

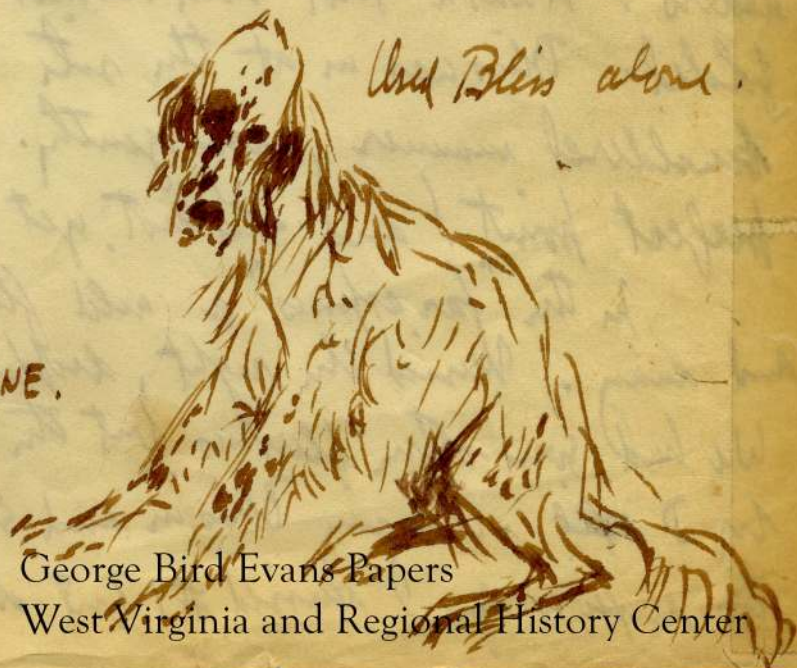
Shooting Notes 1964

Saturday 17 October -

Once again, the wonderful experience of introducing a young dog to grouse. Bliss, double grand-daughter of Ruff and the most promising since Ruff, has been working quail nicely and has been introduced to woodcock the last two weeks in Canada. Shadows, eleven and senior citizen, and Dixie - six and Bliss's mother - had to stay home opening dog pens. We took the young hopeful to Lower Donaty. Weather cool and damp, after a rain last night was perfect and the color magnificent. But regrettably the grouse were not in evidence. Flocks of quails hunted up ridge to pipe line and cut over to next valley south where in rhododendron where we usually find them. Bliss moved one wild ahead of her. Late, so we did not follow but went down the ravine where I always found lots of grouse. Today one flushed on back ridge. No more action but a long trek back to car. Disappointing, but Bliss ranged in lovely manner, at one place running to side of path to check scent with head high.

Threw 2 - 2 flutters
no shots

A GOOD ONE.



Monday 19 October - Cabin 22

264/2

Drove thru hard rain and up Backbone Mt. in flaming color.

Went direct to the Gates where ^{rain had stopped and weather cold but perfect} we saw Ed Filler leaving, followed by Walt Lesser and a man from Down, Del. I gave Shadows about hour circle alone first from 4:15 to 4:45 (fast time) He made one point down ours (I realize I must use a bell on him in here).

My & I took Bliss & Dixie out at 5:00 in covert to north of road. Dixie made a lovely point on edge of aspen clearing but Bliss came in and did not stop. The cock bored directly at me and I turned, brimming with confidence, and missed both barrels. The next flush was wild and I missed a single shot. Then, in a dense area of alders Bliss's bell went silent and it was fully two minutes before I could fight my way in to where she was solid and like a picture. Knowing it was nearly impossible, I wedged in beside her, the bird went up and I tried for it arcing over the alders. It was a shot thru thick but by a wonderful chance it folded. Bliss was in at the site and mounting the bird in a considered manner, very gently. The first bell of the year over a perfect point! and she not yet 10 months.

In the "far aspens" a wild flush formed from behind me - low and away. Missed the right, dropped it with the left. Dixie retreated. We had some other flushes but the next action was a honey for point by Dixie. I swung Bliss in and she backed beautifully. I guess I was too anxious for I missed #1 but dropped the bird with #2.

Dixie retrieved. (This is something new, so consistently!) B's backing
 so staunchly was a thrill to Ray and me. We moved several other
 birds away to the car. When Ray took the car and followed me
 slowly while I worked D. & B. toward the gate. I am passing up
 shots that B. bumps, just to clarify the need to point, and so
 let a lovely chance go across in front. Out on the road a
 flush that was removed far enough from B. came over my left
 shoulder and I tried for it in the failing light - missing (what's
 wrong with my right barrel today?) but saw it fold well out
 in the gloom of the alders on the second shot. I plunged in with
 D. & B. but neither seemed to get scent at the point of estimated
 fall. Ray had driven up and released Shadows also joined but the
 we searched till dark we found no bird - a deeply remorseful
 experience. B. had made another fine backpoint to D that, while
 it proved empty, had to have been a recent flush. We are delighted
 with her - and Dixie, who is another dog on wild birds after her
 prophetic action on the training ground (due to her relation with Miss B.)
 As to my shooting - ragged today.

Moved fully a dozen woodcock (Walt had moved two; Ed, me)

10 shots - 4 hits W.C.

(1 over B. pt., 1 over D pt. - B back pt.)


