

Little Sandy, keeping to the field edges. One time we dropped into
 meadows on the Big Sandy hill near the point and again after
 starting up Little Sandy and dropping to the creek path, but didn't
 even hear a bird go out.



FEATHERS GOES
 UNDERGROUND FOR WATER

"OLD SPRINGHOUSE"

In the last portion of the afternoon, just
 when we should have reason to expect birds and in the best cover, it is
 discouraging to plug along with no excitement. Even the dogs went stale.
 But climbing up the last hill before dropping to the car, the view of
 Chestnut Ridge and Wagon's Gap was worth it all. So was the coffee in the
 station wagon.

1:30-6:15 (4 3/4)

no shots
 saw 5
 6 flushes

Ruff
 Feathers

Saturday 13 October: An early start (11:30) on another hot but
 unbelievable October day. Took the Blues, Wilda & Shadows, to the
 pasture land at Jack Copeman's and started ~~in~~ the woods behind his place -
 good standing buckwheat field - hunting the popovers and rhododendron
 (rho.) along Barnes Run without making a bird, working upstream.
 The woods was much too dense but a glowing October picture. Crossing the
 stream high, I hunted the far side down to the end of the woods, coming
 out on a field above the Troy Guthrie place. Shadows and Wilda were hunting
 like dreams but taking punishment in the heat and confusion of dry woods.

Faced with dense brush from recent cutting, I began following it along the edge to reach the hemlock cover in the hollow. With both dogs working the thicket I was stopped in my tracks in the open field by a flush that came out of the bush and rose acutely as a cross shot parallel to the thicket. I swung thru and fired going thru a short lead and saw the bird turn, hit and with the right leg dangling full length, into the thicket and disappear, leaving me staring at a cloud of feathers floating in the hot air. It was foolish not to have



used the left barrel which certainly had a good chance to stop the bird, but instead I marked

the direction as well as possible and followed, remembering that a dangling leg usually means a bird that won't get off the ground again. Jacksons hunted diligently and I spent a long time cursing the area but we never found a feather. Wilda could easily have come on it, given it a couple of shakes and moved on, as I've seen her do, and too, there could scarcely have been worse care - dense briars and wild-rose growth but I worked it as well as I could. Finally I gave up and crossing the little run that comes out of the big hemlocks further up, I hunted below the Meyers Rocks sho., eating lunch at the western end. It looks much the same in here tho I haven't been back for years. After lunch, found lots of grapes on the vines in the Harrison Guthrie corner but no birds. Again hunting back to the bottom where I lost the grouse, I worked all the way to the bottom and crossed the open

fields to start climbing back to the station wagon at the power line -
In the bottom of the woods we flushed another grouse - only # 2 was per.
Following the sound I walked halfway up the hill to meet a pair
that headed up. A wild reflex from one of them near the top gave
me a surprise shot as he sailed over my head from ^{Wilka somewhere} the right. I
tried a quick "right-on-time" as he ~~was~~ bored away but missed.

Shadows had begun to lag - from the heat I think - and the shot
peppered him up. But he soon lost interest, tho I hoped to find the
bird again at the power line right-of-way. Returning to try for the

second bird, I walked into what I think was a new one,
and got no shot. As I started to follow him toward the
power line, Wilka found and bumped another one on the very edge of the
woods above, and he took the same way out, offering me a not too bad
chance across to the left but a shade far out for the thickness of the
woods. I swung thru him but either fired too soon or stopped my swing.
The bird faltered at the shot but I realized he was dodging a tree and
went on very normally. About now shadows went completely
stale, just when I needed him to search ahead.

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I followed the two birds, cooping and napping
Shadows all the way with no results. At the
power line we flushed one of them from the very edge
and it would have been a chance if I had not been preoccupied with my
problem boy. I started to follow it into the cut-off thicket on the far



WILKA STARTS ONE ON ITS WAY.

side with Wilda nowher about and Meadows dogging my heels — then said, "To hell with it, I'm not out to walk up birds without dog work," and turned back and marshaled the two brats to the car. I believe if I had taken the time, or had the time to take — I should have stopped and given Meadows a long rest or better yet have quit hunting sooner, for none of the dogs are in shape for long hunts while it is this hot. It was only 4:00 when I reached the car, but we were having Janet R. & Virginia C. to dinner this evening and I had promised Kay to come early.

11:30 - 4:00 (4 1/2)

3 shots - no hits
Meadows
Wilda
flushes 6 - 7
mmmmmmmmmm

Monday - 15 October: The color is screaming and the weather is still incredible October, and very hot. To 80° this afternoon. We had breakfast under an maple and Kay persuaded me to wait until late to go out today as Kay, Buff, Father and I drove to Houdersshell corner and parked, starting to hunt at 4:00. It was so hot I shed my shirt at once and wished for my game bag instead of shooting jacket. The cover was dense but beautiful and we hunted all the upper road that goes out the ridge. The new feature is the power line (same as Mt. only several miles north) that bisects the old covert. I'm not certain but think it has been 10 years since I hunted here and found the woods stripped. Now it has come back in perfect bird cover and very much as it looked when we discovered it in 1939, 17 years ago. Blue and I hunted it often.

Ruff & Feather were hunting well, covering the woods but we found no birds. Then, as I was approaching the pond on my path, an explosion of sound ahead alerted me and I saw the quail just in the open cross to the right. I kept my eye glued to him, mounted and swung thru him and fired as I went thru a lead and saw him fold beautifully and drop in the right-of-way.

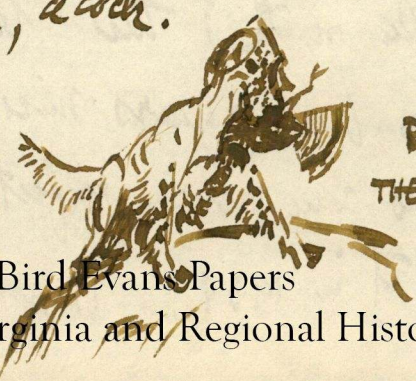


Both dogs came in quickly at the shot, eager for the retriever. I very much wanted Ruff to find him and make the retriever as the first bird of the year but Feather is much faster. However, he was on the spot and Ruff worked too much to the left. Suddenly a bird flushed

up into a tangle of vines at the far side and for a moment I had a confused notion it could be my bird, but when it took off normally I knew ~~my~~ mine could not have reached that spot or have moved like that. Letting

Feather stay out, I got Ruff headed toward the point of fall and he soon got the scent and picked the bird up with an air of surprise, thinking George's bird had flown away. They got a movie of him as he brought it in, climbing a rock with the lovely big quail, a cock.

after much rejoicing, I started to change the movie film, only to have it break in the press. In order to see the picture, we didn't attempt to do any more movies and will try



RUFF BRINGS THE SEASON'S FIRST.

always the roll at home later. We hunkered down the ridge & with
 Sandy, scarcely able to believe we had once driven a stria wagon
 up the dirt path from the creek. The bridge is gone but good stone
 abutments remain. We ate lunch in the cool of the shades here, then
 hunted out the bottom path. Beyond the power line we saw two more
 pairs of birds, reaching the little tho. ruins back of Capps that used to
 hold so many thrills for us. Crossing the head of it we returned along the
 upper slope, made 2 reflexes. Dropping down a log path nearly gone now
 I heard #7 go out a few yards to my right, a close acutely rising shot
 such as I had missed very consistently in the past. This one was no such,
 rising thru leaves and vines and going fast but I managed a focus on
 him and somehow many of them and he dropped, hit hard. It was a
 quartering, acutely rising shot.

fe Feathers & retriever but I
 he was there on the double
 coming to me in seconds,
 grip all the head which plays hell with the plumage.



This time I called
 needn't have troubled—
 and had the bird
 with his usual

This was a small hen, perhaps a yearling, and it
 made a wonderful day out of one already
 outstanding. I have to admit, they can
 plan them well.



DON'T SWALLOW IT,
 FEATHERS!!

as we walked back the path we saw two Texas, a reflex
 on the powerline and another - #14. What country!! I decided

discouraged, and even King, who usually sees only the best in other
setters, admitted that he was hopeless. We got into a nice lot of
birds on top the shoulder and heard several go out as we hunted back
toward the road. But had no look at them and no shots. It was too
dark to shoot by 6:45 and we took the road to Mrs. Lissy's house where
we talked to her for a while, with a cordial invitation to return.

3:55-6:45 (2 3/4) No shots Windows
most 8-10 flushes

Thursday 18 October: I took Ruf and Feather, the old team, to
the Meyers Rocks country, stopping to talk to Mrs. Charley Meyers.
I have come away with a red face on repeated occasions when I've tried
to talk down to natives using the term "pleasant" for quail. I asked
if I might hunt "pleasants" on their land and was told she guessed it would
be all right since I wasn't a stranger. Then she added, suspiciously,
"What kind of pleasants was you going to hunt?" I abjectly explained
that I meant the old fashioned ruffed grouse and slunk away. When will
I learn my lesson? But only last week our mail boy told me, when I
had asked if he'd seen any quail on his route, that he had a copy of ten or
twelve, and I had to translate my "grouse" into "pleasants." And I'll never
quite get over the hill-billyest female I ever saw who, in a parking lot
in town, admired "them big ugly dogs." When I asked if there were many
mountain pleasants near their place she said "No but we get lots of

them there — what you call them — buzzards? No, grouse." So there you have it.

I found the Meyer's Rocks territory changed but for the better. The woods immediately below the rocks on the upper end cut out and grown back to excellent holding cover, too dense for much more than path hunting. Puffins was hunting too much to me and not enough for birds, kept looking back, and Feathers also was traveling beautifully both missed a pair of grouse that lay wonderfully and flushed only when I walked to the spot. Both birds pitched into the thicket below the hemlocks, offering no shot. Following, I placed one rather well, for he rose as Feathers worked in and I made a swing up through him and saw him go down. It was gratifying for I was a difficult shot in thick cover. Feathers bored in to retrieve and was certain, had him. But after a moment when he didn't pick up the bird and stand with it, I saw the



grouse between Feathers and myself, moving down the slope toward some thicker cover and walking rather fast. Checking to see that neither dog was near, I shot the bird rather than risk letting it reach cover where we might lose it.

retrieved the bird nicely — just arrived, was a bit thick of a yarding cork.



Feathers turned back and and Puffin also had unenthusiastic. It was what I

Pushing on, we reached the far side of the cut — on hill where #3 rose ahead of Feathers. Not coming to follow it, I worked back up

excellent
~~of a~~ again.

Puff: 1 kill
Fathers: 1 kill
1 retriever

2 shots - 1 hit

4:00 - 6:30 (2 1/2) near 9 - 13 flocks

adult hen
yearling cove: collar; broken, broad, crop: empty

Saturday 20 October: Yesterday in Pittsburgh for shopping (my
new new shooting jacket) and the symphony with Firkensy in the evening.
Today dull and cloudy with a few moments of sun, but ^{a little} cooler and
ideal for hunting. We took Puff and Shadows to James, and found
the cover thinning and still lovely in areas. At first Puff took a
while to get going - most irritating - but Shadows bumped a bird
almost immediately and it put the ad stuff in both of them. I
believe, of all combinations, Shadows does best with Puff. We
saw no further bird until along Rowing below James when, crossing,
we found a group of five young birds that kept leaving ahead of
us, crossing back to the far side. After eating lunch at James
Footbridge, we hunted back upstream to find them but succeeded in
seeing only three, one coming over my head between Puff and me,
but I didn't see it. It was getting on but we hunted down the lower
train below James. At the ravine with the collapsed bridge I came on
Puff on point and in a moment Shadows bumped the bird well ahead.
The production, the first of the year, did Puff a lot of good and he
hunted the area along the train very well. Below the connecting path
I whistled to him to turn him into cover when he whistled and

from half way about. I could see it was hot and I let shadows
barrel up and stopped him at command. My voice put the bird up
and for a moment I thought I was going
to get a shot but it kept coming,
except for one flash glimpse as it
plunged for the creek bottom. It
was a lovely point.



FATHER & SON, SOLID
ON THE TRAMROAD.

Turning back about 6:00 we kept to the
upper road & just below the strip mining near
mined a grouse on the hillside and another at the spoil bank, no shots.

Going up the road to Jones' Puff made another stunning point,
doubled in an intense posture just as he had piled up. Again I
stopped shadows on a backpoint and the bird flushed to the right
of the dogs across the road. at Jones' we stopped to chat and in
almost darkness began the long drill back to the car. Nearly down
to Plover Creek I stopped, removed the shells from my gun and
remarked to Kay that I wouldn't try any further shots. As I finished
my last words a grouse exploded out of a tree above my head and broad
back the road toward Jones!! as if to say "Okay Buster, as long as
you're going to be so nice about it!" It was quite dark when we made
the Tonalta Turnpike and found the car and only the upper road

It was home in spite of the lack of shooting it was a wonderful day,
if for no other reason than the very satisfying productive points by
Buff. He takes a while getting into it but when he begins, no one
ever did it better. We were interested to hear from my that the
grouse (same?) still drums on the rock above his house and lets
him get close enough to see it.

No Nests

Buff: 3 productives

heard 14-19 flashes

Meadows: 2 backpacks

2:30 ~~7:00~~ 7:00 (4½ hunting
7:30 at the car.

~~Scratch out as complete with of the grouse season because of my goddamned cold.~~

Monday 29 October: ^{B/C #4} Yesterday less cool arrived and today we

took off in lovely sunny weather for our trip to the big mountains.
Halfway up Allegheny Mountain it started. I should have seen it
coming but I was optimistic. A road crew had the government trail
torn up at a culvert replacement and while it was ^{an} annoying delay,
a wait of an hour or more, we thought it was just that. After the
road was opened we drove the short distance to the top and found
ourselves in a low-hanging cloud. We had seen the situation from
Red Creek valley but it looked like a passing thing and just another
bit of the wild character of these high mountains. But up here, it
was less exciting. The gosh thickened as we ~~climbed off~~ and became

a dense fog that closed in around our hood as we passed
 thru it. Nevertheless, we decided to try the Fisher Spring area as
 planned and drove out the mountain top trail. ^{The weather was thickening steadily.} With the stuff no better
 at the spruce swamp, we decided to go on out to the Blackbird
 Knob trail and hope it would be thinner there. It wasn't. However, we
 put on additional clothes and taking all four dogs (Puff, Features,
 Audens and Shell) we started along the trail in a drifting, withering
 dank fog with scarcely room enough to see a grouse flush ahead.
 We began moving woodcock (one of which I tried for and missed
 as it zipped over my head in a low straightaway) and after reaching
 a fir-ringed tributary a headwater of Red Creek (possibly Alder Run)
 we got up and returned with Kay as navigator on the compass which
 was the only way we could know where to move. Not far from the
 road Puff started up on a lovely production that Shelbo backed
 nicely at command and a grouse (the only grouse we saw) flushed
 with no chance for shots. Back in the car we needed for Petersburg
 and the Hermitage Hotel and warm baths and a good dinner and to
 wait for tomorrow and better weather. Silly people.

no shots on grouse (one missed at woodcock)

1 her.
 1 grouse - 1 flush
 7 woodcock - 8 flushes
 Puff: 1 production
 Audens: 1 backpoint
 Features
 Shell

Tuesday 30 October: Last evening the third thing happened. During a

conversation with Jerry Coulter of the Hermitage, he mentioned that he was going grouse hunting on Tuesday with several people, one of whom — the game warden — was taking them to an area supposed to have lots of grouse. It happened to be along Stonewall Run, the one spot in all the hundreds of square miles in the Monongahela National Forest where Charles Brock was supposed to take Les and me — and on exactly the same day. So when we awoke to a morning in Petersburg just as thick and wet and mean as the top of the mountain yesterday afternoon, we didn't feel too bad for the entire trip had been ruined anyway. Hoping to make the best of a bad situation, we packed up and headed for home and, driving thru fog and cloud on very high mountains till we got to Mt. Storm we finally hit some openings around Oakland. By Terra Alta we were feeling better and when we dropped off the god-loving Barries at Cabell we came down in a world of sunshine and blue skies — our world and I wouldn't trade it for Ten Dolly Sods and Cuman Mountain ~~with~~ all their scenes of crawling game hoys.

At the Whetzel road we turned north and drove to the country beyond Mrs. Craig's where Ray dropped us off with Feather & Shell, she taking Ruff & Madons back with her for a chat with Mrs. Craig. Les and I hunted out around the first knoller and almost at once I got a shot at a bird among the right pine for a

flush about me. I crawled for a look at him, got it as he passed a dead snag and swung thru a dead and fired. At my shot he faltered and settled down fluttering as with a broken wing tip, going out of view over the rise ahead.

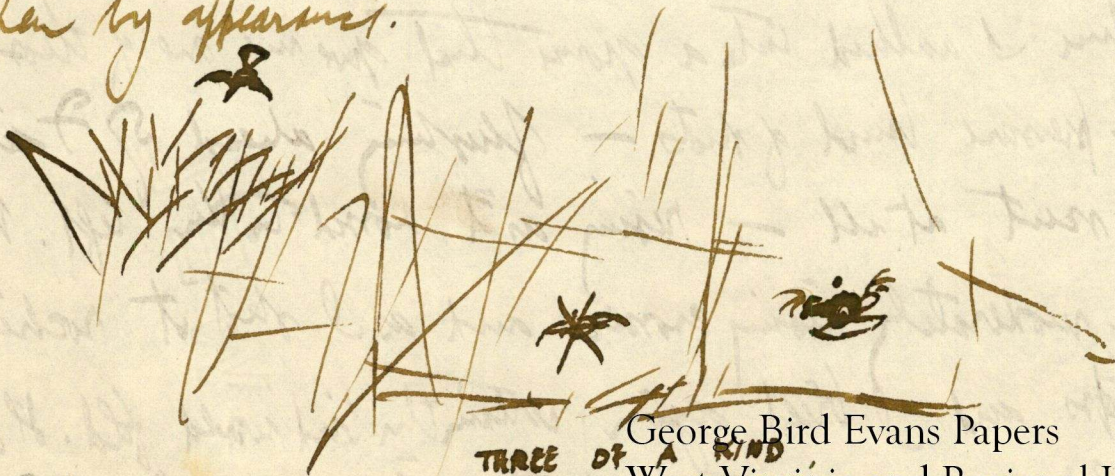


Feathers dashed in at the shot and began searching at my command. I saw another piece of the bird to hide in grasses and

fallen treetops and also felt he probably was running down the hill all the while I looked about me. I had feathers circle and search against the wind and again after letting him range well below me, called him in and was satisfied he covered the ground well. The bird must have taken off again or have run down the slope too soon for us, for we didn't find him. We moved another bird not far along and it could have been the one I shot at tho I doubt it. At the shoulder of rocks I turned us up the hill and just on the margin of the main road less got a shot at a bird and missed. We followed the road south a piece and then cut up the slope where I walked into a grove that gave me one of those high-blood-pressure kind of shots - flushing ahead of feathers, also got no scent at all - rising as it moved to the left. My first try was at a moderately rising crosser and as I shot it rocketed up for the tree tops and I tried again, certainly the bird would fold. It didn't, but instead, leveled off and went back the way it came. One night

feather and floated down to tempt me. Heading less the right direction I came to an area big and I hunted last year, a sort of ravine with a nice log road cutting back along the ridge. With less somewhere up to my right, I started to cross the log road and we and he in heard the gun go out of a tree above less's general direction. I called to him to turn back - all these changes of direction make it difficult when hunting with another person - and I took the log road as a line to follow.

Moving nothing after a reasonable distance, I made a circle to include some cover to one side and then reversed my direction. A grouse flushed twenty yards ahead of me, topped the trees and dived somewhere in the area I had come from. Just as I thought it was the bird I'd followed, a second one flushed from the same spot and boreed away, low. I fired, saw it go down, and caught the rest of a third bird from the same place. Feather was on hand and some showed the bird, a redstart but not a true quince bryce - and an adult hen by appearance.



We moved one of these birds as we hunted back, a close-lying flock from a log that I could have had a good try for had I cared to shoot. I got two more shots and we made a lot of grouse along the ridge above the road as we hunted back above where they was parked, waiting for us. Dropping down to her, we ate lunch then decided to explore the country as out the road before hunting any further. It is barely grouse cover all the way to the gap, with excellent looking grouse woods on the left of the road at the forks of an old road to the left. We wanted to see what it looked like as up in the gap which we have noticed in the past - and we found out.

