbed with a roar and I found
 the right spot above him before I pulled. When he went on I
 couldn't believe it and I tried again with the left and missed.
 Seeing powdered wood all over the snow I looked up to see a small
 raptor with practically all of my right pattern absorbed in its
 narrow width. You can't win.

After the ravine after him and
 another jerk wild from the
 little run. At the top when I
 was sure I'd get a look at him
 in the narrow neck of case,
 nothing happened.

Finally, walking down into some hemlocks I
 saw him leave the branches and sail across the open field to the
 woods around the shoulder. It was nothing to do, but I couldn't
 have refrained if it had been ^{my} the best act on earth. I shot at him
 thru branches and with no chance of enough lead - and missed.
 Back in the bottom Puff made another production. There was a new
 boy after today, hunting and covering every likely cover. I was at
 least thrilled about that.



TWO MORE
 SHOTS -
 ANOTHER TREE

2:00 - 6:30 (4 1/2)

6 birds - 25 feathers
 25 feathers

Friday 19 December - Kay went with me today and we took the
 whole bunch - Puff, Wilds, & Feathers. Got a late start
 due to trying to catch the trespasser whose car was parked on the
 last hill by an place, beyond the quarry but had no luck. Went
 to Roaring Creek Gap again today and parked at the old
 road and then after road further up than yesterday. The snow was
 still there in the deep valley but breaking up. We hunted up the
 main log road and heard one go out wild along the creek. After
 that, no action till we hunted up the left fork above the sawmill -
 new to me, where we flushed #2 wild. With no birds in
 the bottom to speak of we decided to try the ridge and as we
 climbed the one above the "triangle" we heard four quail flush
 one at a time. I suspect Puff had them for he came down from
 there. Following the sound we flushed one from a tree that went
 up to the left shoulder. Then further up the little stream-
 path we heard one flush and saw it come at us, clearing our
 heads by a yard or so, down to the bottom. Heard no more up
 the run so swung to the left shoulder and Puff found and pointed
 I am certain - the bird up there. I almost got a shot. Down in
 the ravine again the "scalper" went out of a tree wild, so we
 started hunting down the ridge, rolling toward the crest. Puff
 was gone for some time and when I searched for him Feathers
 moved in on a point and we heard the bird go for the bottom, up
 back to the ridge, however, and ~~flushed~~ all the way to the

At the lower parking place - nothing. Way down the hollow I could hear Kay's horn. I stopped blowing my whistle and started calling. About the time I'd decided Kay was going to walk I ran to the Tannery bridge and had begun using biblical names instead of Kay, she came driving back about the Tannery itself and just above the little danty. - None too soon for me.

2:30 - 6:30 (4) 1 shot - no hit 3 productions } Puff.
march 13 (1 new)
17 flushes.

Saturday 20 December - Because of threatening forecast of rain, I took a near-at-home hunt with Puff back on Sandy on the south side of the valley. Dressed in my Navy topcoat for the weather. I started out in a sleety snow that turned to rain. Hunting up on Spiker's land above the road (across from Faulkenstein's), I had nearly reached the crest when I saw a large grouse climbing from Puff who was ahead and below me. I decided to try for him as he crossed above the low thicket, a pass shot to the right, and I swung deliberately ahead of him and held the spot in sustained lead for a moment and fired my left barrel. I missed if I didn't miss.



I followed and after circling twice I am almost certain the bird had flushed from Puff's behavior. He then and coming the flush. I swung back toward

Fandy I hunted the top of the cair around the ridge and
Puff showed signs of game and pointed. Then he moved on
and later I heard a grouse go out wild, evidently crossing the
open field to the woods. I'm not counting this as a production.
Keeping on my line of hunt I approached the fast little
ravine that runs up there from Sunday and again Puff pointed.
This time he only moved a few feet when the grouse flushed
from a ~~tree~~ hummock and I do call it production. However,
the bird was away with no possible look at him by me. I estimated
that he had gone on to the next shoulder and followed but didn't
make him. Up on top in the nice grassy areas around the ridge
from the old house site there was nothing. The rain was not more
than a drizzle but it was making life hell for me with the
glasses I was wearing. I hunted that area thoroughly, doubling
down into the side of the ridge in evergreen cover but heard
nothing. As I rounded the shoulder of the ridge high above
Beaver I walked toward an isolated piece of cover on the
edge of the sloping field and a bird blew out long before I
was close enough to do any harm. The birds are like that
lately - actually panicky. Must be the long reign of snow. That
stuff, incidentally, was well broken up, having melted into small
patches in the woods except in shady corners. I hunted the
cover that lies on the ridge along the field and on the return
swing put out 45 - a high ~~count~~ ~~of~~ ~~birds~~ ~~seen~~ ~~again~~ ~~did~~