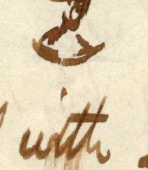
(1 lost)

Shadows

Bliss 1 PROB W.C.
 # K "
 Dixie 2 Prob "
 # K "
 2 ret "

Tuesday 20 October First, drove to Roles to search for lost bird,
using ^{eleven} Shabars, alone. Ray & I estimated direction and range of
fall and began combing. In a short while I saw Shabars - a few
feet from me, turn and pick up the 'cock which he retrieved
proudly, sitting to deliver. A nice hen. Luck! (I had let S.
find and retrieve one of the birds from last night, before we left the
cabin today. It could have fixed the idea of finding a cold bird?).
Chatted a moment with Drs. Van Ormer & Cook who had been
hunting beyond us. Did not look too exuberant.

We left with no hunting and drove to Balsams, taking the car
well into the area. Did not see a bird. Used S. & B. but much
food in here - a single ~~spotted~~ ^{dotted} thrush here and there.

Returned to car and I left Ray at Thompson's house to walk in,
while I took car to the Wolford Place, meeting Mrs. Wolford who was
a delightful person. Using D. & B., I went directly to the blackberry
briers. In the exact spot where Lewis had moved it in 1962, and one
last year, I flushed a grouse that went away right - a short glimpse
through brier canopy but I fired and the bird fluttered and went into
a vertical tower. Taking no  chances, I centered it with
a left barrel shot that  dropped it solidly. Both D. & B.
were at the bird when I arrived with D. in charge. She delivered
nicely, then turned on B. - bad. Holding D. I hid the grouse -
an adult hen - and let B. find it, ~~strapping her into a solid point~~

which she held well. Picking it up, I again ~~had it down~~ tossed it out ahead of her and this time she picked it up and retrieved it to me in fine style. Her first grouse kill. a grouse is no small affair to me either, after last season!

No more birds here tho a few hawthorns full of red haws. In bottom swamps we missed a Wilson's snipe I passed up.

Returned for day at Thompsons and then to Gates where we had the place to ourselves! Gave Shadros 1/2 hour. Shot a woodcock, S. retrieved nicely. Think he had a point on 1st flush. at car.

Ray & I took D. & B. into regular coat. D. gave me a nice point in far aspen area and I missed a shot at the bird. As we followed, missed 4. Came on D. on point and B. backing loyally, but no bird when I walked in. Sent them on and B. pointed what was the same bird, I believe. As she took a few steps it flushed and I dropped it well out. D. retrieved. On way in

ward on a two was but no shots. Another nice point by D. & backpoint by B. Day cold, overcast. Snowflurry when grouse was shot.

Wolford Place: missed one grouse - 1 flush D. 1 kill } grouse
one shot - 1 hit B. 1 kill

adult hen: inter
cups: winged maple seeds, twigs, snipe screech.

3 shots w.c. - 2 hits (1 on B pt) S. 2 ret w.c.
D. 1 ret w.c.
B. 1 prod w.c. 1 back.

Wednesday 21 October a fine clear day and up to Dolly Sods!

Drove out to Fisher's Spring Run, passing several cars of hunters today but no one here at the double culverts beyond the head of spruce. Heard nothing in area where we'd flushed 4 a few weeks ago and after hunting down to some beaver dams (small) circled back toward road. Just inside I recognized some cove and decided I should hit it.

Within moments a grouse flushed in front of me and gave me a short glimpse, left-cross & rising. I fired and saw the bird collapse.

Dixie & Bliss was on the spot and D. made a lovely retriever - a nice large red-ruff cock - and to my surprise still alive. After dispatching it, I took D. to the nearby car (she had turned on Bliss)

and then we hid the grouse & let B. locate and point it. She points ^{dead birds} rather half-intensely but styles up when handled. On way to car with D. I had realized we had missed the proper entrance to cove by a narrow bit and we actually flushed a second grouse - part of the group of 4 I think.

Rather than push that bird we moved to head of Fisher Sp. Run and parked in usual place. Here we found where some bastard had cleaned a grouse and left the remains feathers etc (the way a cur leaves his spoon for the world to see). We missed nothing in the usual areas here tho we found cranberries by thousands - as I've never seen before. Where are the grouse? with food like this. Circled

back to car (I was using Shadow & Bliss this time) and crossed the road in area on brink of east incursion. (Not cautious but no

Birds. Disappointing.

Better tired and let down in spite of good luck shot - it takes more action than this to maintain excitement over long walking - we drove back to main road (Petersburg - Samsville) and parked across from dense hawthorn stand - red with fruit. This is the true Dolly Sods I think and we wanted to hit it at late feeding time.

Walked back to get view over eastern ridge, taking all three dogs. Was in lower margin cover, Kay on the road. Suddenly D. found, but did not pin, a large woodcock that flushed across road in front of Kay. Making it down in clump of cover on upper edge I sent dogs in to locate. B. whirled but did not get to prey before the bird rose - straight up. I managed a shot and saw the bird settle back, falling thru limbs. Shadows made the find a nice retrieval, sitting to deliver, as he's done regularly this season.

Taking the inside edge of wonderful hawthorn back along road, Kay took S. to car as he was feeling his oats and moving too far out. Almost on the road, we walked into a 'cove' that came up over some red pines and disappeared. We finally made it out of trees well ahead, followed in a high wind that had set in as the sun dropped and on the next flush I missed a shot that seemed to have been lost in the small gale. We got another bird, then a prodestructor bird by B. but no more shots. And no quail. Have seen so many hawthorn on

shrubs.

Moved 2 quail - 2 flushes	B. 1 kill quail
One shot - one hit quail	D. 1 kill, 1 ret quail
2 shots - 1 hit w.c.	G. 1 ret w.c.

adult cock: red, solid
 crop: empty, but gizzard had cherry seeds and shells

Thursday 22 October Good weather, partly sunny & cold. To
Kempston area. Disappointing. No grouse cover. Used Shadows & Bliss
for 1 1/2 hours. Returning to car flushed the only grouse wild. Refueled
from trees. Moved out toward 219 and stopped to try a good looking
area leading up to spruce & hemlocks. Near car, a large drumming log
with droppings from a big grouse but he was not at home. On way
back, flushed a woodcock in two flushes no shots.