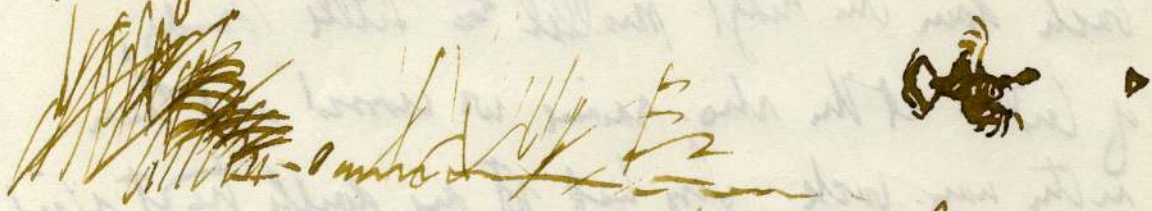
We realized we were climbing but we didn't know how much till it was too late to turn back - or rather go backwards, for there was no way to turn around. The car seemed to be wider than the road, extending out over, especially on the left side which dropped off sheer - and in the narrowest part we found a covering of fallen leaves over slippery black mud that didn't work well with smooth summer tires. We stopped at one fairly dry place to formulate plans and faced the fact that there was exactly nothing to do but keep going. With the rear end slipping somewhat in the black ooze under the leaves, we crawled along the mountain side making beds that were cut out of the hill scarcely as wide as the car. The view out there the tree tops were magnificent and helped make it all a little less grim but when I finally saw a house in the distance I breathed more normally, for I ~~hadn't~~ ^{hadn't} been ~~over~~ ^{over} the road ~~wouldn't~~ ^{wouldn't}

falls out into a log road or driveway altogether. On top the
 view into the Saltlick valley was stunning. Kay took notes and
 we drove to a turning place along a row of sugar maples then fields
 on top. Going back it was very much the same except that we knew it
 could be done if done carefully. at the foot of the gap we parked
 at the forks, left Feathers in the car to eat his heart out and
 took Buff, Shulows and Muel and Kay and hunted the grape-
 vine cover along the gap shoulder. We saw 2 quail. at one point I
 saw an owl - a big one - float up ahead of the dogs and on an
 impulse shot it. It looked like a horned owl. I rather
 regret doing a thing of this sort but if it was a horned owl it would
 account for a lot of quail. (Actually it turned out to be a Barred Owl)

Less regretted, at the car, that we call it a day since he wanted to
 give his feet every chance to hold up, and since that suited me,
~~we~~ we drove to Old Hemlock. This Whetzel country is fabulous
 and my kind of quail cover.

4 hrs	4 sets - 1 hit (10 new)	Feathers: 1 retriever 1 kill
	March 16 th - 20 flocks	Buff Shulows Muel.
adult hen:	broken, no collar, narrow, red-cast	
crop:	grapes	

Wednesday 31 October: Weather warm, cloudy and threat of showers, after some sprinkles in early a.m. We changed our plans to go to Clint Rechart place until tomorrow (promise of better weather) and went instead to the Houdershell place, Less and I taking Feathers and Moll, leaving Kay at home with Ruff and Shadaw (Wilba at the Dupalams). We began making birds immediately — three before we reached the snow line. Failed to locate the large groups we flushed on the far side last time but continued to the rch. raising up to Cuppos, Less taking one side, I the other. At the head of the run, I was forced to work considerably to the left to get them and heard Feathers put a quose out of some rch. on top the rock ledge. In a few yards we came to the edge on Cuppos fields and I saw a bird take off as Feathers entered a crab-and-queambies thicket. The bird kept low and crossed to my right giving me a chance at him after he passed some intervening cover. I swung fast and fired going thru a lead and for a moment that I missed, then he collapsed and tumbled. Feathers was on hand, having seen the bird fall and soon retrieved.



It was a yearling hen, hard hit. Less and Moll joined us and I started them out the edge of the cover, taking the inside of it myself. It is difficult to plan quose hunting for at best it is a matter of changing strategy to the tactics of the moment, and what with trying to keep a

quest either on an edge where he can get a shot or on a log road which may
 not lead where you think it does, sometimes things don't work out. After
 a circle and several attempts to contact Sam by whistle (voices are prone
 to growl) I realized we were quite separated. at last I heard him
 down over the ridge where he had crossed via the road well ahead of me.
 Flashing a bird on the way, we got together and took time to eat lunch.
 afterwards we hunted around the ridge about to the Hillman place below
 the spoil pile of the abandoned strip mine operation. We made several birds
 in here and on our sortie alone (less begged off when I suggested
 following a grouse we made) Feathers made a point of short duration
 and then looks at the flesh in time to spoil a chance I might
 have taken at the bird. Altho he is covering country beautifully he is
 showing no signs of descent bird work, being content to chase flushed
 birds for short distances in spite of until I stop him with my voice.
 What became of the lessons learned in the pheasant field? I rejoined
 Les and we hunted back down the ridge parallel to Little Andy,
 making a couple of birds. at the sho. ravine we crossed and then
 moved two more in the way back. Les had got one double try at a bird
 and missed. The weather had been terrifically hot but had not rained.

1-6:00 (5 hrs. 1 shot - 1 hit
 made 16 (9 new) - 16 flushes Feathers: 1 productive
 1 retriever
 1 kill
 yarding hen: broken, no collar, narrow
 crop: grapes & leaf a two

Friday 2 November: Yesterday was miserable to begin with and got worse. Jess and I started for the Clint Beckert place but the rain opened up on us at Centenary and Jess suggested turning back. Taking the chance to get off earlier, he left for Ohio about 3:00 and Bay and I went to Mountain and to the mountains to pick up Wilds. Today, Friday, was nice and sunny with some clouds but warm. Leaving Bay at home to specify Puff, who got the worst end of a tussle with his own shell a couple of miles ago, I took Wilds and Shadows to the Scott Run country in the Forest. After several false starts, returning to car to change outfits, I got fixed comfortably in a flannel shirt and game bag combination and headed along the ridge when last year I made so many birds (and got a couple) not a feather today. Not until I rounded the first hollow did I see a bird on the second shoulder and followed him up the ridge, many #2 on the way and in the same direction. With two birds ahead of me I felt very happy and kept going with shadows of Wilds watching the cover fairly well. As in both first birds, they got no hint of me when I walked into one of them as a reflex and as the year bird across low and not 10 yards ahead, I swung ahead of him and fired just to see him pitch at the moment of the shot and go away as if he'd never heard the shot. I think the pattern went just about him. I made no more until I had worked down to the intersection of the hollows low down near Scott Run. At a log bridge below where I'd taken lunch,

I let the dogs wallow and drink in the clear cold water, then - as they shook themselves and started to move on - a grouse flushed



from the lower side of the bridge and what must have been the creek bed and rose in a

nice left crossing acutely rising shot. The only trouble was that a big white oak was in the way, and had to wait for a look at him on the far side.



him no harm. Turning back the valley and climbed the steep or two, I began the hunt toward



my look, and that, did after. I had hunted down ridge - moving another kind the car, a more nearly toward

the old C.C. camp site. Was getting late when I reached it and, dropping below into the good grass came ward a bird for two flushes - on his second rise, a surprise flush that crossed high, and well out, to my right, I missed another try. Altogether, I felt the three shots were not too well handled, but were the kind that take more brilliant reaction traps I possessed today. A high spot of the afternoon was a big wedge of Canadians - thirty or forty - that sent chills down my spine with their unearthly cries high in the sky above me. What wonderful things they are and it is always an experience to hear and see them



3 shots - no hits
moved 8-10 flushes

Shadows
Wilds

Saturday 3 November: Puffo's paw is still stiff and he can't hunt. We left him with Willie to care for him and Anderson to take his traps out on, and Day, Feathers, and I went to the Clint Reebert country, driving the station wagon all the way down into Huffmans woods. The weather was lovely with sun, a bit too warm and too windy. We crossed the basin above the road, following the old tram road and saw Feathers make a couple of birds ahead. At the main road we made 2 more, one going up over the rocks toward Smiths. Following we walked into a bird that seemed too soon to be the one we were after ~~but~~ but it was a lucky chance, low, close and in a rather open situation. Somehow I seemed to swing too fast and, finding myself ^{too far} ahead of him, I stopped my wing and started over, and of course missed what should have been a certain shot. A good part of the



pattern showed on a tree ~~in front~~ but none reached the bird. It was an inauspicious

beginning. The bird circled back into the basin country and we followed, crossing the sho. cover along the little spring run which is underground up here. Near a clearing I flushed another bird that quartered low to the left - a good chance for a shot like a clay target at that angle, but I stopped my wing as I fired.



after some bit of unsuccessful searching I walked into a bird among some rocks further up the ridge. Deciding to follow, we hadn't gone more than a few yards when I saw Feathers

turn into a clump of rho. and then instead of pointing, bore in and
flush the bird. It was a nice rising crossing shot but again I stopped
my swing and missed.



FEATHERS DUMPS
ANOTHER ONE.

Following the flight direction of the
last 3 birds we came to a new piece
of cove - a ledge of rocks and rho.
that seems to run well up the mountain.
We ate lunch in bright fall sunshine
in a leafless world, quite changed from
the hunting two weeks ago. The view from

here was immense - across to the
Chestnut Ridge. After lunch we pushed to the top of the ledge and
came out on a flat or slope with clumps of rho. reaching over into
larch cover that blended with hardwood scrub. Suddenly a bird
flushed from some rho to my left and I wheeled from my tangle
to get a good close look at a high crosser. I swung thru him, certain



I'd connect this time, then stopped
my swings I fired. The pattern hit his tail fan which doubled
under him for a split second. Then he recovered and went on. What
I took then I realized I would have had time for a left barrel but didn't
take it. Miserable shooting. We hunted hard for him, rather expecting
to find him wounded but never found him. Feathers hunted
industriously but I question if he could have shot at a good bird after

seeing the poor scenting he'd been doing all day. Giving up - tho I feel
 we discovered a lot of good new territory, we departed to the main ~~road~~ ^{road}
 below Smiths and began flushing birds immediately along the
 lower train road. Again I saw Feathers wheel into cover as he struck
 scent, and deliberately bump two birds. One went out the train, the
 second came back at me like the low meander at station, it ~~stayed~~,
 only this one suddenly climbed. I swung thru him and tried to get
 ahead, missed and turned over my left shoulder and folded him
 high in the trees with the left barrel and saw him spin down in a shower
 of feathers. What a thrill. It appeared to be a yearling cock, hard hit.



Feathers took a while locating but finally found
 scent and retrieved, laying the bird down a few
 feet from me. We walked out almost to the Clint Rechart run. Got out up to
 the upper road a bit this side, moved one more bird soon after the shot - a
 bird that Feathers started to chase. I stopped him and brought him
 back and rolled him. Works as if he can't remember lessons. At
 the big rocks on the lower train he moved another bird. No birds on the
 upper road back but 2 more at the main road, one low one down the road
 would have been a chance but would also have been a sprinkled dog if I had
 shot for his track after it. I wondered if it would not have been a good idea!



2:15-6:30 (47)
 yearling cock: solid, collar, wide
 6 shots - 1 hit Feathers: retriever
 missed 16-18 ^{flashes} ^{kill}
 crop: ~~drapes~~ drapes
 George Bird Evans Papers
 West Virginia and Regional History Center

Monday 5 November: Hot, sunny and clear. Another lovely day.

Ruffo's paw seemed well enough after his tussle with Shell so we took him & Shabono to the Crane school road above Roaring, driving up the road at the Tannery. The cove along this road is hanging with grapes, literally bushels of fruit that have concentrated the grape population four miles away. Near the top of the knoller we passed Fitch Mc Ginnis driving a lumber truck and he advised us to go to the low of the hill and hunt back the old road to the right "if you're hunting grouse." Our first cast - and I changed to game bag & shirt - took us into a pine planting where the old farm road to be. Also the timber had been stripped all around. It took us a few moments to see that this was nothing. ~~with~~ We returned to the ~~place~~ turning at an old deserted house - the Stanton place of John Stanton's car and reached the area beyond, going into the strip mine up higher - not the same as down at June's - where we made 2 grouse for 3 flocks. One of the birds lay well but Shabono ran into it and got no scent at all. The second bird he flushed from the slappings and it came back too close to lay to offer a chance. It later flushed from a tree. After eating lunch we drove back down the road to the tributary that crosses with excellent who-corn, and later I hunted the fine heavily loaded grape cove at nearly the best time for feeding birds and made nothing. The greatest disappointment, and a real one, was not the lack of action but the distressingly poor work by Ruffo who seems at a new low - moving as the blind and ~~stupid~~ George Bird Evans Papers - every few yards

to listen for me. He is active enough when he takes the notion but seems to have no desire to move out on his own with a few rare exceptions. I can't believe he is that near blind for he doesn't run into obstacles - and yet he simply doesn't get out and settles down to hunt. I don't ask - or expect - him to move with a fast but I do wish he would move. Of course the complete lack of birds did nothing to inspire him. Ray thinks when the weather cools that he'll do better - and I can only wait and hope. Altogether this was a perfectly good day wasted. Had ever heard of *franklinii* the other time we were here. Why?

3:00
~~6:00~~ - 6:00 (3) No photo Rufous Shrikes
 moved 2 - 3 flutings

Tuesday 6 November: Ray & I took Feathers to the Dority country after voting in Brandonville. The clear hot weather is holding and we had high hopes of finding birds moving freely. The road was blocked by the ash hills beyond the Dyppolt place and so we drove on out the ash hill top level to the head of the first gulch and parked. But this country is not yet grown back enough after the slashing it suffered several years ago and we had a long trek thru unproductive cover. We finally reached the hemlock-rubus ravine we were headed for and hunted down the path on the right side but with no results. Crossing over we hunted back to the head of the cover and Feathers moved on first grass, a crossing and quartering flight the cut behind me and was too close to day to attempt when she dropped down. Taking the upper edge of that hillside back down the hollow we almost got run down by a

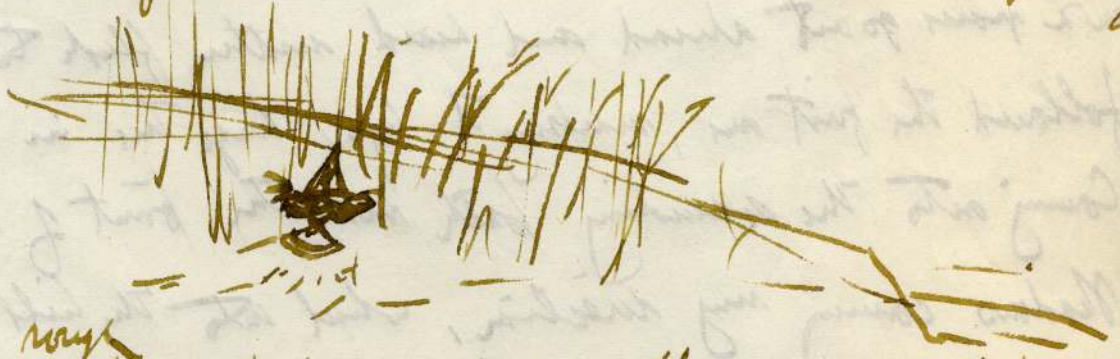
miss sized buck that was dashing away from Feathers. Coming on me
 squarely in his path he reared to a stop and plunged sidewise
 down the hill. Frankly I was a bit uncertain as to his
 intentions at first glance but Kay tried a short burst of
 moral fiber at him. I would have had an excellent opportunity if
 I'd had the camera but doubt if I would have remembered to use it!
 Further on Feathers bumped two more birds. This is a good cover I've
 never tried and would make a fine return hunt around the point
 toward the hollow near the ash pile. We, however, headed up
 Dooty via the hogback ridge and ate lunch on a log in the
 sunshine. Soon after eating I flushed a red looking grouse off the
 left edge of the hogback and tried a quick "right-on-him" but saw
 him turn left as I fired. I hunted clear around the ridge with Kay
 taking the berry field then we took the



lower road and finally reached the
 upper road where it drops to Dooty. No birds.
 Returning along the road we met Feathers, who

hunted all day like a dream quartering each side of the paths
 and all the good corn, moving toward a poplar vine above us and go in
 with his head high and his tail merry and heard and saw the bird
 go out. It was a deliberate bump. Why he won't point grouse when
 he does beautifully on pheasants I can't explain. He seems to have
 no desire whatever to point - no sign to

and then hunted up the ridge along the grape vine stratum, moving within
 from wild. It was late and we couldn't follow on upward all the ridge
 line where I am sure we'd have more grouse. Instead we returned via
 the road to the little tributary that crosses when I took 7 catters and
 made a sortie up the river cover while they walked on to the old
 farm place to wait for me. Featherers moved a bird that came on my
 head while I was waiting there down river. I followed it down the
 river and moved it wild off the shoulder of land where the road climbs
 from the river. I tried for a shot as it went out low and straight-away
 but missed.



There was no more
 action but we had a
 long walk thru some rough
 cover to reach the car. I think the best way to reach this cover would be
 up the other Darity road to the Crane School, then walk down and across
 Darity and you'd be there. Why we didn't see more birds I can't understand.
 The weather is much too dry and hot for one thing.

2 shots - no hits

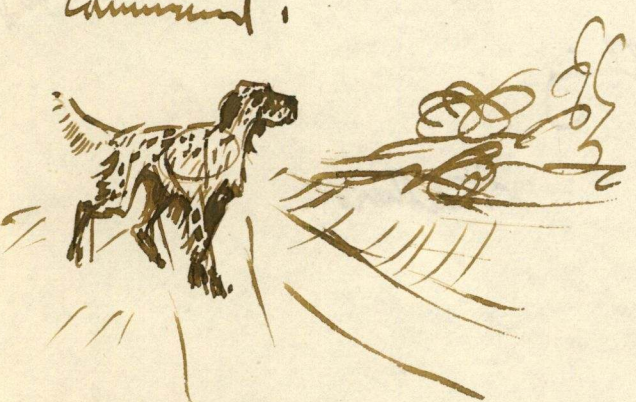
7 catters

moved 7 - 8 flappers

2:30 - 6:30 (4)



Wednesday 7 November: Today was some cooler after rain last night and this early a.m. I planned to take Shadows alone leaving Willa with the other three but Willa was hell bent to go along, pushing her way thru the studio door as I left and I didn't have the heart to turn her down. I parked at the Hazel Run train winter place and getting my two blues across the road between cars, I headed them down the valley. The first bird yodeled down across my line of vision from shadows on the hill above me but I couldn't get going in time to shoot. Moving on I got around the hillside some pines to the alder thicket where I've moved birds just below the upper edge and where I stopped to watch and a grouse went ahead and heard another flush to the left. I followed the first one, marking it by a large tree in line of flight. Coming onto the ascending path near the point of land I saw Shadows coming my direction, wheel into the hill and point, head high, reaching for vent. It was about right for the grouse I was following and as I moved in, Willa came up and stopped at my command.



SHADOWS STIFFENS.

She made a break as I moved but I stopped her with my boot - not hard but firmly, and I wondered that the bird didn't flush at my voice. Unfortunately, no bird materialized when I walked in. 'The shadows held beautifully and I sat

there on, convinced that this was where the grouse had been and taken off.

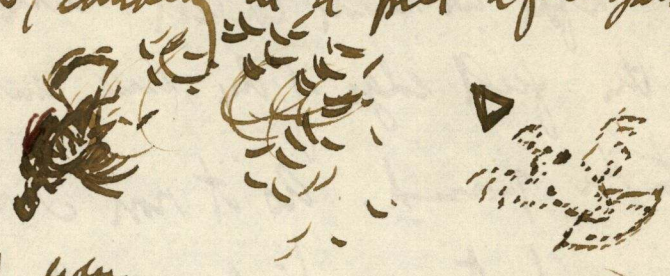
#35
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We hunted all the way down the left margin of the old farm to the
point between Laurel a Big Sandy, crossed and were partway back
along the old lane before we made contact with further birds. A
grouse flushed from the field edge of the lane away from the dogs and
bored back low to the ground. As it rose I realized I had a shot
coming up and swung fast and fired giving them a lead. It should
have made a kill but it didn't. Instead the bird climbed higher
and pitched for Laurel Run over the trees. I wanted to be sure I



wasn't overlooking any further birds
then doubled back and followed
the bird I missed, hunting all the
way to the bottom path along
Laurel and back up the lane.
At one place I think Wilks

bumped a bird, probably my grouse, but I didn't see it go. Why
there weren't more birds in all the area I had covered I don't know, for
last year this place had a lot. Finally I got back to ~~the~~ ^{my} empty
shell lying in the leaves and then hunted a up to where the old
lane bears left away from the woods. Madaw and Wilks were
working the cover up ahead in the stand of little hucklebs. Suddenly
a grouse came barreling out of the cover headed low and almost
at me. It rose to clear me ^{as I mounted and glancing my eye}

as the bird I swung thru it and tried for a bit of lead and fired. The grouse spun like a top and dropped solidly thru a lesser arc in a shower of feathers, landing in a pile a few yards to my left, above the line.



p134 100%

I saw it raise its beautiful, big head, and when I saw it blink its eye and I felt a little sick about it. Then it relaxed as I called Mudas in for the retriever. He made several excited casts, but the scent and swung into a point, then reaching for the hot smell moved in and pounced on the bird, coming up with a big load of feathers. At my command to "fetch it here" he picked it up and ceremoniously circled around the way he had gone in, bringing the bird in a lovely retrieve, laying it on the ground a few feet in front of me, proud as a ~~king~~ king.

It was a huge cock with solid tail band and jet black ruffs - the nicest bird I've shot this season, if any one of them can be more beautiful than another. The bird was very hard hit well back, its legs both limps and shattered, so in spite of my fast swing my pattern had centered back a bit - which was as well for it would have been shame to blast the breast open. Wilka came in and showed unusual interest in the dead grouse. We ate lunch on the spot - being about 5:00 and I needed it.