what most of them do - was out far ahead. I followed and scoured the whole top area with no luck, only to put him out of a hemlock on the return swing, much closer to his original flush than I'd have expected. He gave me a look at him as he soared down the ridge above the trees but the time was a time when I'd have tried, I don't have the confidence after my long string of misses, so I passed. I had no more action till after eating lunch when I dropped into the bottom and hunted up the lower path toward the Beaver hole. One bird went out of small hemlocks with no look at him. Later, just below the hole, Puff pointed in the path - and I moved around to the left in an effort to come in from the side. The bird had other ideas, and tho' he lay nice and tight, he shot out of rhododendrum and across Sandy with no chance to shoot at him. At the point of land at Beaver, I saw a triple set of grouse tracks and believe this last bird must have been one of them. I, with no other place to go, unless I crossed Beaver, hunted up the slope toward the open field. Just fifty yards or so below the edge I came on Puff - solid. He was above me and to my right, but pointing across in front of me, making a nice chance to walk in. As I did, a grouse rose from the ground (unusual) and I held off that important moment.

him - and fired. When he didn't fall I could hardly believe it,
and I tried with the left, but he went on. Those are the
times that get you. As nearly perfect aiming as I'm capable of,
deliberate timing - the kind of shot I've made again and again -
and they fly on. It begins to eat at your mind and gnaws
away all the confidence you ever had. You try to analyze it coldly;
was the lead correct - you think it was. Didn't stop the gun as you
pulled? No. Was he too close. The distance was perfect. What about
that piece of ruffling out off - not enough to deflect much shot.
The shells? I've done my best shooting with 3 drams 1/8 oz of 8s. or
2 1/2 s. What is it then? What the hell is it?

All you can do is try them as they come up. Shooting is like
that. Miss one and you're set to miss the next if you're not
careful. Get a few and you begin to be a little less
careless. Then is the time you really shoot.

I followed along the ridge, keeping just in from the field
edge and after a short grass flight, came on Ruff,



frozen again. I was
above him and he was
pointing to a spot to
my right into hemlocks
amid pole size timber.
I should have - and even
the left of it.

RUFF DOES
HIS PART

around him in a wide circle and came on below to keep the bird between me and the edge of the woods - but there was a path leading down to a spot in front of Puff and it was my undoing. As I neared him, the grouse left the far side of the hemlocks and, as far as I could tell, after a half hour's hunting, this world altogether. There wasn't time to hunt the cove across Beaver so that left the ridge back downstream, either retracing my hunt high up or take the lower path. I didn't like the latter, so up I climbed, hoping to meet one of the earlier birds again. I got all the way along to the nice grassy meadow with no action, and then dropped into the hemlocks and found below the old stone fence. Across the wire fence as I was following my own foot prints in the patches of snow I heard a grouse take off ahead me, and saw him curve around the hill into the head of the ravine. I believe it was the 3rd bird I'd flushed on my way out and that he'd lain tight a few yards from me as I passed, while Puff quartered below and ahead. I followed and after some work we put him out and saw him move up toward the old house site. I was determined for more chances to shoot and though it was getting dark I followed feeling his bit in the patch of woods on top the ridge. To my amazement as we approached the clearing just above us he took out of a tree on the edge and cut for the grassy meadow around the ridge. On we went and as we entered the cove Puff ran

kept in the same line around the hill. This was rather loose
bird work but I know of Puff had mented him he'd never have
flushed him and anyway, two birds ahead are something.
So we went, I hoping just below the upper edge of the cove
and Puff working ahead. Suddenly I heard it and saw the
grouse rise from where Puff and I run onto him. Down over the
ridge he went - out of my ken for the day. I scolded Puff
and he knew he'd done wrong, for he held, crouching, till I came to
him and smacked his rump - then soothed him and sent him
on. At the head of a little spring run among the grasses where
the other grouse could well have been I carefully investigated
all possible tangles, even taking hold of a branch and shaking
one good looking bunch. Nothing. Then Puff came in and
swung into a point in the old spring directly and I was sure
we were going to ~~get~~ ^{have} it. After a moment he moved in to
establish his point, thought better of it and moved off, alone
and reaching for some scent he couldn't find. So he went to
the edge, I followed hoping for the best - and then, back
when I'd shaken the tangle, the grouse went out and around
the ridge. You can't win. After a day of birds moved out too
wild, you get one that changes his tactics and lies as tho you
had your foot on his back. We followed in near darkness, and
this time the same bird flushed as far ahead I could only see him
muzzle down the ridge toward the creek. We said enough
and plunged down an old path.

when we got to the car about 6:15 and with the drizzle which I should have mentioned had let up to make a couple of hours lovely hunting conditions, started in again. Just to make the thing complete, Puff managed to find some foul matter near the road and allow in it ^{but} thoroughly.


12:15-6:15 (6) 3 shots - no hits 4 products of Puff
and 8 (4 new) 17 flushes.