Small leaves, feather shape, like 'cock tail feathers in woodcock cover.
Drove down to the Gates about 4:45. Took Shadows for a 15
minute turn and shot a 'cock I walked into. Fired right barrel too
close but dropped it with the left. S. retraced, sitting nicely & delight
as he has done on all the 'cock this year. Crossed the road at the car
and gave him another 15 or 20 minutes on far side but missed nothing.

Back at the car I rested and then Kay & I took D. & B., starting about
5:45. First contact with game was a grouse flush at the edge of the
aspen clearing - a surprise and I tried for a rising away shot - a bit
too far and for right barrel. I had the 3-1-8 woodcock load and worked
for something nearer. We followed and refueled without a look at the bird.
On the way Bliss made a short production but the bird went out too
soon for a shot. We passed up good woodcock cover in an effort to
remove the grouse and it was too near dusk to get in all the hunting
we would have liked. Headed directly for the 4-bird-cover and
there I heard B's. fell so silent. When I reached her she was still
solid in dense thicket. Kay & I fought our way thru spruce - and
I knew I'd never get a shot. I could see B's. eyes bulging as
she tried to see the bird before her. Finally, backing and
crushing the reedy tangle as I went, I finally flushed the bird - a hen that

run straight up and over the bush and I managed to come thru and drop it. This run in at the fall and I think he found it but it took D. to locate it after.



EYES BULGING.

B. made off. During this action, two more flushed over our heads, going back of us.

We followed the pair & heard one go out. Later D. disappeared and think she

may have been pointing a grouse which showed beyond the aspens, crossing far out and right — sailing out over the savannah of spruce. Hoppe's to follow. We hurried back in the falling dusk, circling in our usual late area. I walked into one 'cock that I missed in the near dark, my gun flash showing pink. We reached the cow ~~road~~ ^{path} and as we approached the road, heard a flush and wheeled to see a dim form cross behind us. I fired and saw it fall. Dixie retrieved this one nicely. A lovely day.

Heard one grouse at Kempton - 3 flushes

" 2 " in Gates - 3 flushes

One shot grouse - no hit.

5 w.c. shots - 3 hits

(1 on B. pt.)

Shadows 1 w.c. ret. 1 kwc

Dixie 1 w.c. ret. 2 kwc

Wills 2 prod w.c. 2 kwc

Friday 23 October. Very cold, mostly cloudy. Tried the "Gas Well ridge" bench cover (there is some beech mast this season). No birds in 1/2 hour with Wills & Shadows. Went on to Sand Run passing a way where some S.O.B. had cleared another grouse - feathers, wings, etc. at top of

Daily Subs. was rambles with streaming beer cans & lunch buckets for
tips in moderation - and for ignorance.

At Sand Run, hunted downstream thru meadow cover. One
grouse moved up over top from Dixie (from tree). No further trees,
so hunted around to main valley to expanse of crab and thorn.
No luck. Hunted back to car and, along road, flushed one
woodcock from deep - early ^{left} cross shot almost missed,
and missed again as it banked away. No one should miss a 'cock
both barrels! Reflushed one a time but no shot.

Drove to Gates and began with ~~D. & B.~~ Shadows for 15 minutes
turn but no birds. At 5:40 started with D. & B. in the special
court. D. pointed, B. barking, but no bird materialized. Sent
them on and saw them point in thicket. Kay called the flush
and the 'cock came back over us and swooped over my left
shoulder. I turned and took it as a high left-crosser, dropping it.
D. refused the retrieve as she did last night. In cover east of clearing
D. made another lovely point and B. barked. There was no bird.
When I sent them on B. ran into a bird - a large 'cock - that I
passed rather than shoot over a bumped bird. Then another bird
flushed behind us - the one they'd been pointing. No more
action till we worked behind near aspen groves and a bird
flushed toward the cow road. Followed, D. ran onto it and I
tried a long shot at edge and missed one, two. Bad. While
Kay reloaded her camera I followed & D. again whirled but
too late. I undershot it as it went over the rollers - too tense.
Five misses on 'cock is something for the 'cock.

Next, a fine point by D. in 4-bird-covert but the bird
 went out too soon. The sun was behind Casan Mountain so, after
 a bit of chicken, we turned back. In path near middle of
 B. went on a point, not quite solid, till I cautioned her when she
 held beautifully. No bird. Sent her on, very carefully, and
 in a moment saw the bird go out (B. did not know it flushed).

Several flushes as we ^{approached} the road but each time I was behind
the bush. Finally in near dark at edge of crab-thicket I heard-
 and glimpsed - a 'cock go up and over alders, caught it at top of
 arc and saw it fall. In darkness D. located and retrieved to me

knowing I needed this one. A fine end to a fine week's gemming.

12 'cock, 2 quans for stay in Cabin 22.

1 quon - 1 flush. 7 shots - 2 hits w.c.

(1 over Mt. D., B. looking)

3 mod. w.c.
 D. 1 net w.c.
 B. 2 back w.c.
 1 mod "
 5.