Working on the ~~the~~ nest ~~over~~, we put out # 6 on the cliff at the point of rocks, and up the valley # 7.



SHADOWS RETRIEVES
A BIG ONE.

Seeing some fine looking quaps -
some down below, I dropped
to the bottom of the ridge and
took the lower path (I was on it one
time before) along Big Sandy thru
excellent quaps & mo. cover over

rocky footing up the hollow, moving 2 separate birds which I only heard
There really should have been more grouse here and tho I'm sure we got a
reflex on one of the earliest birds, we didn't move enough. It was 6:25
when I reached the road and got the two blues back across it at
heel.

2 shots - 1 hit

Shadows: 1 retriever
1 kill

1:55-6:25 (4 1/2) moved 9- 11 flocks
(no snatches, blunt) 14" fan

Waldo: 1 kill

adult cock: solid, collar wide
cups: cinquefoil leaves



7381.36

Thursday 8 November: Much cooler today. After Puff's non-participation because of his still lame paw, we were glad to get him out again. Kay & I took Puff & Feathers to the Clint Reebert country to assure us of plenty of game for Puff. Drove the car clear into Huffman's woods again and began making birds at the train crossing of the road when a quon flashed across from the logs who were in the car to the right and I saw the bird, too late to try for him, as he settled on a boulder in the woods to the left. He worked out wild. We made further birds at almost regular intervals along the train and about where we had flushed them the first trip in here. It is a glorious feeling to have birds getting up constantly and to sense that they are so evenly distributed thru the coast. Puff was working very close in and checking with me rather too often, but I realize now this is because he cannot see me well and so I cluck to him when he looks back for directions. I do think he overdoes it somewhat and I have to be careful not to encourage his checking too frequently. Some way beyond the rocks along the train, Puff made a point to the left of the path and a bird flushed. It is good to have the old boy make a productive point peeps the day up wonderfully. By the time we reached Reebert Run we had made several birds that were new ones. Working on the far side of the run, we cut into the basin to the left and there Puff established another point after a preliminary stand. This time there were two birds, both moving out well ahead of us.

greenberries we reached the tree again and Truff made a
 short point, then moved in and feathers worked into the tangle
 and flushed the bird. I can't understand why feathers shows no
 tendency to point grouse. Shortly afterwards, Kay discovered that
 she had pierced her leg with a thorn and found it bleeding profusely
 where it had struck a vein. It soon stopped after we applied pressure.
 With all our birds moved we still had no opportunities to shoot - the
 birds moving the other way each time. We hunted up Reebut Run to the
 old Reebut house moving two birds on the way. We ate lunch in the
 woods above the path and then, uncomfortably cold, moved across the top
 then quadrants and gorges - moving a bird - and on to the lower to the
 Reebut place. I had heard ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~men~~ ^{men} mention that the men in their group
 had seen grouse along the road but it looked very unimpressive. I
 had just expressed myself to that effect as we were walking across an
 open old field when Kay said "There goes one!" and indicated a corner of
 woods to our left where feathers was working. As she spoke, I saw a second
 bird flush and cross the field beyond the corner of woods and then heard
 a third grouse. Suddenly I saw it cutting our way in a line to cross
 behind us. Kay dropped to give me the shot and I swung ~~the~~ ^{the}
 bird and fired going thru a lead and saw the impact of the shot
 turn it over. It kept struggling but went down in a gradual arc
 and struck the ground about twenty-five yards away. Kay called that
 he had got it all on the move ~~from~~ ^{from} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~flight~~ ^{flight} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~moment~~ ^{moment} ~~the~~ ^{the}

shot landed, and the fell out of sight behind some brush. As I ran up I saw the grass ahead of me on the ground and both Feathers & Puff arrived to retrieve. I wished I could had Puff into the bird before Feathers found it but that is a difficult thing to do - if not impossible. Feathers spotted it and had it in a matter of moments, retrieving it to me while Kay took movies of it all.



A LATE-AFTERNOON BREAK.

It was a yearling cock. We were both unaccountably cold and since I was getting on toward 5:00 and the day had ended so satisfactorily we decided to forego anything further that could only have been anticlimactic and over back at the station wagon, had some life-giving coffee and headed for home. We drove to Morgantown for shopping and some visiting with friends.

2:00-5:00 (3)

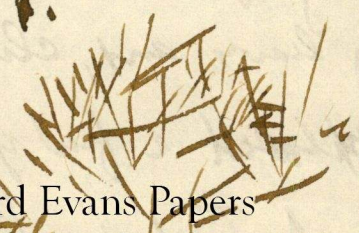
yearling cock: broken, collar, wide crop: none

1 shot - 1 hit
ward 15 (10 new) - 19 flushes
Feathers: 1 retriever
Puff: 3 productions
1 kill
1 kill

Friday 9 November: Twenty-one years tonight since Speck died. Today was quite cold, in comparison to what we've been hunting in — low forties. I took Maximo & Wilda to the Laurel Run bridge at the Projele road, parking there. I have been anxious to hunt down the valley on the far side in that luscious looking hemlock cover. Today seemed not to be the day. Perhaps it was the high wind, but down in the valley it was nice and quiet. We missed no birds that I could hear, tho' the two blues hunted diligently, until we were below Gibbons, when I heard #1 flush wild. All thru the hemlocks and down to the old crossing on Laurel in the Rockville road territory there were no quail.

It is discouraging for a young dog like Maximo to hunt his heart out in country that doesn't produce enough birds to keep up interest, but he hunted beautifully — wide and fast — all the way. Wilda too covered lots of ground. After eating lunch on a log in a spot of sunshine in the bottom, I moved on to the tram that used to cross Laurel — no log any more — and there and not until then did we see #2 — a bird Wilda put out. It came my way behind me, higher and reared stiff, and just as I started to raise my gun I saw it bank over the high tree tops and swing across Laurel, dropping a bit of intestinal matter as it left, to show me what it thought about the procedure.

I hunted on toward the Rockville road, in spite of the late hour and the miles behind me and still found nothing — at last turning



return trip, higher in the ridge. We passed thru fine cover but we didn't meet a feather. Finally I dropped to ground and beating the old suspension bridge, crossed on it, sharing it with Indians who preceded me while Wilka took the water, but safer, lower route.



WILKA TAKES THE WATER ROUTE.

Just beyond the deer hunter's cabin, Indians swung off the path and instead of stopping, moved into a land that flushed quaternary and rising to the front and left. I tried for him but missed - a not too probable chance. Instead of following, for he seemed to patch for the deer cover along ground - just all the way across, I hunted up the tributary valley at this point and crossed well up. To swing around the shoulder of the far side. I hoped to meet birds on the steep hillside high up where ~~they~~ I used to find them. Crossing a fence I scrambled along the steep side, stones rolling under dry leaves and, climbed higher to a little shelf. Suddenly a grouse exploded a few yards above me, a little higher than my head and I tried for him - ~~too soon no doubt~~ and missed,

and fired again, right on him, as he leveled, but to my surprise did not connect that I could see the the bird went out of sight at the second shot.



I had Nicholas come in and search, just in case I had dropped the bird, but I wasn't very optimistic and I wasn't there. It was, however, red hot and eager and it shot flight further on, moving into an intense point ahead and above me. It was a production and the bird didn't linger long, flashing against the sun and I had no shot. Nicholas broke at wing but stopped on command, and I was very pleased with his entire performance. I think he is going to be all right.



I had no more birds moving tho I hunted all the way up the north side of Laurel to the church and the car on the far side of the creek. My shooting today was poor but I am pleased to note that ragged shooting, which annoying at the moment, no longer irritates me and spoils the day. After all, it's a break for the grass which is all to the good and when there is a production it means more to me than a dead bird.



3 shots - no hits
missed 4 - 5 flushes
2:00 - 6:00 (4
Nicholas: 1 production
Wilde: and a fine day's work

Monday 12 November: Legal Armistice Day and we were particularly free of rabbit hunters (except our invited Galloway boys) or grouse hunters in the woods.

Saturday the wet snow kept us home and today the weather held cold but partly sunny. The unfortunate factor was the wind which tore and shrieked at the tall trees and every exposed surface of the mountains. Ray & I took Buff, Teatons & Shadow to the Bowing Gap and it lived up to its name.

Driving up the Tannery road toward ^{and} after we parked at the forks. The wind was high even down in here when we started out and I remarked that we'd not see a bird all day. It was almost prophetic but not quite. In the first little corner of woods we made four grouse within five minutes after starting—

one flushed back past us too far out to shoot, #2 went straight up the hollow, #3 cut horizontally around the N.W. shoulder and #4 flushed from a hemlock and went about to the crest. Following the general direction of the three we succeeded in moving none of them. And this we doubled and covered the shoulder well we still did not. The rest of the day was spent in a futile hunting effort, covering the left and then, on the return, the right side of the road hollow, then crossing the shoulder into the sawmill hollow we worked to the head of the left fork and across the shoulder to the next valley, then down the left side of the sawmill hollow to the big gnarled maple, hunting that out and eventually the hollow to the south. Not until we were returning from that and wading down the little run whose slippery rocky bed serves as a path did we get a bird up. Buff

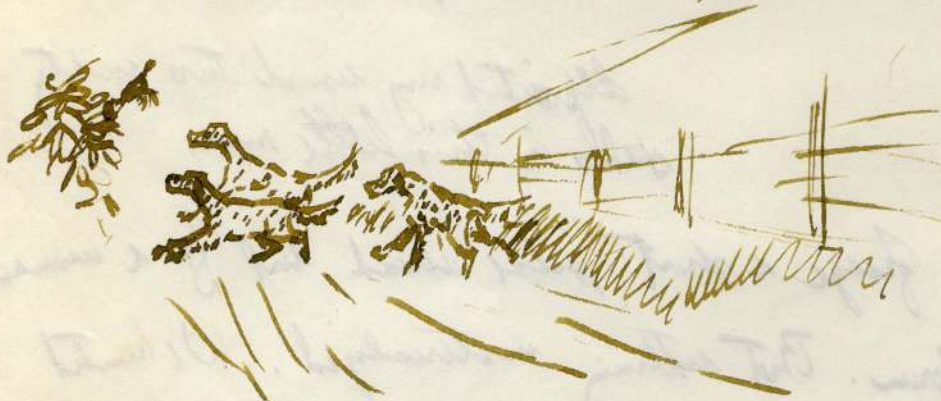
had stopped on a not too stylish point into the thro. to the left when
 a grouse exploded to my left and came past me a few yards into the
 cover and climbing fast. In fact, I think that bird was moving as rapidly
 as any grouse I can remember but that was probably because I missed
 it - twice. My first shot seemed crowded by saplings that prevented
 a good smooth swing and tho I held right on him at the peak of his
 rise with my left, he went on untouched. I shouldn't care so much, and
 after its over I don't think I really do, but at the moment nothing quite
 frustrates me so much as missing a shot I should have made - and
 doing it twice within a few seconds. ~~Doesn't~~ help. * And so I



deposited my usual two empty
 shells in this little run.

Puff made a lovely intense freeze a short piece ahead and for a moment
 I expected to find the bird down. But nothing materialized. We hunted
 down the main ~~hollow~~ hollow and at the road, Ray took the keys and walked to
 the car. I needed the three dogs then the woods where I expected to find
 the first grouse flushed on our way out. I hunted all the way up into the
 thro. when the four had moved but found nothing and cold and tired
 after such a futile day as this one, I walked down the road toward
 the car. Just short of the parking place the three dogs who had
 developed a huge desire to use the road, flushed a grouse from a clump

of Mrs. to the left and I saw the bird coming low up the road,
 directly at me. If the car had not been so near I'd have tried for it
 as an incooper, but I waited, wheeling about and tried for it as it
 went away, there was no chance for missing, warned as I was, but I
 did — and as the bird faded, smaller and low to the road, I
 held directly on it going away and fired the left barrel and saw
 it drop. It was wing tipped and as young Meadow came dashing
 past me, having seen the bird fall, it lay for moment on the open road,
 then ran for the bank on the left. Meadow was then just behind it
 as the other two arrived
 and there was a mad
 scramble on the small
 hummocks on the bank
 with the quon weaving in
 and out of the woven wire fence
 as it ran. For a moment I



that Father had it, but with a supreme effort Meadow retained his claim as
 first comer and with a lunge got a grip on the quon, retrieving it very
 nicely to me.



Came into view in

It was a nice redeeming moment
 to a poor day's shooting. Day
 time to see the last of the 'Sprock'

1:30-6:15 (4 3/4)

yearling hen: broken, no collar, narrow
 crop: quon

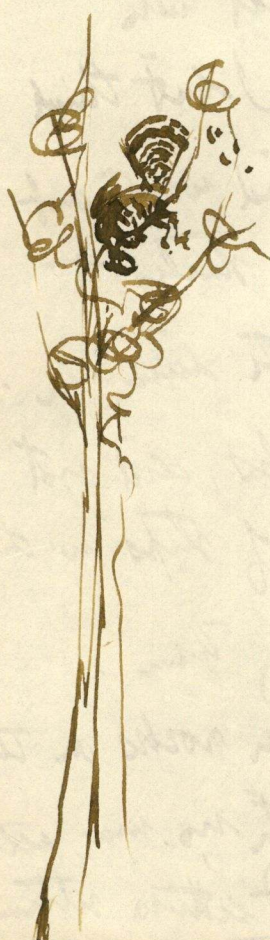
4 shots - 1 hit

ward 5-6

Buff: 1 prock
 1 hill

Tuesday 13 November: ^{Trans} Cold, clear and mostly sunny in spite of forbidding ^{#47} weather forecasts. I took Feather alone to the Lick

Run country, parking this side of Summers' and hunting up the rocks and who in the hollow above Lick. Crossing the tram road, I pushed on up the little ravine with grapes - Feather working like a dream. He seems to sense his special responsibility when alone. Not until I was about two-thirds up the mountain did we have any action. I had been seeing these grapes hanging lush and was constantly aware of big fat robins flashing out of the vines. Suddenly one came my way from Feather's direction, somewhere out ahead and to the right of me, and I realized it was a grouse - a high wheeler. I mounted, swung past and fired and saw him fold, tumbling over and over and striking a sapling with a vine where he lodged in the top. The bird was quite hard hit and stone dead even before he struck the tree and it began to look as though I had a climbing act ahead of me. Feather came in at



A PARTRIDGE IN
A LOCUST TREE.



the shot, walking practically to find the bird, and laying my gun down, I worked thru quinine vines to the breast

sapling and tried shaking it. It loosened the bird at once, and it fell, very limp and boneless feeling into my hands. I lay the grouse on

the ground and let Feather ^{continue} searching till he hit the next while standing over it. He picked it up ^{from the excitement}, stopped & ^{settled himself} in the middle of the

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retrieved and for a moment I feared for my quarry but it held together
and after laying it down once, feathers finally brought it to hand.
It was a beautiful large adult cock, very hard hit all over.



FEATHERS STOPS
TO SHAKE.

As I moved on up the ravine to prospect the cover, another quail flushed
into me from almost the same quarter, this one coming lower and directly at
me. I wasn't interested in another shot so soon but tried for a dry wing
and found that by turning around I might have had a going-away chance,
but I doubt it. I continued up the ridge and came onto a flat with
blackberry bushes still in leaf. I heard a quail flush - I don't think
Feathers was near it - then in a few moments a second bird went out
and headed for the right shoulder of the mountain. As I started to
follow, a third quail flushed from a spring in the opposite direction.
I continued after #2 but though I counted past 400 steps, did not
flush it. I would be interested to know the number of steps in the
average quail flight, but it rather takes away - counting them.
at the top of the mountain I hunted north, skirting the rocks on the
backbone and went all the way to the Mystery Field with no more action.
It was four o'clock and I stopped to set traps with Feathers sitting

by my log, very pompous and very close. I told him I had hunted this area with his grandfather and with his father when he was younger than Feathers and quite a lot better, but it did little to humble the young man. Putting my second shot back on, it was quite cold up here, and picking up my beautiful big bird from the ground beside my gun, I started working down the run that comes off the western slope. We moved #6 to the right of the stream and circling back up after him, ended up following the next branch down the mountain, moving #7 well down.

Again following we failed to flush him, but did move #8 & #9 together. None of them, except #6, were near Feathers and I can't say he knew any but it flushed. It was getting late and I worked down the mountain, thru excellent greenbrier and grapevine patches. The surprising thing to me, is that this mountain has changed so little in the 17 years I have known it.

The cover is some higher but not as much as I would expect. The one great change I must regret is the sulphurous fumes drifting all the way from the allright plant. You can even see the smoke in the valleys. I wonder if it will affect the birds. At the tram we headed into the bay of the river branch that crosses when I made the long right barrel shot last fall - and rather than pass up any of it I climbed the steep ravine and worked over to the shoulder with the greps. There we moved nothing until we dropped to the tram where a bird went out wild from what would have been a shot in all probability if I had walked the path.

it back. At the next shoulder a motion caught my eye and I saw a grouse barreling off the mountain and sailing like a fast clay target against the sunset sky. It was well across the path before I decided to try but I made a wrong bet and fired going thru a lead, and lost sight of the bird.



ONE AGAINST THE SUNSET.

I ran up the spring, and set feathers to searching for the bird. I did see a lone feather floating down but that was all. We looked

carefully but couldn't find it and I decided I had probably not lead far enough a wrong bet enough, a both. Just to be certain, we hunted down the ridge almost to Fish Run and after feathers had canvassed the area well we headed for the car, following a faint trace of the lower tram road. We were still a long way in and when we finally topped the last rock ledge and moved toward the distant road it was too dark for shooting. However, I saw the station wagon glistening in the fading light, straight below me, and I wished they were here to tell me I had a good sense of direction. The sunset was clear gold and red with the Pinery Mountain for hunters' shanty in silhouette against the skyline far away. a beautiful day.

2:15 - 6:35 (4 1/4)


2 shots - 1 hit

Feathers: 1 retriever
1 bill

adult cock: solid, collar, wide
Cops: graphs

moved 11 - 11 feathers

George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center
again I count only 18 tail feathers - never the 20 shown in drawings.

Wednesday, 14 November: This was one of those days that completely shot
 the hell out of any decent average I may have
 made - which I haven't. Weather? warm, cloudy and dry. I took
 Ruff & Shadows to try Mr. Fodebauer's country above Cuygart. I found that
 gentleman along the road to Cuygart where I suspect he spends most of
 his time. After identifying myself - he had no recollection of me -
 I took him back to Mrs. Feathers where I heard him inquire about a
 truck to take his "male cattle" to the sale. After long conversation he
 finally got in my station wagon and rode to his house where he proceeded
 to fuel himself with such a deep pull on his toxic that after a
 hundred yards in the woods he was too weary to go further and at 2:30 I
 got going - alone. Shadows had marked #1 as we entered cover and I
 crossed the far ledge of rocks across the run to try to find it again. I
 worked up onto a flat on the shoulder of land and while following a dim
 road flushed #2 from where it had been dusting in the wood powder of
 a rotting stump. It was a low quartering rise to the right and I
 dropped to one knee for a view of the bird and from that position missed it
 with a snap instead of a swing. Foolish reaction. 

Following we marked #3 too soon for it to be my
 bird and as I began to raise my gun to my shoulder,
 my finger touched the trigger and discharged the right barrel with the
 stock away from my shoulder, which gave me more recoil than normal.
 I count this a miss but it was such a damnable thing it should never have
 happened. Further on we remarked #2 without a look. Turning I covered the
 flat to one side feeling that this was where the birds were and being

reached another log road, was standing in it with Puff near me. Madson
was working in toward us when he suddenly flushed a grouse that climbed
acutely. This time I controlled myself and instead of shooting as soon as
I saw the bird, waited that ~~it~~ ^{cool} ~~just~~ ^{came}, focussing on the grouse
as he passed some interesting brush toward the top of the carcut, then
deliberately swung thru and fired going thru a spot ahead of him - and
missed. Why, I can't say, unless my timing just wasn't right, which of course
it wasn't. It was one of those days.

Looking at the bird instead of glancing
anyway, he went on over the tree tops
next valley, stopping on the brink of vast territory that I'd like to
hunt sometime. Today, however, I wanted to cover the rest of the flats.
Returning to the side of Procheauers I followed into some damp area
with pitch pines and laurel and rho. and walked into a grouse that was
thirty yards or so ahead, climbing to top the pines, or so it appeared. I
swung up thru him, missed, and fired the left barrel right in him as
he leveled off - and missed again. As I reloaded, a second bird flushed
from the same spot and went the same way. Practically hopeless, I started
the dogs after them and plunged into the cover. In some laurel and
tangled debris I came on Puff, stiff on a low point turned my direction.

I walked in and approaching him flushed a grouse low and
quarterming to the right. I must have missed instead of swung for he
didn't drop at my first shot and I caught him with the left barrel



I suppose I was
my eyes to the grouse.

I followed to the

as she ran to tops some trees. What a relief! He seemed to fall hard but I hurried up and urged Puff to search. at first he began looking too close in but I soon saw the grouse dead on the ground, wings spread. In a moment Puff got the scent turned and nailed it. The retriever was, not in most stylish in that while I ordered him to sit, he dropped the bird at my feet but I had no quarrel. a kill over a point is a rare experience with me these days and I'm not the one to quibble.