Monday 22 December - The day was cloudy and cold with an occasional break then and back to cloudy again. After the long run of snow just past, it looked like the right day to find grouse feeding. I stayed home with pre-Christmas activity and took Puff and young Feathers to the Hoy Miller country, parking at the entrance to the old place. About one or two minutes out of the car, Puff ran onto a grouse in the peccobriers above the old lane and put him out scandalously but the one followed us couldn't refresh him. On top in the old covers bordering the abandoned fields we moved a grouse that plunged over the ridge toward Little Sandy and in following, we found ourselves in the cover we had planned to hunt on the last leg of the day. Puff pointed a grouse in the peccobriers just under the brow of the hill and closed badly at the flush. I called him back and broke off a match and prepared to correct him but the sound of my voice flushed a large ^{thirty} ~~grouse~~ ^{and I} ~~from the other~~


dropped the switch and took a long left-barrel try but shot behind it. Shifting the discipline, I sent my two characters in the direction of flight and followed. Eliminating each possible spot around the ridge, we had finally narrowed the terrain down to an edge of woods bordering one of old fields when Ruff indicated game.



Instead of moving in and punning the point positively, Ruff put his nose to the ground and rooded up. In the bird, flushing it and taking after it into the clearing. That called for more than sitting and, resting my gun against a tree, I proceeded to deal out some - too severely I think now for. I'm afraid I hurt his shoulder from the way he acted that night, tho he showed no signs of injury the rest of the day. After we got that ugly business settled we hunted on over the ridge but only heard the next flush go wild. ~~Proceeding~~ at the old springhouse foundation on the brow of the ridge above Little Runby we got a point and heard a bird or maybe two. Following back up the ridge we heard two more flushes and finally cornered one quail in a little cluster of hemlocks (I think without a point) only to hear the bird bore out and come at me like a hornet. I was completely surprised and missed a double barrel try as he passed - too close on the first shot. The quail went up the valley so we followed but couldn't locate him. Finally, I decided to ~~shoot~~ ^{kill} and try to

locate one of the earlier flocks. 

Puff was working out well ahead of me and I labored up the partly grown up field, still mulling the last shot over in my mind and brooding about just what I had done wrong. Suddenly

up over the crest I heard a bird flush, then another. And after a moment a third bird flushed, but it acted tight and rose slowly. I took a quick lead with the left barrel and fired and the bird went down in a fluttering landing. 

I ran up, reloading and called Puff in to retrieve. It was a fairly open field, breezy and with a bristle or stubble of small saplings like a growth of beard, but tho the ground was rather open I couldn't see my bird. Puff and Feathers were both on hand, searching enthusiastically but showing no signs of scent. From the way the bird had settled I was certain he was only crippled and must have run down the sloping ground, so I began moving further out. Puff followed my directions and was quartering the country but with no results. As I doubled back to recheck the area I looked up and saw Feathers with the grouse in his mouth. At that moment



that lanky, boney, overgrown, gamby pup looked like the most beautiful thing in the world to me.

FEATHERS FINDS & RETRIEVES HIS FIRST GROUSE

Tuesday 23 December - A short hunt alone with Wilda on the Wetmore place before going to town for Mother. Covered the usual ridge, missed 3 birds, probably missed before; no shots. Covered Mason Run above the bridge but no birds (beagles running in there and some shooting, so birds may have been scattered).

No shots

1:00-4:30 (3½) Missed 3 (some new)
5 flushes.

Wednesday 24 December - a pre-Christmas hunt back at Hoy Miller country with Puff & Feathers, leaving Kay at home with Mother, getting ready for tomorrow. Weather about like Monday but no blue sky - cold. Missed only three of the 13 missed Monday with only one production by Puff. This time after covering the top margins I covered the ridge and hunted up Little Sandy low where I'd heard so much shooting and only missed three altogether in here. Should have missed many more.

No shots

1:00-4:30 (3½)


Missed 6 (3 new)
7 flushes

1 production } Puff

Friday 26 December - Day after Christmas hunt. Kay stayed at home with Mother and I took Puff alone to Roaring Creek Gap, parking at the upper spot. The day was cold with a light sugar-snow on the ground in the gaps. I missed the first grouse at the ravine below the sandstone pile where I

saw one more out ahead of Puff and sail up over the brim of the hollow - on its way toward where I'd parked. Puff came tearing down the gully and ran onto a second bird that nearly bored into me and up over the hemlock stand above me without a chance for me to swing on him. We followed but didn't locate him and so dropped down half way to the bottom and hunted the ridge at that level up the valley. As I worked along they raised hemlock cover a grouse flushed about me and took out low along the ridge offering as nice a shot as anyone will ever get.