Mon. to Fri: 27 shots w.c. - 12 hits
 3 " quans - 2 "



Saturday 24 Oct Checked out of cabin 22 and drove toward

home — perfect, sunny clear. On way changed plans from Custer Pines place to Abram Creek (re Hubert Cox). Located area — good looking alder — thorn apple bottom near route 50. Within a few minutes after starting, saw a grouse flush back from Bliss and land on edge above me. As Kay joined me ~~at Bliss~~ & Dixie, another grouse came back following the first. I got a shot — left high — crossing — and the bird fluttered down, winged. I saw it right itself and begin to run. At the spot we found nothing but as both dogs began to search, Kay heard a flush that seemed to go out into a large thorn field. It seemed unlikely that the bird could take off in normal flight but less likely that a third bird could be there. We scoured the field as best we could but both dogs went sour, apparently from my insistence. Finally Kay went for Shadows while I again searched the site of the fall — no luck.

working hard we found nothing
so dropped into the Aubriet again
bird had reflushed before my shot.



Even with Shadows
in the field and
go when the first
while hunting.

the thicket I flushed a woodcock that I managed to drop in thick alders — another winged bird. Bliss got to the 'cock and caught it as it fluttered. This helped revive my overwrought state of mind a bit. As we resumed our hunt, using all three dogs now, I realized no one — including dogs — had covered the slope below where my bird had

and Bliss that direction I saw the crippled quon take off
 and flutter down the bank. I fired and believe I hit it for it
 stopped fluttering as it ~~fell~~ disappeared in deep woods. As
 moved in and Kay found herself standing on the bird before the
 dogs located it - a young hen. after all the stress of the
 situation this made everything right. Dixie picked it up,
 then refused the retriever - this' been a bitch today - so I
 pulled her off and let Shadows do the retriever in style, getting
 to deliver. Feeling wonderful, we hunted on up the valley.

A fourth quon flushed from a tree and crossed the creek. Later we
 crossed above and flushed a woodcock twice. That was it. Country
 looks good but we wanted to head home after 3 1/2 hrs. so
 returned to car. The thorn field is loaded with red hawthorns.
 (Sunday Cox called and said he'd now hunted there ~~Wed.~~ & moved 17 quons
 Wed. (?)

On way home we stopped to see Fosters and while there
 foolishly left the quon & woodcock in car with dogs and Bliss
all the quon. All of it. Just to carry me back to original
 mood.

young hen: inter
 (Bliss at this one
 in car that inter)

Moved 4 - 5 flocks
 one shot - one hit quon
 moved 2 cock . 1 shot - 1 hit.

Shadows } 1 ret w.c.
 1 ret quon
 Dixie } 1k. "
 Bliss } 1 kill "

Monday 26 October Hot, dry day. Waited until late afternoon and tried the Houdershell Place. Perfect cover, loads of grapes here, as everywhere in our areas, but few birds today. Kay heard two flushes in hemlock cover near power line out where Bliss was working (were using Bliss alone). Followed across to where I guessed they would go and again Kay heard a flush - near me she said - that was the end of my contact. Hunted till we reached Cupps Run and had to turn back for lack of light. Lovely and cool after the sun had set.

Moved 3-3 flushes

No photo

Bliss worked beautifully in fine range and quartered the cover like a veteran

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Wednesday 28 October Too hot & dry to hunt yesterday. Today Kay & I took Meade & Betty Foster to Stony River Dam. Early, partly cloudy and cooler up there, we tried to locate the area where Tess & Rhinohart got into birds last year but found it around one too many shoulders to reach in time. On first small ridge my dogs - Dixie & Bliss moved a woodcock that we flushed (Dixie was swinging out to scent as it went out, coming at me and then swinging left) and I shot - an adult hen. Meanwhile Meade & Betty had moved our quonot which we followed and Tess bumped again. After an sortie across the first main stream and turning back, Kay & I skirted the site of the original quonot flush - the section with Hawthorn & holly, both loaded with fruit this year - and I came on Dixie on point with Bliss backing - a beautiful job.



Key heard the first grouse go out, I heard & saw #2 and then both saw & heard #3. What a brace of dogs! Calling M. & B. in followed. Tess bumped one of the birds, D. & B. bumped the next, but stood steady at flush. Next came another beautiful double point <sup>(Key took a miss)</sup> by D & B - a hot spot but the bird had gone. Next, I saw Dixie run into one of the birds on the edge of some woods. I saw the bird flash from D. before she was aware of it. On the next rise Meade walked into the grouse and shot it - an adult hen, I thought. One more flush from me and the dogs and that was the end of it except that after putting Meade & Betty into the ravine that empties into Storm River below the dam, Key & I arranged to circle and meet them at the car. When we arrived, it was nearly dark but no sign of Forsters. I drove the car to the bridge below the dam and I set out in falling darkness with flashlight to find them. Key blew car horn, I blew my whistle and at last I heard a shot far downstream! Finally made contact and got them back - both good sports about it, but it couldn't help being an unpleasant feeling in strange country. Why did they go downstream to find a dam which had to be above? On my back, we ate miserable food at Mt. Storm lodge but I learned of fair grouse prospects in area.

(My 1962 key still will fit the new lock for Storm River, tho the gate was open due to lock being replaced).

(personally) Meade 4 grouse - 10 flushes  
 heard 3-7 (flushes) no shots  
 moved one woodcock - 1 shot - 1 hit  
 Dixie: 1 prod grouse  
 Bliss: 1 backst. "  
 good dog work.

Friday 30 October : This we shall call Black Friday. Yesterday we had a badly needed rain. Today was perfect, cool, sunny, and, for a while, damp. We decided to go to Mt. Storm to try Jay Scullato's suggestion and then get John Kitzmiller at Lodge and try his thicket. First stop near road house this side of Mt. Storm and parked on old road that leads back to bridge on Story R. Walked north thru flat woods - fir looking - and soon saw Dixie on point and heard a woodcock flush and almost immediately flop back down within yards of us. It soon reflushed another short distance which I marked. Iibly both Dixie & Bliss seemed unable to get scent and D. finally ran into it, sending it directly at me. The cock chimed vertically within feet of my left shoulder and I made a foolish try for it as it lurched & missed, starting a chain of shooting such as I barely remember since I started hunting.