A KILL OVER RUFF'S PRODUCTIVE.

It was a beautiful yearling cock and there never was a more welcome bird. We stopped for lunch on the occasion. after eating I made a circle but failed to move the pair I had flushed and think they may have turned into some bushing to the left, tho' there is a huge territory in here for them to use. The only food I can see is teaberry. Hunting down the run, partly on the far side, then crossing back into ^{the creek} my original efforts.

I moved or remained a bird. Got a dramatic point - not productive - from Puff frozen on a slanting boulder with shadows backing close by. Covered and hunted down the run as my time ran low, flushing two or three more birds. Puff had another unproductive, that must have been a hot spot, with shadows backing. I finally stopped at 5:45 but I was tired after dragging my boots thru a mesh of ground briars all afternoon - and after very hard shooting - the most wearisome thing I know. This shows further

2:15-5:45 (3 1/2)

yearling cock: solid, collar, wide

7 shots - 1 hit (cock) Puff: 1 productive

moved 9-13 flaps

shadows: 1 kill

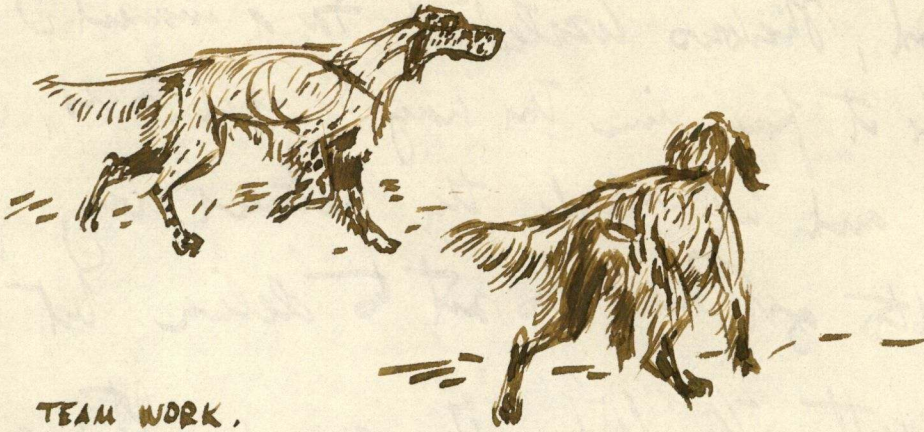
Thursday 15 November: Ray & I took Feather & Wilder to revisit the
Meyers' Rocks country. The day was very
warm - above 70° - and clear and sunny ^{and very dry.} I hunted in game bag and
shot combination. Altogether it was disappointing for we made very
few birds. In fact, we just about accounted for nearly the birds I had
left last time. I am crediting Feather with a production of #1, but
had seen him stop and when the bird flushed, he was in motion on the
spot - so I also credit him with a break at flush. In the flat
area I saw a wounded grouse on the ground and hoping to catch it
to bring home and also keep the dog from it I probably handled
the thing all wrong. It ended with Wilder catching and killing it -
the question if we would have captured a bird I had shot. It
put an unpleasant touch to an otherwise nice afternoon, tho the
shooting was nil.

No shots
(no news)
2:15 - 6:00 (4 1/4) moved 7 - 9 flushers
Feather: 1 production
Wilder

Saturday 17 November: Cold, overcast. Got a late start going alone with
Ray & Shadous to Charles Kelly's and the George
Ringer country, parking in the main road across from Kelly's and hunting
down the hollow below the strip mine to Brown without making a bird.
At one time I came onto Shadous roiled on a tiger boat and saw
beyond him Ray in one of his stretched out thrillers, the two of them making
lovely pictures in my eyes. Unfortunately that was my last but I feel

one had just moved out on us for it was hot.

156/#53



TEAM WORK.

We crossed Beaver on the bridge to George Runjers and on the far side I explored the first hollow that runs up to a rho. cliff and some close slashings. There is a lot of excellent cover in here and I only scratched it but not making birds and wanting to hunt up Beaver, I turned back and climbed the steep hillside to the edge above the rho. cliff.

Having just inside the edge of the cover, I heard a grouse flush and saw the bird settle into the dense rho. on the slope ahead. Working both dogs into the area I failed to near the bird, and moving on, I kept along the slope of the hill in some small growth I saw a movement on the ground ahead of me and the grouse flushed, rising and going just slightly to the left. I waited for a good focus on the bird, swung up there and fired and saw it tumble in a lot of feathers. Feeling it may have been only crippled, I called Shadow in to search and he arrived on the spot but, being very excited, began circling too high up. The feathers were still floating down around me but I couldn't see the bird and when Buzz arrived

the retriever. He tried hard but just before he could have
come onto the bird, Shadow located it. In a moment I thought Rufus
was going to take it from him the way he used to do, but Shadow
is a new boy and he made the retrieval very firmly on
his own. I tried to get him to sit to deliver but he got rattled
and lay down, putting the bird on the ground. It was a big cock,
hard hit but still in the reflex throes of death — a beautiful bird.



I am far from consistent in my shooting, but
I really believe that the most important factor
in it is the focussing on the target — what I
used to call waiting that split-second. With
the eyes glued to the bird and never leaving it,
the gun comes up and either goes thru the
bird, or a lead ahead, or travels "right on it"

whichever of the three general types of shot it may be. If I can only
remember that focus before mounting, I know my shooting will be improved.

We moved around the hill and into excellent grapevine tangles and
more two were in there without following. Crossing the power line
I hunted further around the hill above Ringers' and up the hollow
of the tributary Charles calls "Rock Run" moving a bird from Rufus
that yoomed low down the slope in front of me — too near leading

Thursday 19 November: ^{Tram} Ray and I took Puff & Feathers to the
Homer Miller county, parking at the corner. It was a lovely
day, about 50°; clear and good hunting weather. We passed up
the briery corner and worked along the tram toward Dick, but turned
up the mountain at the first little spring run. Normally we find
birds here. Today we didn't, tho we had heard one go out wild on our
way up the path from the car. Finally, I saw a flash of motion well
out ahead and counted it #2 but never refleshed it. We got all
the way to the Lake Run basin with no further birds made, and
instead of immediately working into the country on the far side of
the headwaters, I turned us left to cover the old fields around the
deserted farm. At the far edge I heard a grouse flush, piping,
and feeling it might still be sitting tight in a tree, I went over. At
the brink of a hollow - a rocky ledge - we saw #4 flush to
the left, too far out to shoot. We followed this bird, taking the
lip of the hollow back down the mountain and after giving up,
started to cut into the little valley to explore. Both dogs had
supposedly "worked" the area but I almost slipped on the grass,
lying beautifully tight for any dog disposed to point. I fired a
two-quick try at him as he dodged away behind a sapling - for
a moment that he fell, then he was up on the rocks and disappeared.

Missing a nest never makes you generous and I began a slow burn at my two bird dogs, who could have run over a tight-lying bird like that one.



We followed, keeping below and parallel to the rock ledge. Finally, up where Feathers was working we saw the bird - or another one - flush and go back up the mountain. It looked like another bumped bird. Then to the right a piece Ruff walked into 2 wood.

We kept after these two and got another

flush, by Feathers, on one of them. I saw him hit the nest, wheel into it and the bird went out. When he is going to learn what it's all about, I don't know. In his fifth season under the gun he moves beautifully, retrieves well, but is utterly block-headed about pointing, with less instinct now than he showed in his second season. Now too happy about either dog's work, I decided to stop for lunch. After all, we're going to be dead an awfully long time, and this is an afternoon in the grouse woods. No point in sporting it. After lunch on the bank of the hollow, we crossed into it and, striking very briery going, made for an old clearing at the head. There from some peculiar vantage they were always here - a grouse flushed ahead of Ruff and bored up the mountain. We followed, heard him go out again, and kept after him, coming into an old path along a fence at the

edge of the woods and a narrow cleared area with more woods above. This was new ~~country~~ ^{country} to me and we hunted up the lease to the left, toward a saddle of the mountain with a cleared field. Standing just short of the field in a brushy corner I began to speak to Kay when a grouse - possibly our bird - flushed from a tangle to my right and cut across the open field toward the woods - a quartering - crossing first to the left with some thickset hedge between. I came to and swung past, giving them a lead - saw the bird flush a second but continued. I held ahead and fired again but didn't stop him - a miserable performance.



The farm above is the Clint Matheny place and now that he is dead, is not lived in.

We took time to walk to the head of the saddle and see the magnificent view of the Cranewille area spread out in front of us. Kay took mair's gun then doubling into the hummocks and the corner woods we failed to near a find the Grouse. Finally, ahead of where I expected him, the dogs put him out - a large flock that climbed way above the trees and pitched for the valley of Shubby hole. It was late, toward 5:30 and we were nearly at the far end of the Breeries and certainly on top of them - I seemed like the top of the world. We had miles of grouse

even to hunt in but no time to do it, for we were a long way from the
 car. Hitting an old road, I took it as the most direct way out, feeling
 it would strike the main road up from over to Hoffmans. After
 some distance along it, I felt we were going further from the car each
 moment and so we plunged off the road and down the mountain
 following a deer path. No sooner had we left the road than
 two grouse flushed from it, but when we would have walked into
 them we'd gone on. Everything was working out that way today - and
 none of the birds were coming my way. We dropped lower and lower into
 the basin and came upon an old mound site with a pile of sandstone that
 had once been the hemlocks in the last lumber swamp. We found a
 dry road across the head of Peck's Run and moving east, for it was
 getting darker as the sun sank, we heard a loud flush and I saw it
 pitch into the sunset sky. It was our direction, so we left the path and
 walked into two more. Pursuing the general flight of the birds we moved
 across country that must have been above the Smith place but we weren't
 in sight of any rocks. We got a couple of more flushes - all the dogs
 seemed capable of - and I kept headed after one that went the
 right direction. Finally in a woods larger than the brushy cover we'd
 been in, a grouse flushed from in front of me and bore out low away.
 He was headed toward Feathers and I could not shoot but waiting until
 he gained altitude, I held my rifle a moment and fired and had him

drop a few feet in front of feathers, was. The bird was wing-broken and



I heard it flutter on the ground as feathers closed in, catching it and retrieving it without a single tailfeather



It was a cock and after we found the feathers -

all 18 of them - I decided it was an adult. Since

we had been following the bird, I think, for several flashes I felt we were not pulling one from this immediate coat so resolved to try for any opportunities I might get no matter how poor. In a hundred and fifty yards or more I heard the dogs put out a bird, and as I saw it go for the skyline, heard and saw a second heading to the right and a third which climbed and came across in front of me, high and crossing left. I swung three times and a head and bird and saw the bird tumble.



Both dogs came dashing in at the shot with

with an amerring sense of feathers outdistancing Rufus when the bird lay fluttering. I did an unethical thing but I wanted Rufus to find that grouse. Calling feathers, I held him till he got to us to take him from me. Then while she struggled with a determined setter, I sent Rufus to find the bird which had ceased fluttering in the leaves ahead of us. Rufus soon hit the scent and went in on the beam, grasping the grouse. Once he had the stag, Rufus made the most of it, prolonging the

Tuesday 20 November: Cloudy, warmer, with bad weather promised but
the snow didn't come. I took Shadow & Wilke to
the ~~Luddy~~ Cover above Clifton, and let me make a note now to
scratch it off the list. Whether it is a junco or just a crow, I
can't say but it is definitely stale. Heard 1 quail for 2 flaps and
saw neither. After an hour, with twenty minutes out for lunch to wait
for Wilke to find us, which she didn't. I drove out the flat and
located her, then left with the feeling I had at least seen a
lovely view of Sandy Creek valley. Parking at the old school house
site, I started my two dogs into the woods. Down along the stream and
they promptly hunted a big quail that must have lain until they
stepped on it. Followed him to the bank above where we made a
lead that could have been the same - Wilke bumped it. Covered the
woods on top and then dropped into the left fork of the stream where
I used to find birds back of Wolf's. Now today until I hunted up the
valley to a branch toward the middle of land above the road that
climbs the hill. There I heard one go out from the edge of a field and
later saw Wilke push another one out - no's no damaged good -
that deliberately climbed, lured off and hatched clear into the
next valley. I hunted all the way to the far stream, climbed a
near-vertical cliff and still didn't find it. Crossing the flats toward
Wolf's, a bird flushed from me off the edge. That was sunny. At last
I reached the run behind Wolf's, hunted down it and nearly to the

ear before we made the by on again - we climbed like a rocket and took the stratosphere route out. Snow time again near the car. My dogs might as well be forehands for all the shooting they offer me over points this year.

2:00-6:00 (4) No shots
mailed 1-2 fluties (Cornelly) Wilds: } nothing
mailed 5-8 fluties (schoolhouse corn) Meadows: }

Friday 23 November: I missed Wednesday (rain and high wind) and Thanksgiving (bitter cold and snow flurries all day). Today began with even denser snow and colder - around 20 - and I waited it out doing odd chores like letters. But about 4:00 the blue sky began to show thru and, eating a hurried lunch, I decided to take Feathers for a late evening hunt back along the creek. Dressing warmly, for the thermometer was dropping, I drove back to the bridge on little Gandy and started Feathers up the south side on Spiker. There was about 3 inches of snow and it clung to the hemlocks ~~but~~ ^{which} reached for me as I passed under, but while I walked the path, Feathers took the cover apart, quartering both sides beautifully. We made nothing all the way to the little run where I killed my first West Virginia quail over young Blue back in 1939. This cover has changed a lot since then - the big hemlocks gone, but the cut-over woods has grown back to perfect quail cover - grasses, medium hemlocks and hardwood saplings and logs. Just as I passed the old gap where the bars used to be, I heard a quail ^{flown} muffled by the

clinging now and my ear flaps at half-mast, and saw an incoming
quarrying low from the thro. on the left. As it reached the path
it rose acutely and I mounted and fired as I went up thru it. At
the shot the bird was buried in the hemlock boughs and I lost sight of it.
Whether it intended to go on or was heading for the hemlock in
front of me, I'll never know but for a moment after I shot I thought it
had taken the tree. Then something tumbled down out of the green
branches and the quon struck the ground and lay fluttering in the
snow, a few clipped-off hemlock branches beside it.



Feathers came in, too close on the flushing
bird for good manners, and fool, uncertain if
I had connected. I ordered him toward the

bird with a wave of the hand and he had it, retrieving nicely. The
last two have been retained and held till I've taken them. It was
a yearling hen, had hit about the legs - showing that a bit more lead
would be in order.

Rather than hunt further in this best cover I climbed steeply up
the ridge, crossed the power line and stopped for a view of some of the
most beautiful winter landscapes in this country. Upstream, folded in
between shoulders of low ridges I could see a distant snow-capped
knob - the Och Frankhauser farm, much prettier than its owner.
Below me the black, cold waters of the stream flowing between snow
covered boulders. Back to the left and downstream the green pine
shoulder above the old Penrod house.

Faulkenstein's and Low Nicker and faraway the incredible blue of Chestnut Ridge. Righting straight up the power line right-of-way that swooped from my feet down across Little Sandy and up over the hills I could see the tiny version of the big trees along our own line and Torquers and sense our own five thousand white pines and hemlocks. This is beautiful country and I can't know why any person in their right mind would ever sit indoors and miss it just because it seemed cold and snowy out.

I hid Feathers on and he was off again, flashing among the hemlocks and snow like a tan ghost, everywhere at once. Not far along there was a flush - its hard to locate them, snow-muffled and with ears only half-uncovered - and I saw a big grouse take the tops of the trees and head out the ridge. Its too bad Feathers can't hold them when he hits scent for he has everything else in abundance. We heard a second bird, also out the ridge and I headed for the upper brink that drops to Beaver, sure I'd make both of them. I made a complete circle around the good cover below the rocks and not until I was walking the log road back to the top did I hear a grouse - a new one, #4, I am sure, flapping from the - a mere sound. On top, I had nearly completed the circle to my own tracks when Feathers put out a big grouse that got a you to go to Beaver. It had been to get and let us

up the mountain side parallel to Reckert's Run. Meadows mowed
 a grouse that I only gawped at from his and Puff's antics. Puff
 was his nose to the ground to much with tracks in the snow, but
 there is not much I can do about it but urge him on. He moved
 fairly well today without too much checking back. At the time
 we turned left and hunted the basin beyond the Run with no
 results till we'd doubled about the trail and were hunting the
 ridge back to Reckert's Run. There #2 - a long time in coming - flushed
 to the side of our path and cut back beyond Kay. We didn't have
 time to follow that direction. We had a good point by Puff backed
 by Meadows near the bro. along the stream but it proved empty.
 No grouse in the corner below the cabin and we stopped in the
 sunshine on the flat above to eat, leaning against trees for lack
 of dry seats. After lunch - around 4:30 - we began the trek
 back along the mountain, pushing thru terrific rock terrain hidden
 under snow but it should have been with the effort in grouse mowed. We
 didn't see a feather. Back on the trail we hunted it out to the main
 road with two flushes below the trail that neither dog even
 heard. And yet we got some more excellent looking points by Puff and
 backed by Meadows. Finally we plunged down the ridge for the last
 push to the bottom, only to get mired in fallen timber - probably from

up the mountain side parallel to Reckert's Run. Meadows moved
 a grouse that I only glimpsed at from his and Puff's activity. Puff
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the blow of 1945 and in ~~the~~ George Bird Evans Papers
 West Virginia and Regional History Center

Tuesday 27 November: Snowy roads covered with another inch of snow in the night made it impossible for me to get up the first rise on the forest Snow road above our house so I backed down and drove out to the hardtop and parked under the power line above Earl Nicdao. There is a coon that almost always sees me once during the snowy part of the season and each time I say will be the last. But I come back. I left today at home with Mother and I had Ruff & Feathers - after a lay-off yesterday due to rough weather. Today we traveled out the woods to the end and dropped fifty yards to hunt back. Ruff was working some grass tracks and tho I called him he stopped, then moved in a few steps and the bird flushed - a rather indifferent production - but they're hard come - by this season. As Ruff's bird cut down the slope a second grouse flushed above us and followed the woods back the ridge toward the power line. Preferring that direction to hunt, I followed it. at about the logical distance to expect him I came on a nice big clump of rho. Ruff was near me, not working at all enough, and Feathers came in from his very nice casts he'd been making and worked into the rho. mass. Whether he stopped at all or bumped the bird I can't say for he was hidden from sight but after he had

to cross and so followed the path thru some of the goldammeret
 briars I've been in - black - rasp - and greenbrier - berries
 that tore the living skin off you when you tried to push them,
 either on the path or off. Ruffed Grouse, were gold - backing
 outrageously, keeping to the path and nursing all kinds of cows
 and finally I had to chew them out and demand some
 pride in performance. Just then two grouse flushed from beside
 the path about when I would have been had I kept on walking.
 On second thought, the dogs would probably have flushed them
 first, since they were using the path ahead of me so I didn't
 lose much. The first bird went upstream, the second crossed and
 began to climb for the hill. It was well out and I pushed my
 bone - numb cold finger in its clumby big glove in part of the
 rear trigger and this I held ahead of time with the left barrel,
 but missed. The trouble was I didn't swing thru time and the lead.
 I climbed the ridge thru hell's own briars and lacerated myself
 for a good twenty minutes - then got
 up and working up the creek, found a crossing.
 Eastern Crows leaning against a tree with two chiselers who
 had the nerve to sit and expect shares after their
 sloppy work, I started down the



climbed the ridge to my left to cover the good woods I remembered
 on top. I came on Ruff in a beautiful point in the open briery
 however time right-of-way but it proved empty. Nothing happened on top
 till we reached the peak, when I came on Ruff in a crouched-up
 position, very tense and afraid to move. As I walked up, a bird
 flushed to the left with no view of him but Ruff still held,
 anything but the picture of style but very hot. I had to double
 over to force them some catbirds to get closer and as I did
 so, a grouse tore out of a catbird's about me. I fired twice,
 more in reflex than design, but he went on. I hunted hard but
 never made either of these birds. That about did it and I
 started back for the car as we were to go to a concert at Morgantown
 tonight. Feather more 2 was in some sh. on the way back -
 without shots a points - Very sloppy work all the way around.

1:45 - 6:00 (4 1/4)

5 shots - no hits
 more 8 - 9 flushes

Ruff: 2 products
 Feathers:

Team
 Wednesday 28 November: Today was a beautiful day, warmer, sunny
 and nearly clear blue sky, clouding over with some cirrus clouds
 but fine for grouse hunting. The snow was softening and the birds
 were on a day like this. I got a bit upset due to Mother's upset
 but after calling Dr. Ingraham from Muller and calling back I

decided to go on to June Cochran's even tho it was late. I
boarded this side of Summers and started at 3:00 on time, using
young Woodhouse's job. He hunted hard and eagerly but is more
difficult to handle than Frattini, tho he is willing. No birds until
after I left June's when I went in and chatted for a few minutes.

I pushed up into the bush above the road beyond June's house -
far enough to see his drummer which he still sees and hears.
Tho it is wonder if it can be the same grouse after all these years. Some
day I must check my notes for first mention of it. This cover is too
rough to hunt freely and I soon headed down the hill on a path.