I was jerky and stiff in my reaction and shot too quickly with the right and again fired with the left, feeling myself stop the swing or, more nearly, just like a shot in the general direction. It would have been a shame to have hit the bird under such conditions and with such sloppy shooting. We followed, me gripping at my slowly work and trying to shift some of the blame on Puff for running over the bird. + ~~and~~

The grouse had traveled along the ridge at about the same level and crossed to the shoulder beyond the spruce stand and below where we'd killed our other two birds in here. We plodded on, around trees and over slippery logs, keeping to the line of flight. Suddenly from a huge log ahead of me, the grouse tailed up and levelled off in a dive over the log and out of sight. 

and saw him drop, I couldn't tell whether on the far side or on this side of the log. Puff materialized and in a moment had the fluttering bird, taking what seemed ages to get a proper hold and retrieve him to me, still alive.



It was a big bird, a neck-bronze, with an almost uninterrupted tail band, hit hard in ~~his~~ right wing, leg and side.

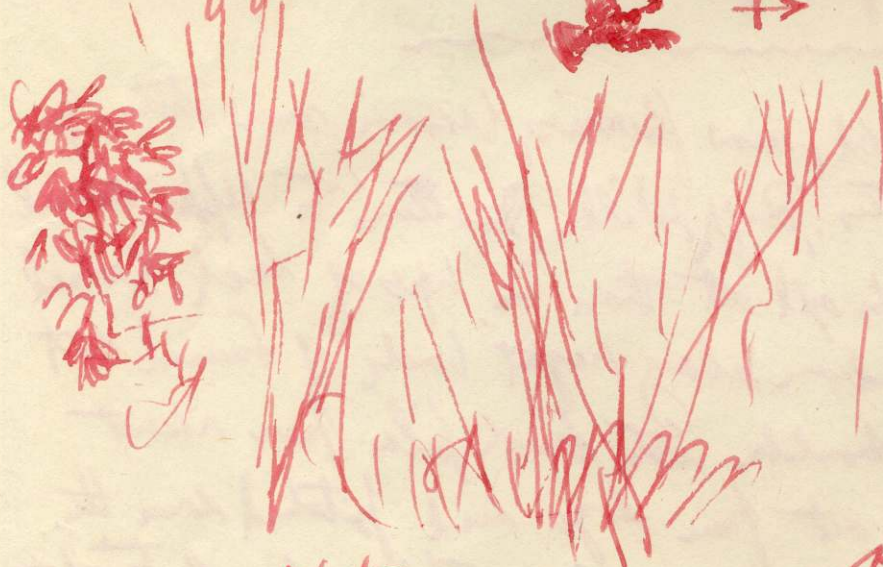
A QUICK ONE

I saw that Puff's right flank was bleeding as he brought the bird in, and when I examined him found that he had a hole completely thru his hip. at first I was worried about the chance that a shot might have hit him but couldn't see how it was possible. Later we decided he had caught his flew under his wing (the hole was directly in line with the tooth) when he had grabbed for the fluttering bird and had bitten thru. It is clearing up nicely four days later. After this action we made no other birds even tho I covered the nest, ravine and the triangle country and had walked up the creek on the right side before we found game. Puff pointed and I heard two birds go out wild from humlocks ahead. We followed and saw two more flocks along the creek and up the left fork. Coming back down near the mill I forced Puff to leave the path (he'd been behaving rather badly about not covering side country unless I followed) and then I walked into three birds in the ~~the path~~ ^{the path}, hearing them go up singly and trying not at the best and so the

not thru the thicket. It aint much of a chance and I didn't
feel too badly about missing. At first I couldn't decide how to
approach them (two had gone downstream) but I
decided to walk down the path, cross the creek and
go into the tangle. Puff had moved in ahead of
me and I was climbing the steep bank thru rhododendron



when I heard a terrific racket from a clump of
rhododendron above and to the left, and a bird rocketed out,
climbing into the sky overhead. I swung past and found the spot
ahead of him, shooting nearly straight up and over him stop and
hang in air, then drop straight down, falling thru a sapling like a
bundle of feathers. He never knew what hit him. Puff was on the



spot when I ordered him to
retrieve and brought him to
me promptly, nothing to believe
(he'd dropped the other bird today
but I think because of his tender legs)

This grouse was stone dead with
his head hollowed out from the
compact pattern - the kind of shot you feel better about making.
That made the day - two large birds - another uninterupted tail-
band - both of a size. I quit hunting and walked the road
back ^{toward} the station wagon.

the road, five quans flushed just above me, two - one - and two, while Puff looked very cheap and silly from where he stood on the road ahead of me - as well he should. Of course, didn't fire at them a fellow. It had been a lovely day after-Christmas hunt but I must say Puff had hunted very poorly for some reason.

5 shots - 2 hits
 2 producers } Puff
 2 retrievers

1:00 - 5:30 (4 1/2) March 17 (5 new)
 21 flocks

- 1st bird from mixed hemlock, hardwood, 2:00, new bronze, almost uninterrupted tail-band, male; dissection, crop: completely empty.
- 2nd bird from hemlock and hardwood, 5:00, uninterrupted tailband, male; dissection, crop: nearly empty except for few pine tips.