Following the little run up toward the road house I came to Bliss on a beautiful point - solid as old Ruff.

I required Kay & Dixie came in and lurched. The woods was moderately open and the next was mine - as Kay rolled the more. The cock floated not flushed, and dodged behind a tree - I waited for a cock and fired as it came into view, missed, and missed again with the left as it disappeared. You are not supposed to miss woodcock, both barrels.



LIKE RUFF

We followed, got a wild flush that started a Canada on a line behind a



shanty, got a productus by D. and moved the bird over again into woods we  
had already cleared. Passing to eat, we circled searching in Jay  
Shelton's brushy edge on the far side, failed to find it and worked  
east when we are sure we came onto the area he described. A huge  
hazelnut, crabapple field red - and yellow - with both hawthorn  
and dotted thorn (?) We covered it fairly well with no results until  
I made a sortie on far edge where I turned to see a grouse sailing  
into a low jet just behind the edge of cover. I took a long try -  
should have used the left barrel - and the bird twitched its wings  
and sailed down the slope. Kay marked it into the far woods below  
and we followed - a tremendous flight. Finally heard D. bark and  
assume it was our bird. It was getting after 4:00 (sun time) and  
we hunted back, flushing a woodcock twice, ~~then~~ <sup>after hearing</sup> a grouse  
go out. Following grouse I saw B. bump another woodcock and  
put it out again on its short flight, chasing. I insisted on calling her  
in and reforming and in the confusion <sup>recognition</sup> a bird flushed from the  
very edge of the little run. I swung on a rising left quarter  
shot and not until I missed did I recognize it as the grouse -  
an indication that I was certainly not seeing the bird before  
mounting. Next, the woodcock was reflushed and came directly at  
me, rising as it saw me and turning. I made a lovely two-barrel miss  
that added salt to my wound. Someone has said no one should ever  
miss a woodcock. Perhaps his right, but that person would miss a lot of  
shots. Actually, I believe woodcock in ordinary hardwood cover

are more difficult than in desert alders. At least, for me. We followed and as I stood on the bank of the little stream I saw Dixie make game on a small island in the run but she did not point. The bird flushed, crossing left in a low float (disconcerting) and I dropped it at close range. I made a beautiful rebound across the stream. Even then the bird had to be despatched but if I had centered it there would have been no bird (but no credit to my shooting). We returned to the car and hurriedly moved to sub. Storm Edge and decided against ~~calling~~ <sup>calling</sup> for (at)quill at this late hour - after five. Parked at beer "joint" this side and while Kay stayed in car with D. & B. I took shadows into dense alder bottom. Some flushed a large hen woodcock that gave me a typical respect cross shot for a short glimpse over thicket and I dropped it solidly. I do better in this case. Shadows returned nicely and we hunted on. I have no idea how far this cove extends but it is bounded by woods on east and a margin of woods on left. Shadows was out too far on the latter and made a gain that crossed left over low cove and too far for a try. But such is the frame of mind of a man who's been missing I could not hold back a left barrel try that missed. Followed this bird accurately but it went out of a tree overhead and landed away, nearly a #1 station high house shot at. Shut. I missed. This is one of my weakest shots, even when in form.

thought just under edge, but I assumed it had crossed the road. I  
cried and heard another grouse flush ~~in~~ east woods but it went too far to  
follow.

Coming back I walked into a creek on edge that I marked &  
S. walked into. (I have never seen him point a woodcock, as well as  
he nails them to retrieval by scent. Odd.) I held back from shooting  
but followed and on far edge S. again bumped the bird. It was now  
nearly dark but I tried for it low and almost invisible - missed, fired  
the left barrel and that I hit. But Shadow hunted hard in  
the entire area and I think he would have found it.

Returned to car to find Kay talking to young friend who  
said there were "pheasants" above the road and about everywhere. (Joe Kuhns)

This was a day to remember with parts to forget. My wife, who is  
adept <sup>in</sup> the care and feeding of a psychotic, made a sterling  
observation on the way home that helped. Since it is accepted  
that no one hits every shot, it is logic that on certain days these  
misses should occur in strings - just as, rarely, hits follow one another.

Miss thought from a nice gal if fluster  
March 2 grouse, 1st count, 2 grouse latter 3 fluster.  
4 shots grouse - no hits  
9 shots w.c. - 2 hits  
Bliss: mod. w.c.  
Dove 2 " " lashed about  
1st w.c.  
Shadow 1st w.c.

13 shells!!

Saturday 31 October Kay & I took Bliss along to Upper Dority.  
Hot, sunny, dry & noisy. ~~Asa~~ Sypolt's house sold out & gone and we parked  
below their place in bottom. Hunted up lower log road (land parted now  
in name of P.C. Warwood?) and  $\frac{2}{3}$  up found birds — what seemed to be  
three flushed from edge of path in front of Bliss. She was sluggish and  
tired and got no scent but stood at flush. We followed up the ridge, I  
in cover below path but the grass must have dropped across the run.  
Turned down at "jeep road" and in rho. in bottom B. walked into  
#4 in a thick clump that flushed from her, not by her. Followed down  
the left side of run and heard #5 go out — which we followed and reflected  
wild from a hemlock. No more action until we climbed the steep side across to  
creek to hunt top edge to high clearings where Kay heard a bird flush wild  
from edge of woods. There are plenty of grouse in ravine near power line and  
good quambrier in high clearing and other places. We were about 5:30  
and near dark when we dropped over to the hanthoris across from the  
Sypolt place but there was no one home. I do think B. had flushed and  
chased a bird down over on our way up the spine of the ridge. But  
we could be reasonably sure of 6 grouse. But no shots. Grouse are  
increasingly difficult to get a look at, which suggests that these  
may be the adult birds and survivors of former seasons — not this  
year's broods — and therefore that much wiser. Not good news. But we  
have hope there will be more here later on.