Coming to a set of fresh tracks and just Woodhouse in the right
direction and I reached the road, turning right to see if the tracks
had crossed below. In a cluster of crabapples I stepped up
the bank to look for the trail when a big bird flushed from a
branch of the crab over my head. For a moment he got tangled
in the tight twigs, fell back and as I waited for him to get

clear, flushed out to my left. I swung thru him and a
slight sense of lead and dropped him solidly. I had ordered
Woodhouse in just before the flush and it worked a good lesson for him.
He searched and soon found the grouse - very dead from a solid

above hit - and retrieved nicely. *thru a large adult oak*

and I ~~shuddered~~ a bit at the chance that I could be ~~just~~ driven.



A FALSE START.

After contemplating Meadows - and myself - I went back down the road and Meadows saw #2 flush from below and go for the bottom.

With no intention of shooting for a while I walked on the road to the first bend and flushed #3 wild about.

In ~~my~~ my ~~way~~ way along, I cut up into the

woods to get Meadows off the path. He hunts beautifully but as long as I'm on a fall quarter too shallowly on either side. Balancing on the snowy rocks and logs I approached some large boulders and a grouse flushed wild rising ^{acutely} and slightly left. It was somewhat distant but my instinct said "shoot" which I did as I went up there. I must not have whipped up smartly enough for the bird went on tho it did ~~fall~~ falter slightly and as it leveled and pitched over the hill I saw one leg definitely dangle - a bad sign. There's



nothing I regret more than to do that to a thing as noble as a grouse, for they're almost certain for meat. But



tho Meadows and I both hunted from before 4:00 to five o'clock back and forth covering that ridge segment in careful matters we never found a sign of the bird all the way to the bottom train. Facing the

ugly reality, we at last got up and hunted on out the road for the short bit of daylight remaining after we ate lunch without by gones lying on a stump, to look at. Again climbing above the road I saw something I had never seen before. With shadows quartering ahead and to the left I caught a movement in the snow to my right and saw a big cock moving out on the run - not a slink or walk - but a fast run, with head extended and with his ruffs at full flare like the pictures of birds drumming.

over

p 137 100%



AN OLD RUFF RUNNING AHEAD OF SHADOWS.

I circled around below hoping to find him before he flushed but as shadows worked on my I heard a flush and

saw a large grouse go up the mountain - surprisingly at right angles to the path of the runner. Then there was second take-off and the bird

I think I had seen running flushed on out the ridge toward the strip mine piles. Clearing the thicket to reach a path clear, I heard and saw a third bird go up the mountain after the first and I

considered following, but it was too late to get into that wilderness and I followed the big cock. As I walked along, marking the spoil pile of the strip workings. I sensed something regarding me calmly from the mang woods on my right and realized I was looking at, and was being looked at by, reaching for the big perfectly

still and kept her big soft eyes on ~~me~~ ^{me} - was with curiosity than with fear, and for a long moment neither of us moved. She was possibly twenty-five yards from me, and very dark against the snow.



I wondered if she would be wounded. My first impulse

was to move off and leave her undisturbed and I did, with her big eyes still on me. It was a very beautiful experience and I like to think at least I don't leave anything like she is in the woods with a torn-up leg. Then, still curious as to whether she was not wounded and also from some sense that it wasn't fair to leave her with the impression that man was her friend, I went back and as she watched me, I made a sudden ^{waving} motion with my arm. In an instant she was up and gone, her big flag white and erect as she disappeared - much larger than I had thought her to be. Next week she'll probably go out on someone's car fender to be dragged around a town.

While I was having my little idyll with the dog, Shadow had located two more grouse at the edge of the spoil pile and one of them cut down over my path when I would have had a nice try had I not hurried. Later we moved the cork runner - again out wild ahead - and one of the best pairs out of a tree.

short road tying the town and the upper road and from some hounds
flushed two nights, taking a try at the first that were should have been
and missed as he cut back and down to Perry Creek. No more flushes
all the way back. Was 6:30 when I left Jim's house after meeting
him again and 6:50 and dark when I reached the car, very tired.

~~3~~ = 3 shots - 1 hit
I reached the car, very tired.

3:00 - 6:50 (4 hrs) 3 shots - 1 hit
missed 12 - (4 ^{new} / 14) flushes
Shadows: 1 retriever
1 kill

adult corks: broken collar, wide 14 1/2" fur
crop: greenbein berries



Friday 30 November: Yesterday, bad weather and a trip to town. Today

the temperature was low, with partly cloudy skies and snow on the ground. After last night's stickance on the Brandanville hill I made use of the chains installed to drive to the Houndskill court, taking Feathers solo. We flushed #1 almost as soon as I entered the woods and tho I could not get enough of a look to shoot, the bird did a side-slip just about the time a shot would have been fired, giving a perfect picture of a hit. Probably dodging a tree. Hunting out the road that crosses the power line I was surprised not to make ^{any} the large number of birds found earlier, tho Feathers covered the ground and quartered beautifully. I decided, after a good distance along, to double back about the road and ~~had~~ stopped a few yards off it when a noise flushed from some top to my left, rising suddenly.

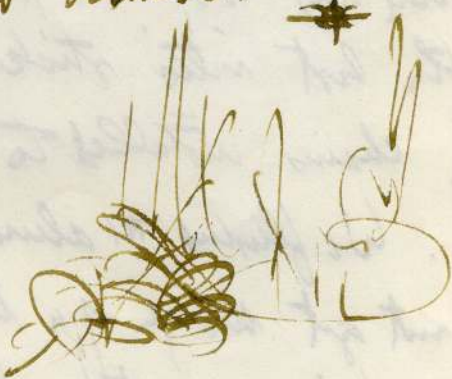
I deliberately held off a moment for a better focus, then mounted and fired going thru the bird but must not have swung fast enough for the pattern seemed to catch it low. It faltered and for a second I thought it was coming down, climbed, faltered again then leveled off and bored out the ridge. I am getting fed up with crippling these birds and if it doesn't stop, I feel like giving up shooting. I was sure the grouse would be found dead or unable to rise but tho we hunted carefully along the line of flight with Feathers diligently covering wide swaths, we did not find our bird. Moving higher for a cast back I heard a grouse flush



up the hill when I called to Feathers. Only a fifty yards further back I saw Feathers slow and stiffer on a point, a very solid stylized point that I could tell was business.



FEATHERS PINS ONE.



Udder's Puff, when he hits them he usually loses one and I find it wise to order "Ray", which I did, walking around below and certain he'd found the cripple. Feathers that so too, and as the bird went out lunged in just but I saw and it was a winged bird. It went

straight and fast in a rising going away shot and as it showed itself well out I held on it and fired - and saw it drop. Feather did not need my command to go fetch. He had it in a matter of moments and, stopping to shake himself and, I feared, the tailfeathers from the grouse, he made a prompt retriever. It was a big cock - a very high percentage of them this year - with part of its tail missing due to capture proceedings. Feather was so overstimulated that I had a long bit of calling to get him to congratulate him in his very beautiful job. It was nice a point as I will we ask to see, and of he was steady to wing - well, neither and.

Reverting to the first bird shot at, and I wonder if this could have been it, unlamented after all except for shot thru the tail fan - when I missed that bird a big gray squirrel ran out at the shot from the very spot the grouse had left - moving suggestively. Feather, looking for a crippled bird was sure the running squirrel was the grouse and nearly outtook it for my yell. The squirrel did a bad job of it and just made a tree trunk in time and even then Feather's guns nipped the tips of its tail hairs. As Feather came to me on command, the stupid squirrel returned to the ground and hopped off very slowly, if not leisurely.

After our point and kill, we moved out of that event and started the head of Capps Run hunting good ~~shots~~ ^{shots}. I saw ~~some~~ ^{some} footprints on the

dogs as we approached the tram road section. The next birds
 were a pair below the tram road rocks, one flushing back the
 ridge toward Buffman's, the other went on the big rocks. Following
 down the little spring run before going after one of the birds. I
 put out #4 from some rho. Now with three birds in the general
 area to the south I swung the dogs that way. After some piece
 I heard a flush and became aware of a grouse, an incomer from
 Feathers above me, coming my way. I turned and took it as a
 left crosser, missed, and tried it as a left quartering shot
 and missed again. Why, I don't know. I followed this bird, a reflex I
 count it, all the way down to the

~~the~~

the

lower path, where

I found my own tracks and realized to my surprise how far I'd come.
 Again I worked back the ridge to the tram road and this time
 hurried out to the south rocks for it was getting late. Having been
 the woods on a day like this is heavy going with snow to be wiped
 off the gun barrels every fifty yards - not to mention what stuck
 to my pants legs and went down my neck. At the tram road in the
 south rocks we had made nothing but I picked my way on up the
 slope thru quambrier and rocks with the dogs working industriously ahead.

Suddenly a grouse flushed a couple of yards to my right and quartered left
 about head high. I focused on him and fired quickly, dropping him
 solidly in a shower of feathers not twelve yards away. Puff was
 there first, very close, and I heard the return before feathers

could arrive and steal the show, which he nearly did. But Ruff had hit the scent and had the bird just as Feathers made the act, and from then on the show was Ruff's and he hauled it up for a good two or three minutes, finally bringing it to me over snowy rocks and delivering it to hand; tho' he didn't settle his derriere too far into the snow.



A RETRIEVE IN SNOW

It was a hen, perhaps a yearling, very hard hit with a feel of no bones left. Feathers came in to sniff the bird but got goaled at for his trouble.

I cleared a spot on a boulder and lay the grouse there while we ate

lunch - at 5:00 p.m. It was quite cold and snowing again when we turned back and taking the tram road, hunted to the tram road rocks again. I sent Ruff below the path and he shortly bumped a grouse almost where we'd made the two earlier today. It headed for Richard's Run and I followed, keeping below the tram to cover the thicket where the bird seemed to be lying. I was wearing heavy gloves, none too adaptable for trigger work and when a bird exploded a few yards from me, where both dog had passed it, as well as myself, I missed as it climbed scately almost an away shot. Almost half the charge hit a sapling at a diameter of 2 inches and I could see

where some of that shot had splashed into a nearby tree at a much greater diameter - showing the danger of shooting in the ^{general} direction of a companion even remotely near. Not thirty yards further along

another quail flushed under identical conditions in the same relative position. They were lying wonderfully tight and the dogs would have had a chance for points at close range but seemed to get no scent, tho they got plenty from tracks in the mass.



TWO NEARLY IDENTICAL FLUSHES.



I wanted for a better look at this bird, got it as he came out from behind trees, then proceeded to miss. I'm sure I was off my timing on this one.

Both birds went toward Richert Run - making three out there now with the last one showing signs of feeling the pattern as he bucked off. There was still country to wear them in before I reached the sho. along the Run and we did flush one of the birds - again an acute rise that climbed the trees and bore for far places, too distant to try for.

I missed no other birds, tho I came onto tracks that I am sure were not mine. It was 6:00 and I had to head down the mountain - a rather barren piece of cover. I was wet to the crotch thru both hunting pants I had on and at the station, where I had time to change into dry trousers and my rod & gun shoes and my Navy raincoat - then had hot coffee and headed for home -

still glad to have the chains on for the snowy roads. This was a fair days work for the conditions, both dogs hunted well, but I did some horrible shooting. Still, a grouse makes it a day no matter how many empty shells you leave behind.

2:45-6:15 (3 1/2)

5 shots - 1 hit Puff: 1 retriever
missed 8 - (no new) flushes 1 kill

adult (if the pinna test is accurate)

Feathers: 1 full
hen: broken, no collar, narrow

crop: empty

The hens have that characteristic red stain at the throat and breast, that shows especially in the snow.

Monday 10 December: After a week of deer season (with some of the prettiest weather possible) we resumed the grouse shooting with a dose of snow on the ground. However the weather behaved beautifully and cleared as the day progressed. Rather than travel to any far coast, Kay & I took Puff & Shadow to the Valley Point country, hunting up toward the strip mine scar. The first grouse flushed from the logs out of rocks on the far side of the first hollow, coming at us and making a shot impossible. Puff worked into the second bird higher on the ridge and I tried for it as it crossed an opening ahead of me but I missed. The bird had taken off in a low, dodging manner so that it wasn't in full flight till it hit the opening and I did not swing thru it fast enough - like a slow Whorl take-off.



Instead of following either of these, we worked up to the strip spoil pile and covered all the bass area thru the first woods. Crossing the old roadway from the diggings where last season I made a rather nice right crosser, we entered the woods on the far side, with neither Ruff or Meadows doing very well at all. As I stepped into the cover ahead of Kay, a grouse flushed from the edge above me and, stooping, I turned and tried for a going-away shot thru the thicket and saw the bird tumble hard. Ruff made the find and retrieved the grouse from the bottom of the shale bank - a very large cock with an old shot wound in one foot, perhaps some of my sloppy gun work in the past. At any rate, this had been a nice shot and did a lot to relax me after some inferior dog work by Ruff who does not respond to overhanding.

We moved around the ridge, crossing the strip near and circled the old Forquer place, which we found terribly cut-off on the margin of the ridge. Working all the way up to the far end where I have in past days found lots of birds, we made nothing and entered some excellent grouse cover beyond, stopping to eat lunch. In spite of the good looks of the place we found no birds, and fought our way thru hellish blackberries (how can they taste so good?) to the top when we began a circle back toward the car. In some open woods I found large grouse tracks and since the dogs had shown no sign of game, called them back and had them work the area ahead of the tracks. They still got nothing but got scared from the pine trees, but

suddenly a bird flushed within twenty yards and made a lachry
rising, straight-away flight - which I missed both barrels. I



realize I probably missed instead of passing
first and then holding and going thru as I
fired. To do it instructively you have to be in
the grove and not tied in knots with your dog.

That's to admit it, but Ruff has taken away a lot of hunting pleasure the
days I've had him out due to his annoying stopping to look back. He
could hunt beautifully still, in spite of incapacity. I don't ask that
he ever do, merely that he go ahead and hunt birds instead of me.
We moved another grove on the way back without a shot or look at him.
Had a nice point from shadows near an original flush that looked good.

I stopped Ruff at command to look, but unfortunately the bird was not there.
Probably, just gone.

4 shots - 1 hit
Ruff: 1, retriever
1, kill
2:00 - 5:45 (3 3/4) made 5 - 5 flushes. Shadows: 1 kill

adult cock: broken, collar, with .15" fan (2nd this season)
crop: empty

Tuesday 11 December: Today was overcast with showers promised. I took
feathers alone and drove to the Mountaindale area of Brown Creek,
and after all my long ride, thru intermittent sprinkles, came to the
creek and found a car parked there. I decided to hunt up the right
side of the creek anyway but had gone a short distance when I heard

beagles ahead of me and turned and hunted downstream a short piece. It was too thick to manipulate and the cover wasn't promising, so I circled back, intending to hunt on the upper slope of the valley above the ~~beagles~~ beagles, but when I approached the parked car, found a man in it. It turned out he wasn't hunting but was a local, looking for bucking wood to smoke meat. On his advice I pulled out to get a coat belonging to my friend Seymour Bodehawn. By this time the rain had set in so mean I gave up and headed for home.

But at Cuygart - once on the mountain the drizzle slowed and I dropped on the Cherry Run road to "Upper Beaver." It seemed like a good impulse when I stepped into the woods on the upper side of the road and walked into a gourd that Father must have nearly tramped on. I don't understand his lack of scent perception. The bird rose close and went up acutely. I did it right. I held off for a focus, swung then firing but he didn't drop. I tried the left barrel as he climbed on but shot under him. At this point Father came in and flushed a second gourd that went the same general direction. I did have the

satisfaction of seeing that my first pattern had been largely absorbed by a multiple ruffling and also saw a small feather float down, making me think it might well have been a hit had the bulk of the pattern got through. There was, however, no alibi at hand for the left-barrel miss and I made a "dry" swing to correct my mounting. It wasn't, to my surprise, a bit dry at



threw the gun up the right barrel discharged before it reached my
 shoulder, giving me a jab in the chule. I can't get ~~decide~~ after
 safety had been pushed ^{off} by my mounting action - it must
 have been - but there was ~~no~~ ^{no} reason for the discharged shell for
 I had not pressed the trigger unless with the lightest touch. It was a
 little disconcerting but I had reloaded in a state of bewildered business
 and couldn't check the position of the safety. I shrugged the thing out
 of my mind but with a mental reprimand not to do such a thing again
 and climbed the ridge after the first bird. On top, about where I
 expected to find him - and within thirty yards of where I shot my
 last bird of the season over young Ruffo's point at 8 months plus - I
 came on Feathers in a lovely point at a ^{very} ~~very~~ who. clump. Feathers is
 not a high-headed, high-tailed dog or point. Instead he is, which very
 intense, a stretched-out bundle of tight muscle - like a straight-
 stocked ^{trap} ~~shot~~ gun - all one line.

When you see him like that, it's business.

I knew better than to mark my behind
 him with almost 300 degrees of

opening for the nose to go out, so I began a large circling action
 to come in from above, while Feathers held like a rock. This sort of
 thing is a luxury to me this year ^{not having had many chances to}



FEATHERS HAS ONE.

shoot one point, and I was keenly excited. But he must have
 heard the quess start out, for he moved in and the bird went out
 the right side - which was the wrong side for me. I marked his
 direction and we followed, crossing large open woods across the road
 that leads to John Kelly's. On one crest, I heard, ^{and saw} a tree crack
 and crash to the ground down in the hollow - a medium sized
 chestnut. I listened for sounds of a saw or ax, thinking it must
 be Kelly but there was no one there. It created an odd impression,
 for there was no wind at the time - just the big open stand of woods,
 Feathers, the silence after the sound, and me. ~~It~~ reminds me of the
 old gag about is there a sound if there is no one to hear it. This
 adds an element of a fallen tree. We doubled back and Feathers
 piled up into a high-sided point that I walked into fully expecting
 the quess. It was a rabbit and I had to call Feathers in and
 saddle him. I moved the #2 quess from some rocks in a little draw, followed
 and moved him from the brow of the hill again and saw him go down
 over the road beyond the station wagon. I hunted ~~the~~
 the Ezra Kelly land and saw a big quess flush as I walked up the
 middle of the public road. As it rose acutely I mounted the gun and
 fired really without reason, for the bird was turning as I did so.
 Following down onto the Ezra Kelly bottom I saw Feathers on another rise

solid point but he ran in before I could approach and from his
actions I'm sure he had a bird that had flushed as he drove. Later he
bumped another that crossed the path too far out to shoot, and with the
dog too close behind - another good chance he spoiled. We moved
one of these birds out of a tree in the hemlocks. This was where we ate lunch.
Afterwards I covered that area well, back to the road, and both sides of the
hollow on the other side of the public road, working up and around the head
of the hollow. Back to Beaver, it was getting dark enough to quit, but
I doubled back into the first cover, just to see if either of the two birds
might have bled back in. Feathers was on the edge and I was further in
the woods, when I heard a bird flush, piping and saw him go up in
a tree. I waited for a chance coming over me but he didn't move, so
I had to approach and he bled out over the main road and into the creek
bottom. As he did so, another bird followed him from a rho. clump. I
can't tell whether these are the original two or not, but it made 11 flushes.
It was about six and very gloomy dark but I had to follow these two,
working all the way upstream for a grass flight on the right of Beaver,
crossing and working back downstream. At a fine looking corner where
I remember finding birds with ad Blue, Feathers made a point but from
his actions I think it was a rabbit - certainly not a grouse. I gave
up and, reaching the road, crossed

toward the car, ordering feathers to heel. Suddenly he made a
 leap away from me toward the far side of the road, and I heard
 a quail take off. There was an explosion of sound within yards of
 my back and I wheeled to hear another go out of a small hemlock
 at the roadside. Then a quail (and I think it was the other bird
 having flushed to a tree) rose out of a high tree and I saw him against
 the fading light of the sky and I knew it was my chance. I
 swung the gun up to go past him ⁱⁿ a high right-crosser, and
 the damned right barrel went off before I had it well seated
 and before I could even start a swing. I made a feeble try with the
 left as he sailed off but the incident had me unnerved and of course
 I missed. Now I'm sure the rather unconvincing shot at the
 record bird today was another premature discharge. Now I'm faced
 with the problem of what's wrong - I think it
 is a worn trigger ^{trigger} that needs adjustment &
 a heavier pull.



A FINE CHANCE AGAINST THE SKY.

I refuse to count the first of the last shots against my record. And at least two of these
 last must have been new birds.

3:00-6:30 (3 1/2)

4 shots - no hits

made 6-13 flocks

Feathers: 2 productives

Bernie Gribble - my deus ex machina - solved and corrected the
gun problem very beautifully. ^{The right.} ~~The~~ trigger rear worn so that the
pull was 50 to 60 oz. By careful honing he increased the pull to around
88 oz or 5½ lb which is a nice crisp, but not too heavy, pull. The
left barrel trigger remains at about 6½ or 7 lb. Thank God for Bernie.