Saturday 27 December - bitter cold, snow flurries, becoming snow storm for a while. Took all three setters, Puff, Willie, Feathers to Upper Laurel where I've never been, more to get out than in, hips of back. Covered good looking hemlock & rhododendron along right bank of Laurel but no game till we climbed a shoulder into brush piles from recent cutting when a grouse showed out from logs and pitched down the hill past me. My frozen thumb was 2 inches thick when I tried to grab at the safety catch and I don't know yet if I ever got it off. Of course I couldn't shoot and the bird went on to safety. No more flocks till we'd hunted clear back along the top and into cover along the hard road that Dwight [unclear] the [unclear]

not walked into a grass in Lincee Thicket, and followed. Puff would
him in a nice productive that would have possibly offered me a
shot if I'd been close with Puff. But Wilder moved in and the
bird went wild. As I moved up I heard a second one go out
and that added up the day. Road very icy on way home.

2:00 - 5:30 (3 1/2) No shots 1 productive } Puff
March 3
4 flocks

Monday 29 December - Kay, Puff, Wilder & Feathers and I all took
off for our second day in the Homer and Army country, parking the
station trailer at the usual corners. Wilder settled down to work
immediately and little was seen of her as we walked up the old
road, but Puff and Feathers made a lot of fuss over running
up and down the path and scarcely got into cover unless I
forced them, on our first lap to the woods. About a third of the
way up I saw fresh grouse tracks in the lightly spotted
snow on the ground and I cocked myself for a flush from
the margin of cover between the path and the field. When it
came it was, as always, unexpected and not to the left. I
heard the flutter and Kay's exclamation about together and
saw the bird rising on the far side of an old tree trunk that
cut my view. As he came into sight to the right he was
still fairly close and just

cover and I took time to hold to the spot ahead of him for a moment - then fired



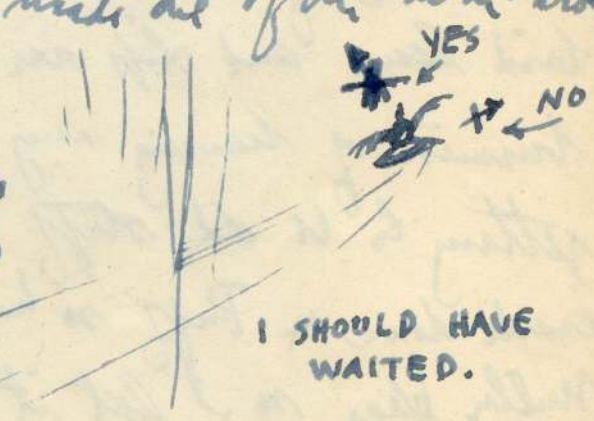
He went down hard.

Feathers was with me and saw him fall and bore in after him, pecking him up nicely and coming back with him in a lovely retriever.

I think it spoiled the whole thing. Turning to Kay I said, "How about a picture?" and she immediately got the camera into focus. Then, too, Puff and Willa turned up for the action after a shot, and suddenly Feathers changed his mind. Having reached the path with the grouse in his mouth, he looked the scene over and turned away into the brush where, in spite of my coaxing him to fetch, he neatly buried the grouse under a log. Puff moved in, located the bird and brought it to me, sitting & deliver while Kay snapped an picture. I can't call it a true retriever for Feathers, tho I'm sure he started out with the correct intent but at least Puff will get a retriever to his credit. This activity gave them plenty of pep - as well as Kay and myself, for it was a beautiful big grouse with a lovely large fan. We covered the ground to the left of the road when we reached the woods and soon came on loads of grouse tracks - fresh - in the woods.

instead of following we turned back in the direction of the
 old tramroad we wanted to take. Crossing the path up the
 mountain, we hunted along the track for a few yards seeing no
 tracks, and heard a bird go out wild. I swung toward the track to
 follow a separate set of tracks and just below the road,
 Buff sailed past me and ran into the grass that boiled
 upward came at me like a jet fighter. I turned,
 feeling Ray duck low and out of the way, and took a
 quick—too quick—shot at the bird which really offered
 a very nice chance. Of course I missed, and watched him
 go back into the quambrie cover we'd just left. I will
 say I think the quambrie veered into his course just as I pulled,
 but if I'd taken the proper time I feel I could have made the
 shot. As for this season I've not made one of the turn-around
 shots, and I've had lots of them.