Bliss: worked half-heartedly  
and I wish I had brought  
Diane to pass her.

ward 6 - 8 flushes.  
No shots

Monday 2 November Took car to Elmy Ford for work and in  
borrowed car, drove to Garletts. Hunted cover around deserted  
Morgan farm. Cover, feed perfect. But nothing. In late evening  
tried good cover across road from car (Chitt's boy said "lots" of  
birds). Again nothing.

No shots

Disc alone, who worked  
beautifully, tho hot.

Tuesday 3 November Election Day. Voted and then Ray dropped  
me at DeBery's. Using Bliss alone, I hunted up Little Sandy,  
moving a grouse very near Ron & Puth's, two flushes. Heard  
two more on steep cliff across from 4th Camp for 3 flushes. No  
shots. Met Ray at bridge at 5:30. All cover excellent but  
not enough birds

Heard 3-5 flushes

Bliss

No shots

[On way down, passed near summit] a lovely sweet cherry; front-organ leaves still on  
with the branches and bark of fermented rhododendron in sun!  
Wednesday 4 November Off again for Blackwater. Stopped at  
Mt. Storm to hunt Bud Cox area behind fodge. Instead of

12, we heard 2 or three at most. But Shadow's accident - ran  
all 3 dogs - a big mistake - put a crimp in more than his  
ear. Bad tear caused bleeding that Ray held for three hours,  
while I tried to sample the area. Disappointing after first section.  
Bliss went sour after I tried to force her to hunt sides of  
path (she usually does it naturally).

Back at car, tired, we decided to make to alder covert west of ridge.  
 again Kay waited in car with both S. & B. this time and I took D.  
 for a last turn before dark. Moved nothing till mid began cordling  
 back on right margin when D. pointed as a cock flushed. Walked  
 to her and put up #2, a high climbing bird that I folded as it  
 landed. D. found it on edge of stream but would not retreat it to me.  
 Another bird flushed, and then D. pointed #4. This one went out  
 beyond screen of alders and I tried a shot ~~thru~~ cover and felt  
 my gun barrels stop. On follow, D. made a third production but  
 the cock went out too wild for a shot. D. made still another point  
 with two birds ahead. No shots. Rejoined Kay at dark. This is an  
 excellent small covert. No sign of the grouse tonight.

Drove to Blackwater and learned we were to have our good old  
 Cabin 22. Nice. Before fire just as we were going to eat, Shadow's  
 ear began bleeding again. Finally got it stopped with compress of  
 terral paper & adhesive which we left in place for several days.

Made 3 grouse - 4 fleas  
 Made 6 woodcock  
 2 shots w.c. - 1 hit (adult hen).  
 S.  
 D.  
 B.

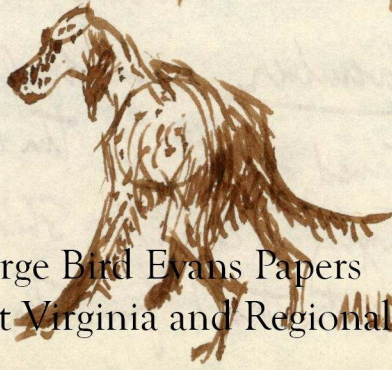
Thursday 5 November Looked up Mel Heath and let him "guide" us  
 to birds. It turned out to be the Canyon Trail on Backbone but we gave it  
 a while, Kay staying in car with Shadow because of his ear. I used D. & B.  
 and hunted down the trail from the upper end. Found a lot of woodcock cover but

no food. Even quail were devoid of berries, the good tangles. Weather nice and sunny and fairly cool. I hunted about 1 mile down until Mel pattered along near the top. One grouse flushed quietly from also. and perched on sapling while the dogs worked below it. I waited several minutes but the bird did not flush until I walked in, when it went out while I was blocked by cover. It looked a young bird. I reached point where R. & I had walked from far end this summer and regretted I'd not arranged for K. & Mel to drive to lower end and let me hunt through. Returned and saw < M.H. on a rock and recognized Mel's sign he had turned back.

Rejoined them and we drove the Rim Road back, I getting out and hunting edge of bog below the road (could have made one bird from D's action). K. & M. drove to Big Run overlook & saw a grouse in the road near "border trail". Near Thomas, Mel pointed out the 30 ft falls in N. Fork of Blackwater - one of the falls mentioned by Porter Crayon.

Leaving Mel at his house, we hurried to the Gates. It had turned quite cold with a high wind. Began at 4:30 with D. & B. D. hit a lovely point in mid-stand, B. backing but the 'cock got out as I flushed. Before I could spot it. Followed to dog path where B. pointed to my right & 2' cock got out, no chance for a shot. Found D. in aspens on a beauty of a point, been there for some time, but again the bird got going too soon for me. Flushed this one as follow-up, then circled to where K. had marked one of B's birds. In exact spot where Bliss had pointed her first 'cock in training season, she hit a solid point with D. backing. I shot this one, a hen.

Long run off film and while she changed rolls, I took dogs into basin cover.