Saturday 15 December: The first nice day to hunt in a long time,
mild, damp, with periods of sunshine. I took Ruff & Shadows to the
Homer Miller country, parking at the corner and planning to hunt the
clint Matheny cove. But the fine weather had put ideas in a lot
of heads. I found a hunter's car parked part way up the old trail and
ran across the wife sitting with a .410 across her lap at the tram road.
I heard hounds running and she said her husband was up the
ridge above - which was almost, but not quite, where I wanted to go.
I moved left into the queerer corner and began to work
up the mountain, in reverse order to the last time Ray & I had
been here and found so many birds. Shadows bumped a grouse
that went out the tramroad toward Smith's, but I had other places
to cover. Just as I reached the sho. and rocks I heard a
shot exactly where I was heading and after reconsidering I turned
back and made for the regular tram road below Smith's, postponing
the upper country for another day. Grouse #2 showed itself in a
left-crossing flight from Shadows. ^{who came barreling after it but}

it was no shot. I did double back in an effort to move it from the
 cover below the train where I felt it had landed but either it hadn't or
 had reflushed before I reached the place. Back on the train I moved
 out to the cord with the rocks where I had flushed the grouse in
 the snow last day out. Just before I reached it I saw Shadows
 stiffen, headed up the slope, made a few yards and froze. It looked
 wonderful and as I circled to come in along him I stopped Ruff at
 command and the two of them were solid. Several more steps and the
 grouse exploded a yard or so from Shadows' nose, a low away to the right
 shot. I glided to him, mounted and fired, seeing him fold in a puff
 of feathers that floated like a magnified shot pattern, back toward
 Shadows. It was his bird and I ordered him to retrieve. It took him
 about twenty seconds to do it. He did lay the grouse on the ground
 instead of delivering it to hand but it was likely because Ruff was beside me.



6149
 70%

A FIRST KILL OVER
 SHADOWS' POINT,

Leaving that area, we moved up to the higher path and hunkered about it
to the Reckert place. I found a dead buck someone had lost last
week, already partly eaten by vermin. Surprisingly, there was no
one at the cabin on the Reckert place tho I heard shooting toward
the Muddy Creek country, and lots of shooting in the lowlands. A fine
day brings them out, especially after bad weather. Rather than
hunt into anyone's path I kept above Reckerts and headed for the
glades near the headwaters of Reckert's Run where Kay & I crossed on our
way down the mountain, but I had only got started when I
heard shooting up there - two guns, and was shooting above the
Smith pass. All I could do was sandwich somewhere in between.
I found myself shooting the ledge of the Smith rocks - moving two
single on the way, and kept just above them. I hadn't realized
they formed a descent making a basin of very rough rho. and
brush. Above they are fringed with rho. and the woods is of medium
size. Suddenly a bird flushed ahead of me against the sun
and away from the dogs, cutting high and back over my left.
I turned and tried ~~to~~ as a high left-crosser, unable to
swing them ~~in~~ but swinging my barrels ahead and fired. ~~It~~
folded and came down with a thud, one of the few times I've heard
a bird strike the ground. I don't think it moved. I did my best to
get the retriever for Puff but Young Shadow was faster and I don't
dare risk spoiling him by ~~interfering~~ ~~the~~ ~~came~~ ~~in~~ ~~at~~ ~~all~~

throttle, over-ran the bird and wheeled on the far side of a log as he got the scent. He coiled back, shuddered to a spread-legged stop as he hit it again and had it. Once more he laid the grouse down before delivering it to hand, but again Ruff was there. Both birds were yearling hens and both were outright kills.



I came back to the car, morning

no more. It was a gratifying day, and I think the trigger pull is exactly right.

2 shots - 2 hits (over pt.)
mored 6 - 6 flushes
(no more)



SHADOWS ARRIVES

1:45 - 5:45 (4 hr.)

yearling hen; broken, no collar, narrow
exp: granular lenses

Shadows: 1 productive (kill over)
2 retriever
2 kills (over prod.)

yearling hen; broken, no collar, narrow Ruff: 2 kills
exp: empty 1 backpoint

Monday 17 December: Another lovely day - mild with sunshine, but cool enough for two shots, and damp enough underfoot to be ideal - the kind of weather you dream about for the December shooting, and rarely get. Ray stayed home to do Xmas chores and I took Feathers and Ruff to the high Beaver country, parking at the bridge below Mountaindale. I started up the left side of the hollow and ward

two grouse almost at once, as that Feather's must have stepped on. No
shots. The cover thickened so that it was impossible to break them along
the creek tho I suspect the birds were down there. Keeping along
the right slope we moved two more (by sound). Finally in a
ledge of rocks and hummocks and who. I heard a grouse flush and
was by Feather's actions that it had gone up over, and I followed,
hoping to reflush it. But the cover on top was dense hatching
and tho I circled widely we didn't contact the bird. Back
along the creek, I came to a lovely clearing that had been a
small, perfect spot for grouse but we missed none. I had come a
long distance and felt I was in the wrong place, so decided to
cross and hunt back downstream in the sunny far side. Wading
over beautiful crystal water that should certainly hold some
trout, with its white flinty bottom which should also mean grouse,
I came out on an opening that had a familiar look. I recognized
the place where, on my first trip to #4, I had flushed 3 birds over
Ruff's point, missed the first, dropped the second, and stepped into
the third. Today they weren't at home. Working to the main road, I
failed to find any grouse — all the greater berries seem to be
eaten up — so I hunted back thru the left margin cover along
the road. Within sight of the open fields where I had parked last

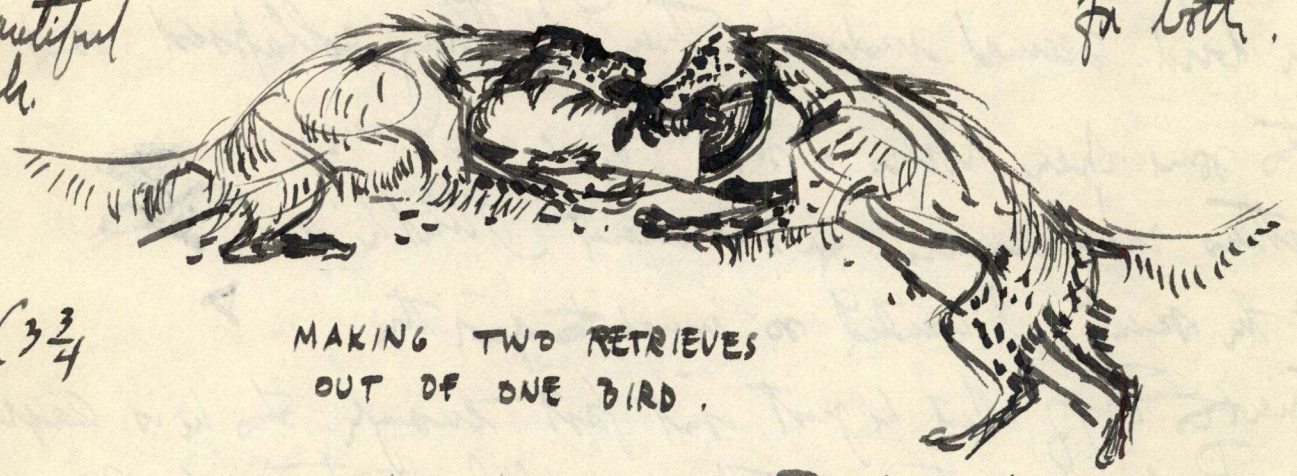
year, I angled down toward the creek a piece and came into an
 older stand of cove - record growth with rotting logs and brush
 heaps decayed. As I approached a small run with some
 tangled weeds I was aware of a gopher passing over my head -
 flushed from the logs - and I turned to take it as an overhead
 going-away. Like my last bird on Saturday, I was unable
 to swing them but I fired going thru a short lead. For a moment
 the bird seemed unhurt, then fluttering, collapsed and went down
 into some open rocks a short piece above me.

Feathers raced in and for a moment I thought he had
 hit the scent. I wanted so much to give the
 retrieval to Puff but he just isn't fast enough, tho he is eager. Passing
 me, Puff was staring with eyes bulging trying to find the bird with
 by sight and by nose. I ordered, "Feathers, go fetch, dead bird!"
 and for a moment it sent him beyond the gorse. As I worked Puff
 in closer by command, Feather circled back around the rock.
 Puff was just reaching the gorse, carefully searching the scent
 as Feather came skimming in. Just as Puff located it, Feather
 reached and for a moment I thought he had it away from Puff. But
 then I saw they both had it and neither intended to let go, I



could see my beautiful big cock with all its tailfeathers pulled out and I called, "No!" Ruff didn't relax a muscle and it was Feathers who let go — fortunately or the grouse would have been in two pieces. Ruff made the delivery, sitting, and this time held it very properly until I took it. Feathers really had made the find as well, and I tossed the grouse out and let him retrieve, which he too, did to hand. I promised to count of a retrieve for both.

It was a beautiful ginger cock.



2:15 - 6:00 (3 3/4)

MAKING TWO RETRIEVES
OUT OF ONE BIRD.

Adult cock: red bronze ✓
 1 shot - 1 hit
 moved 9-10 flushes
 Ruff: 1 retrieve
 1 kill
 Feathers: 1 retrieve
 1 kill
 crop: ^{solid collar, wide} ~~quaker~~ berries
 I moved another flush and 3 more birds and an extra flush after the shot.

Tuesday 18 December: Kay & I took the two buses to the forest but came on a car parked at my covert, so changed our plans and drove down the mountain to the tributary of Little Laurel that crosses the main road half-way down. After pushing thru the tangle of rhos, along the run we found the woods too large and open for grouse. (The post-deer season crop of reports of birds - mostly baggerals - bump out the habitats)

a short sorted, turned and headed for the station wagon. We had a late start to begin with but decided to try the Dwight Wilson country. We got out again about 4:00, hunting the steep brush hillsides downstream from Wilsons. At the top of the ridge a bird flushed from a tree above and behind me, a fast overhead away shot that I tried for but missed as it turned just at the shot.

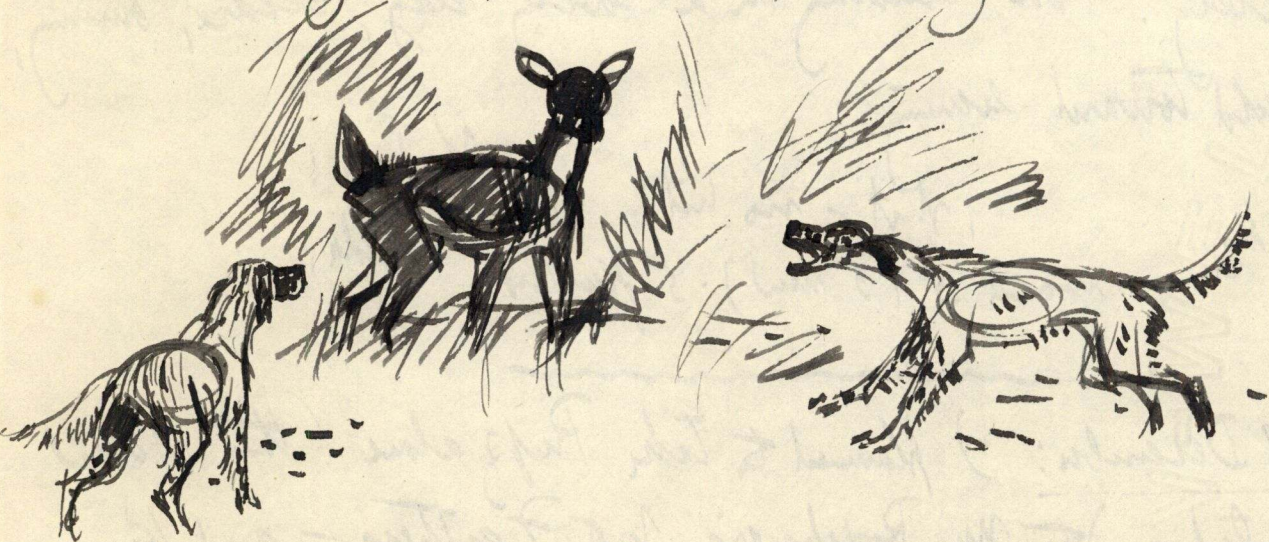


It along the upper margin of cover, so the first tributary hollow where Wilka put #2 out of dense cover along the run - it flushing into a tree and perching there invisibly as I walked around below, only to flush the other way when I left. We ate lunch at a better cold 3:00 p.m. near the little cabin below the old top charring. Later Wilka bumped #3 from the margin above. It was too late to go further and we hunted down the left side of the hollow to Laurel where two grouse flushed wild from me out of bushes below the path - crossing the valley. Poor hunting on a lovely day, clear, sunny, and better cold toward evening.

3:00 - 6:00 (3 hrs.)
 1 shot - no hit
 missed 5 (3 new) - 5 flushes
 Meadows:
 Wilka:

Wednesday 19 December: I planned to take Puff alone (that special day I've counted on) to Mr. Rodchauer's but Feathers - and Kay - worked on my emotions and I took Feathers along. It was a gorgeous day to be out - mostly clear sky, sunshine, but rather cool with a bit too much wind at times. With Feathers & Mr. Rodchauer at

the house, I cowered about the same country I had before, but this time the birds weren't there. Reaching the pines and mossy swamp when I shot my bird before, I cursed without results. Hearing feathers barcking, I told myself he had flushed a grouse into a tree, and pushed my way thru the tangle in the direction of his voice. I was a bit disconcerted to see both Puff and Fattens - and within seven feet of Puff a large and indignant looking doe. She had more the look of a llama with rather too short ears and tail - probably the effect of her heavy coat ~~which~~ ^{which} seemed to bristle as she stood her ground in front of Puff, who seemed to accept her about as he would have accepted a heifer. She made a move in his direction and I yelled at him, fearing she'd attack with those sharp ~~hoofs~~ hoofs. When Puff came to me she turned, ~~and~~ casually, and then leaped away into the thicket.



Shortly after this, as I moved down the run, which is the headwaters of the second run over from Rodehavers, we flushed three grouse from the dense thro. along the stream, but failed to

move any of these again. Doubling back into the wedge between the two runs, I hunted toward the point and, below some rocks came a Ruff pointing in an old log road. I stopped 7 feathers at command, but there was no grouse there. After moving on a number of yards, Ruff again pointed while 7 feathers circled well out ahead. This time it was productive - a lovely point ^{with big noisy, deliberate} - but the bird went away low and into the run, with only a glimpse of him between trees. It was good to have Ruff clicking.

I worked all the way over the second run and came to some nice sho. and humbuck cover, moving #5. Crossing the stream, which had increased in size here, I hunted up a log road on the far side and saw a big grouse flush from a tall tree, crossing back



RUFF PRODUCES.

over - a clear view but a shot I felt too distant to risk trying, even with the left barrel. Returning downstream, I hunted thru improductive cover almost to the intersection of the runs and within sight of some of the lower houses. This area is too much scrub-oak, no grapes at all and everything tied together with a tangle of cat briars that produces almost no berries at all. I ate lunch at 5:00 and

hunted back upstream. On the way, Ruff made one of the hottest points I've ever seen, immobile with his head turned back over his left shoulder. I stopped 7 feathers as he



barreled in, and Ruff didn't move an eyelash while I approached and walked in, certain I'd just had a bird. It must have just gone out before we got there for it was

very intense. Back at Rodchaw, I stopped to speak and then
drove the station wagon to the old field above Beaver, where I
made a quick half-hour circle of the flat and dropped to the
creek. I walked at ten after six and nearly dark, I called
but a grouse out of the tangle along the stream and, getting a
flash glimpse I took a quick try and missed as it crossed
Beaver. At the next a second bird went out. I don't know when.
Approaching the bridge, I recognized a familiar shape in one of the
trees - a grouse perched high, looking down at the two dogs. I
waited, hoping for a flash my direction but finally a different
bird flushed from the thicket below and both birds bore away on
the far side. I circled but didn't meet them.

1 shot - no hit

made 6-6 flushes at Rodchaw
(no new)

Puff: 1 productive

2:30-6:30 (4 hrs)

made 4-4 flushes at Beaver
no new

^{170 #39}
Friday 21 December: Today began misty and wet, but about 3:00
opened a bit and stopped drizzling. I took Puff & Shadows to the
Kott. Run covert, parking on the Coppers' Rocks road at the usual place.
Today there was no car ahead of me. It was warm but almost foggy.
When I started at 3:55 from the car, with every branch and
twig hanging with a necklace of water drops, that came misting and

dribbled down on me whenever I touched one. Dropping over into the big boulders and grapevine area where I failed to meet a bird earlier this year, today I found things different. Ruff was moving in a very limited range but young Shadows was reaching out pretty well, I thought, and so I was surprised when a grouse flushed wild below me, after both dogs had presumably covered the territory and moved on. Feeling there was a chance of a brace mate, I whistled Ruff back in and finally got him into the place the bird flushed from where he hit the scent and began unraveling the old foot trail, back-tracking down the slope in an ignoble manner. Shadows came bursting in and ran into #2 not three yards or so from where Ruff had passed it up. Both birds had pitched for the bottom and I left them for the return trip. Moving down the ridge toward the next shoulder, Ruff ran into #3. Beyond the ravine on the upper slope of the cover where I usually find game, Shadows bumped, and chased, #4, returned after his hasty retreat to camp, and chased #5 from the same spot. While I scolded him, Ruff ran into and bumped #6 from the path ahead of me where I would have had a lovely shot had he handled it properly. I asked to flog the speckles off both of them. I tried to locate the two shadows put out, when they had flushed along the top of the ridge but ~~the dog~~ ^{George Bird Evans Papers} found them the Ruff made a ~~red~~ ^{West Virginia and Regional History Center} point ~~at~~ ^{to} them.

It could have been a point of take-off. Coming down the far
shoulder I finally walked up a gourd below a boulder where
both dogs had been working. Of course, the bird didn't get me
a look at him for he had been casing the situation and
huddled it to perfection, flushing down the valley toward
the big rocks on the next point of land. It was after 5:00
but I followed and covered that shoulder with no results.
Coming back up the valley, on a lower level, I came into
a bird, #8 that flushed from me - neither dog having any
idea it existed. It was an acute rising shot but at last too
far out to risk. Later Puff pointed where it had been and
shadows made a nice point further on, but moved on, properly,
when nothing developed. Some yards ahead #9 flushed up the
valley. No look at him. #10 flushed from a high tree and
climbed the ridge. No shot. Finally we reached the lower
slope below where our first two quons had flushed and
shadows managed to bump one of the birds that had moved
back toward the original cover. The only indication they
showed that birds were around were the false points or foot scent.
Conditions should have been ideal, damp, quiet - what I think was
perfect. I could almost smell them myself. The one chance I
might have had was a #2 when shadows flushed it, but the

pattern would have sprinkled the dog — which I am not certain
wouldnt have been a good idea! Ruff bumped 2, Shadows 5,
and they missed all kinds of chances to point other birds.
While cleaning my gun I dropped the forend into my
stock and put a considerable dent in the stock. lovely day.

no shots
3:55-6:25 (3 1/2 moved 10 (all new) - 11 flushes
Ruff } no.
Shadows }

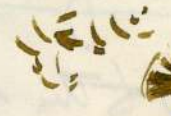
Taxon
Saturday 22 December: Waited for the usual daily showers to end
and then drove to June's, taking Ruff and — at the last moment —
Feathers who broke my heart with his act when I started to leave.
It was a mild day, nice and damp underfoot with some sunshine
breaking thru at times. I moved nothing all the way to June's, tho
unlike yesterday, today Ruff was working nicely. He began his stop-
and-wait act when he entered the woods. I called him to me, made
him sit and, taking his face in my hands, I said, "Ruff, today we'll
have none of that goddamned Foolishness." Then I sent him out,
using the dog whistle two-blast signal and he worked beautifully
most of the day. After a short conversation with June, I hunted on
out the ridge, all the way to the strip mine, then going further than
usual, I turned and came back along the tram road, not having
moved a feather — almost unheard-of in this territory. Finally at
the uphill link between the two roads, Feathers bumped a grouse
that Ruff would have made a mountain of, but it was Ruff

stiffened even after the bird had gone. Further on, I heard #2
go out. I followed but failed to make them, finally climbing to the
upper road and the animal set where, soon tho it was after five,
I pushed on up the ridge into the higher forest, where I stopped to
eat. The sun was almost down to the trees and I had some big
rough cover to look on the way back. Very soon after starting
back, feathers moved a grouse from what looks like good new
country to me (at least, it has been years since I've been in
here - a sort of flat shelf partway up the mountain. Shortly
#4 flushed, cutting high across the trees - a left-crossing shot
that was a bit too far out. I waited, hoping he was angling my way,
then mounting and swinging thru him I felt some dense trees
coming up and stopped to poke my shot thru an opening - and of
course missed. I'd have been



better off swinging fast and letting the
pattern hit whatever trees were there, for it is a certain
need to stop the swing. The bird went on down the slope out of my
path. Very soon after, #5 flushed from a tree top and this one was
going my way - and I followed. All these I count new birds
and think this area worth hunting further; but I soon came into
the severely cut-off Washington ~~that ends the rest of the ridge~~

above James and from here on it is hell - sheer blackberry
 jungle where even the paths are denser than the rest of the tangle.
 I tried to protect my gun stock and new shooting jacket as well as
 I could but it was mostly tear your way thru when possible.
 I was standing on a one-time log road - now the center of the
 blackberries when my quail I'd been following flushed above and
 behind me, coming about head-high as a fast, level winged
 quail, quartering slightly in from the left. I got ^{noticing some missing tailfeathers,} my gun up and tried
 to swing ahead of him - you have to swing as unhesitatingly fast
 as you can or its no go on meowlers - fired and saw the bird
 flush but bore on past my right shoulder. I wheeled, getting
 my gun muzzle thru and ahead and fired again - and this
 time saw the quail fold and go down. The momentum of the flight
was so great that it fell fifteen or twenty yards beyond the
shot into a tangle of logs.