We followed, after some post-mortems
 on my part and a few dark remarks
 addressed to Buff for bumping the quambrie,
 and soon were back where we'd been
 hunting. We had a look at a quambrie (either this last or the one we'd
 heard flush) that came from the dogs and sailed over the trees above
 me, but I couldn't try for him.



of my fine team of setters who should have been pinning
some of these birds and giving me a half-decent chance to
shoot instead of clearing all tracks away out ahead of me.
Finally in the big blown-down stretch of timber we gave
up and turned back, keeping to a higher level and stopping for
lunch in some nice rocks where we saw fresh droppings (last
winter's) and more tracks. After eating we took pictures of
each of us with the grouse and the three setters who looked
just as righteous as if they'd been pointing all the grouse
we'd seen. We hunted along the old road, as we'd started
to do, until we came to the first little draw up the ridge. We'd
made three birds here the other time we were here this year but we
had to go well up the ridge before we heard a flush, and that
went up straight ahead. We followed and just this side of
the brink of the basin where Sick Run heads, I saw a
bird leave and slip over the thicket ahead of the dogs. This
business of having my birds pushed ahead of me was
getting to be old stuff but no fun. I had resolved not to
crack down on Puff so hard after my tantrum on the Hoy
Muller place so I let it ride, but I'm not sure it was too
wise. When we made up I found three sets of tracks and
we worked toward the rocks that fringe the basin. Down
along the run, I saw a good-looking ~~part~~ ^{part} of the base of the
ledge and since the dogs didn't ~~find~~ ^{find} it I walked over.

before I could reach it, a grouse arched up over the rocks and out of sight. I moved a few steps more and a second bird flushed, rising toward the top of the ledge, but I was wedged among some saplings. I swung on the bird but tho I couldn't follow with him I tried a premature shot and missed. We followed



around the rocks and moved north along the flat. A bird, possibly the one I'd missed, flushed wild from the thick cane to the right and we plodded on, but couldn't locate him for another flush. At the old

Matheny farm up on top we decided to circle the Clearing and had moved along the left edge when two birds flushed ahead of me and followed the edge ahead of Kay who marked them. We kept to the line of flight and finally moved both, far too wild for a decent look at them. I think the birds' jumpiness has a lot to do with Puff's not handling them better this past week.

We came down the ridge without returning to the old road and tho we missed them good territory at times, we didn't flush a grouse. At the lower edge, Kay went on in to Homer's dings while I worked out the thick cane to the left of the path. At the house we had a nice visit and delicious dinner with Homer, Amy, Merle and Mickey and a granddaughter of Amy's.

1:40 - 6:15 (4 1/2)

3 shots - 1 hit
missed 11 (8 new)

1 retriever } Puff
1 retriever (conditional) } Feathers

Bird, large with uninterrupted tail band shot at 1:45 in thick brush over.

George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center
Baltimore, Md. 21201
Special Collections, 3

Tuesday 30 December — Kay and I took Ruff to the Muddy
Creek Club as Jim Allen's guests, driving past the store at
Cuygart to check in with Mr. Reckert and over what was "Jump-
Rock" to the second concrete bridge where we parked. Hunting
up the hill to the old fields on top, we covered excellent greenbrier
tangles around the clearing and should have heard birds but there
was nothing forthcoming. Moving around the first field, we dropped
over the head of the ridge above the little tributary of Muddy Creek and
Ruff saw a bird up the slope in front of me. I was unable to get
a shot and failed to miss it a second time. Returning to the
hillside we hunted up the valley, keeping just below the top of
the ridge. Kay heard a bird flush and I walked into it on
the second rise, too far below me to shoot because of intervening
brush but we followed it down the hill into hemlock and rhododendron
cover along the little run. at the creek I saw the bird flush
not many yards from where Ruff had circled — it must be the
condition of snow patches and light sugaring snow, but Ruff hasn't located
birds at all well during the past week or so. I tried for a shot
as he climbed but missed and I saw him level off into the
hemlock clump against the hill. We went after him and I
was surprised to flush him out of the hemlock cover, so shot a
flycatcher. Again we followed, this time along the bottom cover —
wonderful little draws and ravines running back from the creek with
rhododendron clumps but little tree growth. Ruff was hunting the
area industriously and Kay was below me along the stream but
I was the one who almost shot it.



time the same) as I climbed down a steep bank and put my foot over a log. The bird bored out ~~like~~ a clay pigeon in a wonderful gun shot, fast and straight with a noisy takeoff, but I was caught off-balance with a

face-full of twigs I had to beat away and I never got my gun up. I was provoked that Puff hadn't pinned him, since he had lain so tight but Puff didn't seem to be clicking on this particular area. Puff marked the grass up the far side of the valley, not where I had judged his flight, and we hunted after him till we came to an old clearing with a lane along the lower edge. I recognized it as the road to Ray & Waddell's place where we'd gone to see them. The grouse had to have done ^{one of} three things, since he wasn't where we were standing: either ^{he} crossed the opening into the woods above, curved along the edge to the right, or curved along the edge to the left. I chose the latter as a starter and left Ray, planning to circle the clearing clockwise. Puff was in the old lane above the edge and I had gone some forty yards. I ordered him to go on but, instead of obeying, he stiffened into a point without moving from his position, headed into the cover a bit to the left of me. It was a tangle of quambrier at the very edge of the road and I was knee-deep in thicket between us. I moved in cautiously but nothing happened and I was immediately ^{in the} ~~in~~ ^{part of} ~~part~~ ^{of} Puff, who had

stepped up and frozen again. I took several steps in each direction but still no sign for bird. Suddenly it decided to leave and began fluttering its way through the greenberries, finally running out the right side and flushing back toward Kay. I waited until I got a good look at it and, since Kay was behind a tree and the bird well up in the air, I found the spot ahead of it and fired. The bird went down in a shower of feathers and Puff was on his way to retrieve. He came back by way of the lane, and I climbed out to receive it from him, in view of Kay.