Then I walked into two snags, dropping each - a cock & a hen.  
 No birds in far aspen tonight. On return both dogs indicated  
 scent where K. had heard a flicker wild. In falling dark, I made a  
 fine high point with B. barking and when I walked in a cock flushed  
 well ahead of us - strong wind carrying scent. Another double point  
 on edge of aspen clearing but no bird when I walked in. Perhaps wind  
 was putting these birds up wild. Heard about 8 tonight - in a bit over an  
 hour. This is real sport in lieu of grouse. Saw newest possible  
3 shots - 3 hits WC

Review of recent Hunters' Moon over Chimney Rock or Cannon Mt. at sunset.  
 Bliss's bird was young hen; other adult cock & hen. Fall early cock  
 had gone after our first week. All these flight bird stragglers, or are more  
 to come? Mild weather has been exceptional. And dry. Bliss & Dixie

Friday 6 November Clear, cool, lovely. Used Shadows today for  
 the first, his car being well sealed, with Bliss. Parked just across  
 bridge from Davis. Talked to a man gathering firewood on electric right-of-way.  
 He had flushed 3 or 4 grouse about 15 minutes earlier on power line. This was  
 much to order.

Angling from the river up ~~at~~ telephone line, we came to where he'd  
 described the flush and I visualized where the birds would have gone.  
 After some work by dogs, I sent them into small cover at left (about  
 Weimer Spring). Circling back to open power line I heard a grouse  
 flush from below me to the left and saw it cut along power line  
 across in front of me, left to right. I waited the magic moment, gun  
 stock tucked against my ribs (I'm proud of this) and then overtook, down



them and fired, tumbling the bird ~~silly~~ in a circle of feathers,  
What a sensation. Blisran in at the fall in dense rho.



on far side and as I crossed the rocky footing of the clearing, a second bird flushed 15 yards to my left and cut for the woods in a low right-quarter shot. I fired instinctively and too quickly then cover (there was no time for more) and the bird disappeared as shadows came bounding out of the opening at the woods edge. If I'd hit, the bird would have fallen on him. It was actually a close shot to him but I hadn't known he was in there. Bless left the fallen bird for the new shot, but shadows soon located the bird and retrieved it, sitting to deliver (old Ruff style). a young hen. Was using 55% - 70% loads.



and one we referred #2 from a humlock. Covered the side under reservoir and the west side along lower margin with no visible contacts, tho K. that she might have seen a quon's flush at one place. When we stopped to eat, I ~~let~~ opened the crop of the bird: full of seeds <sup>and</sup> the narrow serrated hairs of low ground birch that grows everywhere here - poor prolander to my mind. About 2:30, went to Cassan Valley when K. depicted Dave and me to hunt right side of road along Blackwater across from 9th, while she drove back to chat with Ben Thompson's mother. I found this area poor. Swampy, too acid, no cattle and the ground in spruce thickets by morning, it had no attraction: one white mark <sup>spot</sup> in <sup>apple</sup> <sup>clump</sup>.

D. returned for me at 4:00 and we used D. & B. in Gates,  
 hunting some area on right of road beyond crab thicket. No birds.  
 Crossed and near aspen clearing heard a wild flush from dogs - and  
 caught a high and distant right crossing cock with right barrel -  
 folding it solidly. Sent dogs to locate but tho they worked carefully,  
 hunting hard, they could not find it. I remarked to R that we  
 were in the right spot for feathers were still floating down. As they  
 continued to fall about us, I began to grasp the situation and looking  
up, saw the cock directly over us, lodged in thorn branches. I  
 had to reach it with my gun barrels and when it dropped almost  
 on D., she picked it up - a cock bird.

In second aspen clump, found D. on point with B. backing. Walked  
 in from the front but D had it well out. The bird flushed behind and  
 to my left. I made a fast shot & saw it falter, then fly on with  
 legs dangling, giving a good flight before settling on far edge of next  
 thicket. Followed & came on B. on point. There was a flutter ahead  
 and D. ran in (she may have had the point herself) <sup>and the bird</sup>  
 managed to make a low flight just above the spires, <sup>legs still dangling</sup> I centered it  
 well and it folded. How the woodcock got off the ground I'll never know.  
 It was another male. Regret this crippling. Other than a smooth flush R.  
 that she heard, these were the only two birds of the morning. Odd after  
 last winter's birds. Did the wind sweep them out?

- Bliss: 1 kill grouse
- Shadows: 1 kill " "
- 1 net "
- new, young: inter
- crop: stuffed & mounted
- 2 shots W.C. 2
- 2 shots grouse - 3 flushes
- 2 shots grouse - 1 hit
- (pubes) narrow ground birch leaves

Saturday 7 November

Hot & sunny. Larry Schweb & Edie

arrived at Cabin 22 for two short sessions. The first on north side of Pt. 32 above Davis. They missed one grouse from cover where I shot my

bird three (I think) years ago & near where Fox missed 7 in 1959.

Reflected with no shot. Kay & I hunted completely circle to rocks & back to car after L. & E. left for Casperway meeting at Blackwater. They met us at car at 3:40 & we drove to Gates. We had used S. & B. on first hunt.

There we got Larry his first taste of woodcock shooting. D. with B. backing made a lovely point in middle aspens, much like a point the other side. I walked in but the bird was behind me when it flushed. I tried for it - a good chance straightaway but I had a moment's hesitation about shooting that direction. Anyway, I missed an easy one. The bird crossed in front of Larry and we heard him shoot twice and saw the bird fall at second shot. D. found and retrieved it in dense alders, to Larry's sincere delight. His first woodcock and a nice shot.

Later I walked D & B into the "corridor" and B missed a cock that I felt I would drop - but didn't. A left quarter over the alders - one I've hit many times. That was it - two birds and I think the count pretty well empty unless further flights drop in. I never can concentrate on shooting when I'm conducting a shoot - always thinking about what to do with the other people and where they are. Guess I'm a "loner". This was less than satisfactory end to the trip.