Feathers was on hand for the retriever and Ruff got there shortly after. I
 hoped Ruff would make the find but he waited too long and in a moment
 Feathers had the bird, bringing it in very nicely - a big cock with
 very red ruffs. I found there were some missing feather with new
replacements growing in. Also that my first pattern had passed thru
 the tail - too far back to drop the bird but enough to disturb its flight.

wasn't taking chances. He and Ruff almost divided it between them
till I pried Feathers' jaws open. It was a lovely big, black-ruffed
cock, even larger than my first bird. A few yards further, I
heard another bird flash up the hill. It had been 6:30 almost
shot and nearly dark. I got to the car at 6:45 and could just see it
down the road. A fine end to a doubtful beginning.

2:45-6:45 (4
4 shots - 2 hits Feathers: 2 returns
2 kills
Ruff: 2 kills
Ward 8 (5 new). 9 flashes

adult cock: red, solid, collar, medium wide inner band.
Cup: full of grapes

adult cock: red, collar, medium wide inner band.
Cup: full of leaves (greenish, tealberry) dogwood bud, small buds

Monday 24 December: Christmas Eve hunt. I took Ruff alone to
the Scott Run area of the Forest, parking at my usual place on the
Cooper's Rock road. The day was threatening with sprinkles of
rain at regular intervals. Ruff seemed to realize his responsibility as
solo gun dog and worked beautifully, needing little handling other
than signals to give him my location. We hunted the first big
boulder coveit with no results, moving on along the ridge to the
next coveit where, up toward the brink of the hill, we finally
saw a bird that flushed back the way we had come. I failed
to raise any other birds all the way to the next shoulder - and
then the sprinkles that had been nibbling at us incorporated
into a rain that soon sent me for cover. I knew of lots of
melted under big rocks but they were nowhere near hot

saw a humlock tree on a leaning trunk & offer a break
 from the downpour. So I struck out for the bottom and
 the rho. along the run. Once there, I waded under first one
 clump and then another but found the damned things only
 funneled the rain from a larger surface and poured it down
 my back. Finally it let up from a near cloudburst into
 just a soaker and I lit out for the car, stopping to take
 my extra shirt out of my shooting jacket and put it on. But
 it did no good for my legs which were soaked thru two pairs
 of shooting pants. Following the lower path up the hollow
 came to the ravine that leads up to the road and there
 Rufus turned from the trail, stretched his neck and stiffened into
 a nice point. I scarcely moved
 in before a bird
 flushed from the
 slope to my left
 and offered only a
 flashing glimpse
 as it cut low across
 to the right. I swung and fired impulsively but didn't get ahead of
 him. The shot even roused him and to my surprise the bird
 landed a neat piece to his right into rho. above a big boulder that
 stood up like an island. I hurried around the rock and came in



POINT IN A
DOWN POUR.

George Bird Evans Papers
 West Virginia and Regional History Center

about it, expecting a flush as I approached. But there was none. Then, wondering if the bird had been hit, I had Puff search which he did well. I'm rather certain it wasn't a hit for the bird seemed to land naturally, but there is a lot of area where a cripple could escape in under the big rock and other stones. However, we couldn't get scent and so I had to go on, assuming the bird had flushed, tho I should have heard the sound as close as I was. After the car I changed in complete dry clothes which I had in my duffle bag - a very important piece of equipment.

1 shot - no hit
 more 2 (no new) - 2 flushes
 Puff: 1 production

2:30 - 4:30 (2)

Wednesday 26 December: My Christmas hunt was in a snowy woods. Leaving Kay at home with Mother, I took Feathers ~~to~~ and Wilka (at last moment) to the little sandy bridge where I parked and hunted up the path on the north side (Spiders') Five minutes after entering the woods a quail gave me a wonderful opportunity, flushing from a small clump of reeds along the left edge of the path and rising and crossing left. I was taken off-guard and shot too impulsively without waiting to focus on the bird, missed and threw the left barrel at it as it leveled and pitched across Sandy - a pretty performance. Both dogs had passed it up when it lay tight. Putting this out of my mind I walked on, crossing the little run and approaching the place where I had shot

a grove this year as it rose across the path near the old fence gap.



I had gone a few yards past the ~~thicket~~ where my bird had fallen thru the limbs when I heard a flush and sensed a bird landing in the dense rho. below the path with feathers moving in after it. Standing quietly, I waited for the reflex and in a second it came, quartering right into the path and rising acutely. I waited for the clear look at the bird, mounted and fired as I went up thru and saw it tumble into the right edge of the path. Feathers came tearing in, arriving simultaneously



with Wilder who knocked him over, righted himself and went on in his mad search for the bird. I had trouble getting him to settle down and hunt to my directions but he finally did and located the grouse at once, retrieving it nicely. It was a big cock, an

outright kill. We made an, thinking how parallel this spot was with the other hill in here - almost identical - and crossed the power line, going on down the lower path along the base of the hill. Strangely we made no other birds tho this cover is excellent, especially in snow. The snow was hanging on trees and covering rocks - about 3 inches of it. as I neared the Beaver hole, I worked ^{to his right of the path and}

crossed the lower corner of the field that runs down this shoulder between the creeks. On an impulse, instead of hunting up to the higher covert, I held to the margin between the field and Beaver Creek where I had raised birds in the past. Both dogs were working beautifully, covering the woods perfectly. Both Wild & Feather were in the thick margin ahead of me, weaving in and out of the small hemlocks that dot the area. I decided to follow an opening after them and had stepped a few yards in when I heard a bird go up from the dogs. It seemed to have gone upstream and as I tried to visualize its flight I heard a sound that went the same way. Both dogs were excited but showed no intention of pointing and then a third grouse flushed. I hoped it was coming my way then saw it climb and cross high above the trees, heading right. It was rather far out but I decided to try and saw a bird ahead. Firing my right barrel and working as I did it that I'd used the left. To my surprise the bird folded and hit the ground by a small hemlock just inside the edge of the woods. I could



see the grouse on the ground, a clean bill but still spasmodically twitching. Feathers made a circle, came in and

cutting the scent, scooped the bird up without missing a step and brought it to me - a hen, but head and leg dirty, liver

surprised at the distance, about 30 yards thru trees and I had
 been using the 2³/₄ dram # 7¹/₂ load on both my hills today.
 That made a day of it, but rather than retrace my steps on the lower
 path, I climbed the hill and worked the top part of the back to the
 lower line, many one of the birds up there. I count all five of the
 other new birds to me this year. Snowy weather after produce,
 especially in this covert.

2:00 - 3:30 (1¹/₂)

4 shots - 2 hits

Feathers: 2 retrievers
 2 hills

most 6 (5 new) 6 flushes Wilds: 2 hills

adult cock: solid, collar, wide

crop: teaberry leaves, wood fern.

adult hen: broken, no collar, wide (only ¹/₁₆" less than the cock)

crop: teaberry leaves.

Thursday 27 December: Weather cool and damp, snow flurries presaged
 that were came. But with a Christmas party in Morgantown in the evening
 we had to make it a limited hunt. Day went along for the first
 time in weeks and we drove to the Crab Orchard covert, parking
 in Deep Hollow and climbing the back way. We used Ruff & Thelous,
 and within yards of the car they hit scent on the old road and
 in working it, flushed two birds that went into the cover along the run,
 one refreshing shortly afterwards. We climbed all the way to the top
 with no more contact with birds - On top we hunted thru excellent
 cover - this is a wonderful area

usually near them. Circled the left end of the plateau I worked us up the path on the brink about Deaf Hollow and approached the old abandoned farm clearing. As we came near the stone wall across the south end, Meadows ran into a grass that Ruff had been within yards of. It quartered left and I made a snap try at it, thinking I saw it settle after the shot, but it apparently was pitching over the hill. Anyway we never found it. I was overly critical of Ruff who was doing very poorly - he does so much better when alone - and that makes him worse - as well as myself. We moved on into the clearing and the dogs bumped another bird that crossed right into the cover on the far side. A few yards to the left and on the edge of the path I saw Meadows hit game scent but instead of pointing he moved in and flushed another bird. Shortly he jumped two more, chasing most of them. I would have thoroughly enjoyed sprinkling him with #8's if I could have brought myself to do it. Really, I think some dogs deserve it and would probably become staunch as a result. Only an innate sense of decency - and a very flickering one at times - restrains me. Having cleared the cover of any further chance to shoot, I took us up and over the flat to follow the bird that crossed the clearing. My bird-dog work was superior to Ruff's Meadows for I nearly walked into the grass, flushing it as I climbed over a barbed wire fence. Both dogs had had all the opportunity in the world to locate it and completely missed it.



followed down into the open grass vine covert on the east slope, ward
the best out of a tree well ahead, marked him up into the top when
we heard him go out in front of one of the dogs. Once more with
no birds to follow we pushed on and again walked into a large
bird that let both dogs walk within yards of him, and then
flushed from a greentree tangle as I passed. I was too bird to
function properly and passed up a good shot as it climbed and
leveled off. We failed to find this fellow when we followed, so
stopped to eat, in a clearing with a gorgeous panorama of the
Brierie, snow-covered and ice-capped under a pale blue glimpse of sky.
Ray took a moose of it. After eating we made a hurried circle
on up the ridge, Ray walking into #9 that neither dog found. We
marked his flight and followed well past the old farm again but failed
to mark it. After hitting the path back the ridge above Deep Hollow, I
walked in to the left and came on enormous grass tracks in the
snow, leading into a tangle of greentree. Puff walked in ahead of
me and ground-trailed, roading into the bird and putting it
out with no chance for a shot. He was doing miserably today with
no hint of a nose. Rejoining Ray, I started down over, coming
to a path that clung to the point of land above the car, then
disappeared, leaving us to get down the steep slope the best we could.
I had done it before, but it seems steeper now that a landslide has

taken out big gnats and left trees uprooted and prostrate. The dogs kept well in with us, while I called them away from sheer drops in the cliff. The ground was soft with them and the trees inadequate. I tried to keep below Kay to be able to stop her if she slipped, meanwhile handling 2 3/4 lbs. of gun in one hand. Auging along to avoid too sheer a descent we made it, with Kay on her posterior much of the time, partly by maneuver and partly because she couldn't help it. At last we reached



A LONG WAY DOWN.

the path with all its foot or so of surface, but it seemed like a paved highway. Down at the bottom the dogs managed to make one final flush to top of the day - one of the first pair of birds - and as I routed at them and about them, I flushed the other one. Some days are off-days.

p101/100%

2:30 - 6:00 (3 1/2)

One shot - no hit
moved. 10 - 17 flushes

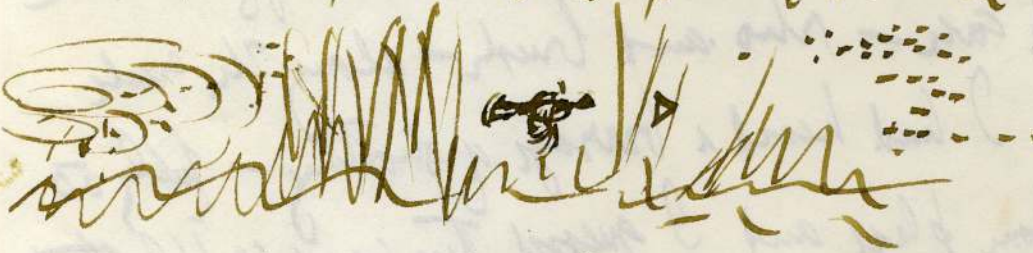
Ruffs } again no.
Mallards }

Friday 28 December: My 50th birthday. The weather was damp but the forecast was for mixed rain & snow. Kay decided to stay home and have a gross dinner and, again passing up a good coast for nearly an hour, I took 2 Eastern papers to the Bowling Green Bridge court, parking this side of the bridge. Weather winds like a

dream and needs no handling at all. We covered the first shoulder
and came back down the first spine, moving around the hill above the
road when we heard the first bird flush wild on the edge of the
old Heath place. No more sign of game until I had hunted
beyond the power line to the run that comes down from the Conley
cove, below the old Darby place. Hunting up that valley I heard two
flushes further some bird. At the top I doubled back toward the upper edge
of the power line, crossing back to the other side again and dropping down to
the old creek road, disgusted with the lack of birds. As I walked
down the old road Feathers kept investigating the sides, and just on the
far side of the power line, threw his head up and moved into the
upper bank in the thicket. A grouse flushed low into a brush
pile, righted itself and then as I glared my eyes to him, bowed right
at me, head high. It was too close to shoot at as well as in
line with Feathers, so I wheeled and tried for it as it quartered
away toward the margin cover along the creek. It should have been a
certain shot but I was too rattled and fired too quickly. The bird showed
no sign of feeling the pattern but suddenly went down with a
splash out on the surface of Big Andy. Feathers dashed down and
I'm certain would have plunged in and retrieved but the bird suddenly
made a floundering rise like a mallard, took off the water and came
heading back downstream below me. This was my first with any



and gun - hanging open. Unable to reload my right barrel, I
snapped my gun shut and waiting for an opening, tried to swing
ahead and fired as the bird crossed low to the right below me, still
out over the water. He didn't drop and I had the impression that he
crossed to the far side of Sandy, almost exactly like and in the same place
as the one last year - another parallel situation.



ONE OFF THE WATER.

I was aware of what
I think were feathers
floating on the water
where the bird had landed
and I decided he had

been hit by the first shot but was still able to fly. So I started
down the road to go to the car and drive up the far side of the creek
to look for him on the bank over there. Feathers was a bit confused by
it all and kept marching the sides of the road. On the near
edge of the old Heath clearing Feathers froze into a forked-up point
on the bank above the road, his head low to the ground, his rear
high in a rock solid point -

expecting the bird to flush any moment and telling myself to
wait and focus on the bird before mounting.



FEATHERS PILES UP
ON POINT.

Nothing happened tho I walked several steps. At last, Feathers
made a sudden move forward, hanging his head to an empty spot
that seemed to have been the scent, then suddenly put his head
down again and a quail fluttered, crippled, down off the bank
and ran into the thick cane - also and brush - along the creek
edge below the road. I had heard a barrage of shooting - fully 50
shots - on the Wilkinson place and I guessed this was a cripple that
had sailed across the creek. I always like to gather a cripple someone
else has lost and would rather leave it to its chances, tho it is
doubtful taste - but I tried to call Feathers off. But he knows his
job, if I don't know mine - and nothing would stop him. I soon
caught his loose neck skin and tried to pull him away but he
was after that bird and didn't stop until he had it - deep in the brush
pile. Then he retrieved dutifully. I felt sick about a beautiful big
cock like this and me not shooting it, but I put it in my game packet

planning to hurry on to the car and go after my bird across the creek.
 Then my foggy brain cleared a little and I started to reason a bit.
 The shooting I'd heard had been high on the Wilkerson place, too
 far away for a bird to have sailed, crippled, into this place. Also, I
 couldn't remember having actually seen my bird cross Sandy to the
 other side. And, lastly, this was just a grass flight down the creek
 from where I had shot and this bird could have been my grouse that
 nuzzled the creek and pitched into the bank, wounded. There had to
 have been a lot for this bird to have landed in the water in the first
 place. I removed the grouse from my coat and looked at it more closely.
 It was soaking wet about the tail feathers and legs and while its
 wings were missing some feathers, they weren't broken and they would
 well have carried the bird in a last effort thus far. I decided that
 I had done about all I could to talk myself out of my own bird,
 and if feathers hadn't had some swag, I'd have lost it. While it
 had been as sloppy a piece of gun work as anyone could do, there was
 no point in kicking Lady Luck in the face when she gave me my
 birthday grouse - and I replaced the bird - a very wonderful
 grouse indeed. On the way to the car I rather flushed a pair from the
 lower edge, too far out to shoot. Later he made a nice presentation on
 me of them. One could have been the #1 bird on the way up. At the far side
 of the bridge, we flushed #5 from the corner and got a flush which I
 saw cross Sandy and settle against the hillside. It had been a

Rain now, and I got to the station wagon where I ate my lunch
and told Feathers how good he was. I couldn't say exactly which shot I
had hit with but ^{you} counting of the night would that I could have been both.

moved 5-10 flocks

The whole incident reminds
me of Father's last goose, and
I end up a bit confused!

2:10-5:40 (3 1/2)

adult cock: brown, collar, wide (same width ^{inner band} as the last hen)
crop: mixed green leaves

Feathers: 2 productives
1 retriever
1 bill

Monday 31 December: New Year's Eve hunt. Kay & I took the two
blues to Mt. Zion, driving all the way to the
schoolhouse. Heard nothing all the length of the hollow below, tho
there was snow on the ground and, while moderate temperature, the
day was ideal for birds to be in the thro. cover along the run. Finally
we flushed #1 wild on the hillside across from Tom Bishop's, but
failed to refresh it. Carried the top of that knob and dropped
down to the path in the hollow before we moved another - #2 that
let us get well past and then lit out for places west. We
had been in excellent cover from the moment we left the car
and there was no reason for lack of birds - perfect variety of
forest stand, plenty of food, grapes and birds and ground
plants, and lots of water. Just no birds. As we climbed
the east slope of the valley and approached the first shelf, two
birds flushed out of right about me where the dog was working
and I saw one sail to the right where the dog was working

The point of land where he undoubtedly pitched over the also rock ledge. Doubling ~~the~~ back, we stopped to eat lunch at 4:50, then covered the rest of that area the best we could, moving a reflex of the other of the pair, followed and got still another reflex and almost a descent. Look at it as it boiled up from shadows and died over the ridge back toward Bishop. We followed, not having time to work any further into the territory but never mind if the shadows ~~paid~~ paid too much attention to tracks in the snow, pottering and dabbled in them. More birds would help him get over that empty pasture but there weren't enough around to do the trick. Finally we had to move toward the car and as we started the hillsides below Bishop we moved #5 that made a protest in the form of a chord across the curve of the wooded arc. Kay met Mrs. Bishop at the house and went up to my hellos while I hunted on around the hill, getting two more flushes from, I think, the same #5. I was to meet Kay at the end of the land but, arriving first I hunted into the good cover about the road where shadows and Wilson industriously roared some tracks in the snow up to a brush heap and flushed a bird that gave me no shot. I missed Kay who passed below us meanwhile and finally overtook her on the road almost to the car. Some Bishop had regaled her with stories of the bear his son-in-law killed in the area we'd been hunting, and of the bear tracks they still see there.

We got to the station wagon at 6:45 - four hours of climbing in excellent bird country but no real look at birds, thanks partly to my no-good pair of legs today, tho' they hunted hard.

2:45 - 6:45 (4) No shots Meadows
made 6 - 10 flocks. Wilda

Tuesday 1 January 57: New Year's Day, partly cloudy and cold as hell.

Ray and I took Puff & Feathers to Homer Muller's and hunted the Claret Matheny covert, moving the first bird almost as soon as we started up the path from the corner. It was bumped by Puff who was up to his old tricks of reading snow tracks. The bird made a beautiful take-off, skimming low across the path to the right, not over two feet above the ground, then zooming up to clear the low scrub brush and level off without a chance to get a gun on him - even if I hadn't been numb with cold only a few minutes out of the car. There was lots of grouse tracks along the path - mostly old ones. We reached the brier corner and hunted out the team toward the pines, then up to the right where I usually make a bird. We did today. Puff ran onto it and as it flushed I saw it as a quartering wimmer, but I didn't wait for the real chance I'd have had, instead spraying most of my right pattern into a six-inch tree trunk and then stopping my second barrel as I felt more trees coming into the wing. Of course I missed. We followed over into the rho and rocks this side of Smith's and, circling, made another bid that offered me a rising wing coming out to the right.

rather far out and too late of a focus before mounting. I should have passed it up but instead snuffed ahead of the power which turned at the shot climbed the rock - who. basin and wheeling right settled toward the ground in a suspicious manner. We reached the area as soon as possible with a round about

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climb and finally flushed a bird that I count as the round individual - not the least hurt from the way it flew. That was the sum of my shooting for the day. We

moved #4 as we worked higher, keeping above the ledge and searching for the Clint Reinhart valley. At last we came on the flat above it and along an old road and loads of ground tracks that look took a long time while Ruff pointed them touchily. His nose than we saw about tracks and it as a sorry sight to see him. If I were decent enough, like the man in the story, to kick the bush ahead and fire two barrels into the air, I'd burn more shells than I could afford the rest of my life. Finally we dropped into the valley to be surprised out and hunted up the run moving nothing but getting lots of empty points from Ruff. It's an emotional stress, walking into point after point expecting a bird, for mostly he is interested as a body scent. We were trying to find the rocks where we'd moved birds the other time and in our search got turned around a bit and found ourselves headed down the ridge. Making a new east, we came to an arching rock, somewhat mushroom in shape, that lay pretered by a bunchion fire and set about building it while I made a circle above. I saw no grouse tho I did find the rocks wld had in mind and when I walked back down I followed

deer tracks that, amazingly, ~~followed~~ waded up and around the
rocks and over logs covered with snow. I finally got back to my and
her fire - a nice warm one but with a nasty way of sending smoke two
ways at once, blinding both of us. We ate lunch hovering around the
flame and growing colder by the minute, finally heading back down
the mountain foyer clear then, like the business as a just eaten.
as we started the snow cliff some thousands of rocks and fallen
logs later Ruff made another point at some grouse tracks.