It was a small yearling, not as large as I'd expected. What made it especially nice was that it was a hell aw a point by Puff - the first in a long time.

I joined Kay and we went back down to the creek to eat our lunch. As we walked toward one of the rhododendron clumps with Kay in front a nice grouse broke out of the foliage and took off, offering a nice shot that I couldn't use for the intervening trees. If I'd been in Kay's position it would have been a honey. But I was as happy to have him out ahead of me instead of winding up the day so soon. As we talked about it, and Puff's not getting the meat, another grouse, #5 for the day, took off from a little shrub on the right.

after lunch we hunted downstream in the direction the birds had gone but got no work until well along when Ruff stepped into the creek, pointed, and then moved onto the far bank and frog, headed into a huge mass of rhododendron. I walked across the ice-edged stream and climbed the bank on Ruff's right while Kay took a picture of the point. In the distance we had heard a flock that proved to be our bird moving out well. Doubling back on the far bank we were certain we hadn't over-run the second group and then proceeded on down the creek. In a little bottom piece I saw a grouse #6 flush out ahead of Ruff, a from him, and settle into the evergreen cover on the left bank of the creek. Calling Ruff in, I headed toward the spot and saw Ruff start to climb the bank and solidify in a nearly vertical position



RUFF HITS ONE
STANDING UP.

That left the dirty work for me and I sailed in, climbing into the bank and wallowing thru dense cover, still trying to keep an open spot to shoot thru. I was sure I'd get a close flush, but after a while the bird gave us only a sound as he took off well up the bank after walking away thru the thick growth. Meanwhile, Kay had blown three blasts on her whistle indicating a

bird flushed but I had to call about the sound of the stream that I had a point. When I rejoined her she gave me the direction of the flush, up onto the hillside on the right but we were unable to find the bird on the hillside. Dropping on down along the

run in excellent rhododendron cover - too thick for shooting, we
 heard a new grouse, #8, go across the run. Following we
 moved him from a short distance and saw him go from the
 rise above the creek. Again we moved him with no point
 from a small hemlock clump and this time he took the
 steep hillside to the top. Leaving Kay, I followed Puff
 up the ridge, a real pull at this point, and at the top saw
 Puff reaching high in the air for scent as he tried to
 get over the sheer ledge of rocks. That meant one thing,
 and we found a gap further along the brim and as I
 gained the top, found Puff stiffened in a point on the
 brink into hemlock cover. The bird didn't wait for me to
 flush him but went out wild ahead. It was the last
 flush of the day tho Puff gave me a thrill up the ridge
 in a wonderful corner of the grandier tangle where the bird
 had probably gone out wild again. I went back to find
 Kay with a nice warming fire blazing and we then hunted
 down to the station wagon. It was a good day and, as I
 write this on a very white New Year's Day - the second non-
 hunting day - I wonder if it will be the last day of the season.
 If so, it was a worthy one to wind up a season that has had
 its frustrating moments but some wonderful living.

Bird shot 3:15, flushed 1st 2 shots - 1 hit (over point) 4 producers of Puff
 from paper. Small, with several 8, 17 flushes }
 interesting trail: 17 flushes }
 17 flushes }
 20% banded her tail, 1 from up

Due to impossibly muggy weather the last 4 days of the season, our Tuesday hunt turned out to be our final day without our realizing it. Anyway, it ended nicely with a kill on a point for the last shot. My shooting was even poorer than last season - no credit in itself - but I believe it was partly due to the unusual season, unsatisfactory in a number of ways: excessively dry to start with, the long interruption due to fire hazard, and after the delayed start I was a bit anxious perhaps. I swung into a better period of gun work toward the last and again realized that the most accurate method of shooting grouse is to hold for that critical moment, before firing, to "see" the spot marked x in front of or above your bird. Whether it is a matter of vision or of restraint, it gets your gun head where you want it (most snags sighting is in error, not because you don't calculate the lead accurately, but rather because your gun isn't where you think it is.) Another point - on pass or quartering shots it isn't enough to find the "spot" ahead, it is necessary to swing with swing past the bird and find that spot, preferably holding it a split second. Some shots don't offer the chance to hold, and those are the ones you either make or you don't. You don't kill grouse you don't shoot at. But waiting for the bird to get out far enough and then to "see" the x, is the best way for me to shoot. And when I don't hit, that's all right. I'm not mad at the birds.