Feathers came in and worked ahead, bumping two grouse some twenty
yards beyond - no shots, and I doubt if I could have pulled
a trigger if I had the chance. I count it a production for Ruff
tho I question whether he had more than the track count but
he needs the score. That was the last hint of game. In spite of
my new wool-lined deer skin shooting gloves and the handwarmer
I had in my pocket my fingers felt like bones cast in a cake of
ice. I was never so cold in my life tho I've hunted in lower
temperatures often. It was exhilarating to be out, after you
are home in front of a log fire and thinking about it - but as
a shooting day it was very little, tho I should have made the
first shot. after that I was too cold to care.

3 shots - no hits

Ruff: 1 production

made 8 (no new) - 9 fleas Feathers:

1:45 - 5:45 (4)

Thursday 3 January: Partly sunny, warmer (up to 32 high) and a fine looking day to hunt. Took Ruff & Feathers and Kay & I set out for the Whitsett settlement, where we still found lots of snow. Yesterday had been too cold with some snow and we skipped hunting for today. Today the light covering of yesterday's snow gave us a good idea of the freshness of grouse tracks which were nearly everywhere. Uncertain of the missed road (since yesterday), we parked the station wagon at Calvert's and hunted out the road with grouse tracks zigging and zagging up the center as if the bird were drunk on frozen grapes. When the tracks cut up the left bank we followed and soon Kay saw a grouse cross left about me — flushed by Feathers. Stopping to take off one shirt (leaving a wool sweater & flannel shirt) we followed the bird back toward Calvert's hollow and just on the brow of the hill Ruff trailed into the grouse, with no chance for me to shoot. A few moments later #2 zoomed down out of a tree about me but I couldn't get my gun on it. Circling back north on the ridge, rather than follow the birds any further out of our way, we swung a little higher and another grouse flushed well above Ruff and a moment later #4 left the same spot, going up the hill. I took my time and tried for it as a going-away shot, that it faltered as it went on and then, knowing I was doing it but unable to stop, I pulled the left barrel directly at the trunk of a tree the bird was behind — a waste of shell and shooting average. Of course it went on. We decided to follow the bird I'd shot at, and the it seemed to go toward the hollow at an angle, and a few yards

ahead ~~two~~^{three} more went out - ~~two~~^{two} crossing left toward the hollow and the other going south, to the right, along the ridge. We followed the three into the valley, found none, and, returning, saw Feather's Vampa bird and chase, at the brow of the hill - probably the one I'd missed. This was amusing - both



dogs were working poorly, ground trailing and whatnot - but at least it meant we had three birds ahead of us in the direction we wanted to hunt. We never missed them. By now it was after four and we still weren't doing anything with the day - having goofed or been drawn and no idea where others might be found in the next hour and a half. By pushing the dogs, Kay (to her disgust) and myself, I got us around the shoulder into the head of the little ravine where I've made birds other trips. There Ruff stopped on point and Feather backed at command. I tried to get up but evidently the bird went out, for both dogs broke simultaneously for a few steps, then stopped on order. (The bird's tracks looked huge.) When Kay caught up with us, I kept going around the ridge thru excellent log and brier cover but found no birds. Finally dropping lower we heard two go out from the dogs, not far above the road - and they went on around the ridge. By now Ruff needed talking to, for he had reached the place where he took four steps and stopped till I signaled to him, then took four more steps and waited for the next signal. after a severe

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holding, he settled down and hunted for a while but just then
Feathers bumped two more birds above us — one going up the hill, the
other around the ridge. Further on, while we stopped to discuss
our plans another bird flushed a few feet from where Feathers
stood and looked at us out in front. I doubt if Feathers has the
nerve to handle grass, while Puff has too much — picking up
ground vent from dry-did tracks and pointing them. It was
after five and getting better cold and we decided to turn back, as
we dropped toward the main road below us # 13 flushed down them
and crossed ~~to~~ to the lower side. As we walked back the road,
14 flushed and went up the mountain far above us. The grouse
seemed to be hair-triggered and jumpy as hawks — many of them
flushing with no dogs near, and none of them coming my way. It
is frustrating to have gone a week without a hit and — worst —
to have no decent chances for days at a time. Feathers came
bounding up onto the road — he at least was covering the
country well — and a grouse flushed almost into his face from
the upper side of the road. He took it as far as I could see out
the road and then came back for his punishment. I yearned for
a bull-whip and could only find a brittle twig that crumbled
as I applied it. I wonder if I'll ever get him steady to flush.
So I do, I may get him to ~~point~~ ~~not too much to ask~~

of a four-and-a-half-year-old setter that had five seasons
 of intensive work. Back at the house in the course of the road
 and no further sign of birds I was perplexed as to what to try.
 So we moved up the little run, and then sidled along the ridge
 back into the area where we moved the 7 earlier. While we stopped
 for a bit of candy, in lieu of lunch, we heard a grouse roar out
 on the little flat above us. No dogs near, no loud talking. It just
 knew us well and went out. Treading up for lack of a better idea
 we came across tracks also leading up and Puff began to trail
 and point. I despaired of getting him to raise his head so let him
 have his way, walking in on a couple of his false points. Finally he
 made a solid point and I moved into the right side. The grouse flushed
 close to us, crossing left. I



mounted and fired swinging thru
 a short lead and the bird folded
 and fell into some snow covered logs
 a few yards to the left. The shot
 couldn't have been much further
 than ten yards. Puff was
 almost on the spot to retrieve, and
 altho feathers came bounding in



A KILL OVER
 PUFF'S PRODUCTIVE.

from above, Puff got to the bird, stepped over it before he got the
 scent and turned and picked it up. The action had been too fast for Kay
 to get a picture of the shot and fall but she took a picture of the
 retriever - a long-drawn affair

partly because, as I found, the bird was still alive. The compact pattern had broken one wing and shot off the lower mandible which was hanging, and yet I had difficulty despatching the bird. It was a yearling cock and while it is rough on the ground, it was an important thing in my life, for if I ever needed a kill it was this one, after a week of trying. We made two more of the same birds (I count them all part of the first?) at the head of the valley and another one in the Mts. along the bottom above Calvert's. We ^{had our hot tomato ~~and~~ bisque and} ate a bite in the station wagon and then stopped to chat with Mrs. Craig before starting home.

3 shots - 1 hit (over Ruff's point)

made 15 (none new) - 24 flushes. Ruff: 2 prod. ~~(hit)~~
1 kill over point
1 retrieval

2:30 - 6:15 (3 ³/₄)

yearling cock: color ^{partly} broken, very wide
crop: grapes, quince berries, fern leaves, buds

Feathers: 1 kill

Friday 4 January: We found last evening that Ray had left his glasses while changing clothes at Mrs. Craig's and so today we returned for them and hunted that general territory again - something I rarely have done, if ever: repeating a covert the consecutive day. It was a lovely day, sunny at times and moderately cool and the snow was mostly gone elsewhere, we managed to hunt the one area that still had plenty of it. Today we brought Shadow's solo, and we drove all the way out to the golf, parking at the "Buckhorn" and

noting with satisfaction that there had been no car out ahead of us.
 as a try-out, we started hunting down the interesting road - a mere
 log road with good grass cover all the way to the place it dips where
 the trees became at bit too open on both sides. There was a sudden
 explosion of sound as #1 panned flushed from a roadside brush heap
 and gave me a short look at his posterior as he bore away between
 trees. I tried a quick shot at him that failed. Just at the place
 where the road pitches down into the fur valley shadows moved up
 into some excellent thinned cover with brush heaps and grass
 and bumped #2 which went up the side of the bank. We followed
 finally climbing to a shoulder of rock that
 made a low barricade up the sloping ridge. I stopped
 to wait for King while shadows worked the
 area and saw him run into our line just out of a good gunshot try
 as it cleared the rocks and headed for points higher. My impulse was
 to follow but I soon came to the nest and I imagine highest, ledge
 of rocks. There were enormous boulders with moss growing all about and
 in so many words were impossible - a very wise guess. We had
 to idly down to get out of this situation and so dropped off the
 hill enough to pick up the bird I had missed. We soon saw what
 I counted as the same guess, as it flushed from shadows and cut
 back into the country as had



bird several rods beyond, the shadows had cast them here and missed it altogether. It went the right direction and we followed along, parallel to the road below us. A grouse flight along I heard it go and then saw another flush from the shoulder above me. I have been getting no dog work on most of the birds moved lately and the effect has been that of walking up grouse that flushed nervously far out. Even those the dogs have flushed have not come my way - something you can expect at least occasionally. After some bit of circling we heard a bird flush wild and gave up, moving along the little path that angles up into the shallow basin above the road. Here we came on a multitude of tracks in the snow - fresh - which concerned shadows entirely too much and after some bit of this I saw the grouse, a nice cock perched in a sapling where he had moved up to avoid the stalkers. I pointed him out to Ray and then, entirely too suspicious of a shot, I discarded my recent taboo on birds that sit and watch you, I bent over and rushed thru some briars to flush him. As he bowed away I made a quick try and missed - which was what I deserved.



He seemed to go out ahead and, thinking how impossible it was to have missed such a shot, I followed half-expecting to come on the bird wounded. At just the right distance and the correct bearing I came on shadows on the only good point I've seen him make recently, standing solid with his nostrils working, his ~~rolling eyes~~ ^{George Bird Evans Papers} I walked in.

I was so surprised to find the point empty that I had him search
the area carefully but we found no bird. No did we flush the
grouse, even when we moved on ahead. About five o'clock we stopped
for a bit of lunch and then kept hunting toward Stamping Ground
Pine hollow to find the six we had left here yesterday. We found
tracks when we got there, lots of them - enough, I would say, for all
six of the birds I had in mind. But not until we walked down along
the brink of the valley did we meet feathers - two grouse that went
for the hollow. It was too late and we were too far from the car to go over
after them as the others and so we headed back, this time lower
toward the road. #9 flushed wild below me and looked as if it were
headed for the Cheat River the last I saw. I had Ray take the main road
while I kept parallel above it and at the ravine in the bend,
Nadrows flushed #10 and as I ranted about the impossible shooting,
#11 flushed from my voice, close by, but giving me no glimpse. Ray
marked the first of the pair (I notice so many grouse this year as in
traces, a questionable commentary on their polygamous habits) as
going out the road around the bend but I was unable to find it.
at last we began to walk the road toward the car and a new
bird, #12, flushed fully 30 yards below the road ~~entirely~~ ^{with} ~~from~~
Nadrows ~~was~~ nowhere near. That's how jumpy the grouse are now.
Nadrows had taken a notion to stay in the road about 1/2 way, so

that meant my climbing into the bush and taking the hard way. I hadn't gone far when I came on tracks, and soon the grouse roared out of the top of a tree over my head and started for someplace in another direction. I whined, saw him against the dimming sky and poked a shot at him that never touched a feather. It was a shot that could have been made, I think, on a day when I wasn't so over-ambitious for a bird and before I had trudge miles ~~with~~ with a set of locked springs instead of muscles. Today I missed. At first I



called to Kay that I was going to follow it up over the ridge. Then I thought of where I'd have to go and I changed my mind. Finally at the car, I left Kay and I took Sheldon's for a final circle up over the rocks, when we started. at last, up under the first baron's rock

ledge, we missed one of the birds. In the dim light I saw it rise across my line of vision, faint against the rocks, and as it topped them I tried once, and then again, but the grouse didn't fall. I'm nearly convinced that this week I'd had only one random shell in my pockets that had shot in it. and this the next to last day, with rain forecast for tomorrow.

5 shots - no hits
 moved 12 (6 new) - 17 flushes
 Meadows

2:30 - 6:30 / 4

Tram
Saturday 5 January: Last day. This has been more than we had reason
to expect - five days the last week. The
weather was overcast and cold - about 30 - and we took Puff and Feather
to House Miller, parking at the corner. Both dogs hunted nicely
but we made no guess until we reached the Smith rocks where,
at the base both dogs found a bird - tho I didn't see any pointing.
The grouse flushed in an awfully rising flush that caught me
behind a clump of snow and between two saplings. I made
a step to one side, and ^{no easy} ^{maneuver} in this snow,
tried for him but felt my barrels stop
as he went on up the shoulder to the left. Starting the day in



form. I felt the bird had topped
a low shoulder but after I looked
us up into the rocky basin we
found ourselves in a hopeless mess
of snow-corned rocks and logs -
the basin below the ledge - and
it was much vaster than I had
imagined. We were in a cul de sac

and the only way out was to go down again. We made #2 on the way.
Still doing ballet figures on slippery rocks and logs we came at
last to the Smith clearing and I note I never want to see those
particular rocks again. Giving up the idea of finding birds up high
we dropped toward the ^{main} road ^{near the corner} ^{where} ^{man #3}
wild. Finally on the road we covered the Smith corner and

started thru the woods toward the tram road. Some fifty yards
out of it, a grouse flushed behind and to my left, coming
away. I wheeled and took it as a quartering right, low,
owing them the bird so I fired. It fell hard and thro' it was
tough on the grouse, I never needed a kill more. I sent the dogs
to retrieve, hoping Puff would get it. He and Featheris both

covered the ground and Featheris passed the bird which had
ceased fluttering. Puff almost had
the scent when Featheris made a
circle and pounced, bringing the
grouse first toward Raymond



camera, and then to me. It was a nice cock with a wing and head shot
visible. We stepped onto the old tram road and ate lunch to observe the
occasion. The temperature had begun to drop, and we moved on out to
the rocks in the cove, hoping to find the group of birds I had discovered
below. We heard only one, for two flushes and, one more headed
toward Hufferman's corner, we held below the tram and hunted that
cover - moving two separate grouse, one for a reflex on the very
edge of Hufferman's run and the road. With another hour to hunt, we
worked up the ridge again to the tram in Hufferman's woods, going on
a dead raccoon hung in a sapling. Why? With a doubtful chance of
finding birds we circled about the

really get going without having to travel too far at this hour, we
turned down the mountain and followed the trail back to the station
wagon, hoping to meet the grouse that uses that area along the path.
He'd made plenty of tracks but today was not at home. But
even so, the old Brierley had not let us down and once more we
came out of this territory with an "last-day's" grouse, and a
country he is. We stayed for supper with the Mullers and showed them
our movies.

2 shots - 1 hit

Puff: 1 kill

Stake: 1 retriever
1 kill

Mixed 7 (no new) of flocks

1:30-5:30 (4)

adult cork: semi-broken, collar, wide
crops: few stems (blackberry?)

SUMMARY 1956

This was a season of facing facts. Puff's work is slipping because of
his failing vision. He doesn't get out far enough to find the birds
before the younger dogs who usually flush them. Hence, few productions
for Puff - and fewer retrievers. Much of the snow hunting led to ground-
tracking by all concerned. I regret not using Puff solo more than once or
twice, both of which times he showed better performance. He still
handles grouse better than the rest.

The generally lower tone of dog work this year. Feather has been his brilliant performer in the past that has carried the others. He made a few nice productions and still can travel well - no longer the hopping gait - tho he stiffens up the next day. But it is his fear of losing touch with me that makes him stop every few yards and listen for me. When I was able to keep him moving with two blasts of the whistle and get out back him, he did well. The times he was alone he did even better.

Feather and Shadow both have lovely style moving thru the woods and both hunt hard. But neither shows enough pointing urge or even enough nose to make me happy. (Too much of Wilder there). Both show good nose on dead or dropped birds. Even Ruf this year showed more awareness of foot scent than of body scent. Was it conditions or the work on pheasants? Feather hits the birdy areas instinctively and travels the way Ruf did in his prime - when he freezes it means business. Shadow also rarely false points and his style is a trade more intense. His range and speed is fine - a little closer, tho than Feather.

Wilder simply doesn't do me a bit of good except to penetrate dense cover. She checks back more than in the past but she simply hits scent and moves right thru. If she could be made staunch, she would be a honey. Her thing battered her tail so badly that it became gangrenous and had to be amputated the Monday after the last day. A shock to all of us.

My shooting this year was below what the old Fox is capable of. Possibly I try too many mere "possibles", feeling no confident of the gun. Occasionally I make them. I still hold to my last year's philosophy as to shooting - wait to focus on the target before mounting, then with eye glued to bird, mount and overtakes. There are 3 types of shots - 1) firing as you go through the lead, 2) as you go through the bird, 3) right on them but going with the target. This last can turn out a miss if you merely snap at them.

The birds seemed almost as numerous as in the past two, and best, in my experience, years. But much more wary - some of them moving out 30 yards away from me with no dogs near. Also evidence of birds running ahead of dogs. Sometimes I think making 2 dogs makes the birds prey tight. Other times I feel I'd be better using one at a time. I wonder when I'll ever learn this game shooting. It was a good year.



Finis 1956

CRANE SCITOL ROAD 1956 * LICK 11.11.1
BRIERIES: * JUNE'S 14.19.0, 12(4) 14.1, 8(5).9.2
* WHELSELL 8.10.0, 16.20.1, 15.24.1, 12(6).17.0
* CLINT RECKERT 16.18.1, 15(10) 19.1, (SELLS 10(7).10.0, (SELLS 8.11.1, 6.6.2, 7.9.1)
DORITY 7.8.0
ROARING GAP 5.6.1
~~ALLEGHENY MT. 1.1.0~~
* CLINT MATHENY 20.29.2, 8.9.0
LICK RUN N13-11.11.1

FOREST: SCOTT RUN 8.10.0, 10(10) 11.0, 2.4.0,

ALLEGHENY MT. 1.1.0
HOY MILLER 5.6.0
JACK COPEMAN 6.7.0
* HOUDERSHELL 14.17.2, 16(9).16.1, 5.6.1
MEYERS ROCKS 9.13.1, 7.9.0
OLD FARM CHAZEL ~~1.1.0~~ 9.11.1
LAUREL RUN (SOUTH & NORTH 4.5.0, (NORTH 5(3).5.0
* RODEHAVER 9.13.1, 6.6.0
CHARLES KELLY-Geo. RINGER 4.5.1
CLIFTON (CONNELLY & SCHOOL HOUSE 6.10.0
LITTLE SANDY S. 4.5.1, 6(5).6.2
EARL NICOLA-POWER LINE 8.9.0
VALLEY POINT 5.5.1
UPPER BEAVER 6.13.0
HIGH BEAVER 9.10.1, 4.4.0 (WITH RODEHAVER COVERT)
CRAD ORCHARD 10.17.0
TOWER MASTER BRIDGE 5.10.1
MT. ZION 6.10.0 12/31/Even Birds

DATA 1956

GEORGE: 46 DAYS 168 HRS. 28 COVERTS

102 SHOTS - 29 HITS - 28.43%

280 BIRDS - 494 FLUSHES

10 BIRDS PER COVERT, 2.94 FLUSHES PER HR.

(RECORD RAINFALL FOR MAY 5.9" PITTS. AREA)

RUFF: 26 DAYS

17 PROD. (.653 PER DAY)

18 KILLS (2 OVER POINTS)

7 RETRIEVES

LIFETIME '47-'56: 494 PROD.

197 KILLS (48 OVER POINTS)

139 RETRIEVES

290 HUNTING DAYS

FEATHERS: 26 DAYS

7 PROD. (.269 PER DAY)

22 KILLS (1 OVER POINT)

17 RETRIEVES

LIFETIME '52-'56

19 PROD.

83 KILLS (2 OVER POINT)

58 RETRIEVES

111 DAYS

SHADOWS: 22 DAYS

2 PROD.

8 KILLS (1 OVER POINT)

6 RETRIEVES

LIFETIME '54-'56

4 PROD.

37 KILLS

10 RETRIEVES

68 DAYS

GROUSE

18 COCKS (14 ADULTS, 4 YEAR), 11 HENS (5 AD. 6 YEARS)

TAIL BAND { 12 SOLID (10A, 2Y)
2 SEMI- (1A, 1Y)
4 BROKEN (3A, 1Y)

{ ALL BROKEN

WILDA: 9 DAYS - 3 KILLS

LIFETIME '51-'56

6 PROD.

35 KILLS

76 DAYS

INNER BAND { 15 WIDE
2 MODERATE (2A)
1 VERY WIDE (Y)

{ 8 NARROW
3 WIDE (2A, 1Y)

Ratio cocks hens similar to 1953 kill (18-11)

Seemed like exceptional number of adult cocks but '53 was also 14A-4Y.
So I see no unusual situation for next year from this.