Ruffs' work this year

as last season. Again, I blame the unusual conditions. At first, too dry - then at the end, for too much snow. The birds were jumpy, in a panic most of the time toward the end and tho' Ruff nailed them beautifully they wouldn't lie for me to get up. Result: fewer shots and points and more wild flushes ending in fewer points. So I can't say Ruff is it as good as he was last year. I regret that I can't shoot over Ruff exclusively but I have Wilda and Feathers to train and, anyway, Ruff has to be rested. As it was I gave him a lot of good work - nearly all he could take, at the expense of Wilda and Feathers.

There were coverts I didn't get to, which leaves us something to anticipate - and new ones that we discovered gold in, to treasure and go back to. All in all, it was a good year - or I should say, a wonderful year.

GEORGE: 36 days in ²³ ~~20~~ coverts (159 1/2 hours)
 BIRDS MOVED 198 (5.5 per day), FLUSHES 466, KILLS 15
 67 SHOTS - 15 HITS = 22.4% (1.24 per hour) (1 out of 4.47) ~~8.61~~ ^{8.61} bird/covert.

RUFF: 29 days hunted. 84 PRODUCTIVES (2.9 PER DAY)
 14 KILLED OVER, 6 KILLS OVER POINTS, 13 RETRIEVES
 LIFETIME RECORD: 340 PRODUCTIVES (31 KILLED OVER POINTS)
 ('47 - '52) 83 RETRIEVES 114 KILLED OVER

WILDA: 11 DAYS HUNTED. 3 PRODUCTIVES, 1 BACKPOINT, 1 FINDS DEAD
 LIFETIME RECORD: 4 PRODUCTIVES, 8 BACKPOINTS, 3 FINDS DEAD, 10 KILLED OVER
 ('51 - '52)

FEATHERS: 12 DAYS HUNTED, 2 BACKPOINTS, 1 RETRIEVE, 6 KILLED OVER

George Bird Evans Papers
 West Virginia and Regional History Center
 "FINIS 1952"

~~CRANE SCHOOL ROAD~~

1952

~~MT. CARMEL~~

✓ BRUSHY KNOBS 7.12.0

✓ JUNE'S 5.8.0

GLOVER'S 4.5.0

MOUNTAIN DALE

~~GORMANIA ROAD~~

LAUREL RUN UPSTREAM 3.4.0.1

VALLEY LEFT OF ROAD FROM SHAY'S STORE

~~CRAB GLADES (MT. ZION SCHOOL)~~

~~ACROSS FROM MRS. FEATHERS' MUDDY CREEK CLUB, 8.17.1~~

✓ VALLEY POINT 5.9.1

✓ LICK RUN 11.16.1 (1.1. opening day) 6.17.2, 3(2) 3.0 (19.36.3.3)

✓ HOMER MILLERS 7.8.1, 11(8).16.1

DORITY (DOWN TOWARD ELSEY RIDGE)

ABOVE CLIFTON (LITTLE SANDY) 4.6.0

FOREST

✓ SCOTT'S RUN 6.9.0, 14.30.0, 9(3).18.0, 15(3).23.0 (26.80.0.4)

✓ GLADE RUN 7.12.0

DICK BENSON'S (SEE BELOW)

CHARLES KELLY'S

✓ HAZEL RUN - FAULKENSTINE PLACE 14.18.0, 12(2) 16.0 (16.34.0.2)

✓ ROARING CREEK GAP 5.8.1, 10(6).28.1, 8(0).9.0, 12(3) 25.0, 17(5) 21.2

CHRISTOPHER RUN

(19.91.4.5)

CADELL

~~MT. STORM~~

RIDGE ABOVE CLIFTON (WEST)

TRAINING see below
~~AFTER SEASON~~

✓ DOLLY SODS 17.21.0.2 ^{2 traps}

✓ WILKINSON PLACE 3.3.0

✓ UPPER BEAVER 6.7.0

HUDSON ROAD

ROARING CREEK (ALONG ROAD) 4.7.1

✓ CRAB ORCHARD 4.8.1

~~LAUREL RUN DOWNSTREAM (W)~~

✓ LITTLE SANDY (S) 4.4.0, 8(4).17.0

(8.21.0.2)

✓ FAULKENSTINE 1.1.0

✓ HOY MILLER 13.29.2, 6(3).7.0

(16.36.2.2)

AFTER SEASON TRAINING

TARL HUMBERTSON 4.4.8

CONDUY TRACT CLIFTON 8.10

DORITY HEAD 3.3

OLD HEMLOCK 11.18

DICK BENSON'S PLACE (COVER QUALL)
LITTLE SANDY FAULKENSTINE PLACE

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~~146 mixed - 288 flaps then Dec 13~~