Returned to dinner at the Inn. 2 shots we. no into woodcock but grouse - 3 flushes. S. B. B.

On return, B made a convincing pt. in aspen clearing - very solid - D backing. But the bird was not there.

Monday 9 November Meade called and invited us to hunt the  
 coast near Gormanville where he'd made 12 quail. Weather still lovely  
 tho' terribly dry & noisy. I and Dixie only, leaving B & S at home.  
 Betty was going along - unexpected to us - so she outfitted Kay in her  
 gear and Kay was wearing leather boots. M & B hunted below the steep  
 mine road and Kay & I took the area above. We left Foster's car at  
 Stoyer, drove out to side road at top of mountain above Gormanville.  
 Hawthorns red with fruit, and some grapes on vines. D. made a  
 beautiful point on edge of clearing but there was no bird. Stopped to  
 eat a hot and soon after heard Meade shoot after Tex barked.  
 I analyzed a tree grouse. Shortly I saw D. ahead, either moving in to  
 establish a point or not yet solid and saw a grouse flush up the  
 ridge. Kay had been a bit upset at blackwater & not yet too pert - so  
 I had her stay below while I followed. At top I came to a little  
 spring hollow with beech & some oaks that looked good. Dixie was  
 working like a dream today and I let her cover it but found nothing.  
 Starting out the ridge with D. still behind me, I saw a movement  
 under a log and a grouse flushed low and away - right. I waited for  
 a good focus on the bird, mounted and fired and saw the bird tumble over,  
 a gratifying shot. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ D. located and made a nice retrieval.  
 The bird was a large adult hen.



Hunted to top of ridge - good paper and thick but ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ On way back  
 to K. I that I might have seen a ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ West Virginia and Regional History Center

Kay & I hunted most the hill after getting together. Cover a bit too open with too few tangles for cover. at top there were hemlock bushes with dotted thorn in what should have been a good cover. No birds. at road again opposite from Styer we hunted out the road. D. made a bird from steep hillside and thurley covered up of me. Kay saw it cross to below the road when we fledged it from a hemlock. We hunted on and came back via an old log road near river. at one point on path I must have stopped for the grouse bored out of a tree behind and above and I wheeled to throw a shot at it going down river but missed. Rejoined made a trail at river which we waded - very shallow and full of mine acids. Made had shot 3 woodcock & missed one grouse. Tess had pointed all and one grouse extra for good luck!

We made 2 grouse - 5 flushes

Dice: 1 bill grouse  
1 set "

adult hen: inter

2 shots grouse - 1 hit.

crops: grapes & fern tips



Tuesday 10 November Hunting in W.Va. declared cloud at 6:00

p.m. route because of fire hazard. So Kay & I went to Upper Dority, going in at upper end. Left Shadows in the car and and Dice & Bleris. Made nothing until we hunted down lower road on the choir hillside. First grouse flushed above me after I had passed. No chance to shoot at bird which topped cave and headed back. While I bent over to tie my boot lace which was dangling, Kay called, "Did you see that grouse?" I hadn't. It had flushed from dog directly over my head and down toward

the stream. What a chance for an meowmer. Further on we  
 heard #3 flash from deep below the path & across the stream. After  
 circling with no results we dropped from top of ridge to stream  
 and ran and then, in gathering darkness, up the valley toward the  
 car. Just after crossing the last ford I was on path when Day  
 repeated his question did I see that grouse. Again, no bird  
 came over me with no sound. Today wasn't my day Poor Shadows  
did not get out at all due to darkness; Poor George didn't see  
the birds.

Mixed 4 grouse (1 new) - 4 flickers Dixie  
 Bliss

No shots.

And so we sit and wait for rain.

Wednesday 18 November Season in W. Va. still closed tho we had a  
 good rain a few days ago. Today cool, sunny, lovely & we took off  
 for Pennsylvania, via Potomac Preserve to buy a non-resident  
 license. Advised none available anywhere but county courthouses.  
 Decided to heck with that, as so moved on to Sam Wallekins at  
 Linstombury where we explained our position, parked and started hunting  
 up Winding Ridge along brink of Whites Creek leaving poor Shadows for  
 yet another time. Wright Springer, Andy Culley & Stan Thack had been  
 over home last week (with Bonnie and Rebel) and reported plenty of  
 grouse in the area. We found that

part of the ridge they hunt and in rather too open cover - tho lots of acorns & grapes. After some climbing we reached Corn Rocks & on edge of rhododendron, I saw D. & B. run into a grouse that topped the also. and the shoulder of the ridge. Paused for a bite of food and about 3:50 climbed over rock ledge and into the basin above, to find a perfect setting of timber slashings, brush heaps and loads of grapes. While Kay waited, I creaked down and into the tangle. At one place I saw D. nit scent & trail into a brushy mass of vines. Instead of stopping on point, she moved out of sight and burrowed a grouscent - inexcusable, for the bird was almost pinned by the cover. It came out low, straight at me, veered and I turned, confident I would drop it going away. I should not have shot, tho the bird was in the open, for I sensed it was too near Kay's direction, but I called, "Drop!" and fired indecisively and missed. This was too risky. Kay was a bit to the left and took no more of the bird going past her.

Incidentally, she did not hear my warning "Drop!"

after some expletives re the tracks I've been getting we moved, together this time, around the upper brim of the basin of slashings. We had scarcely reached the section above the site of the flush when I heard and saw another grouse explode from a tangle and, veering to miss me, bore up the slope. I could see an old deformity of the tail feathers as it passed. Calling "Duck out, boy" I turned on



take this one as a right-quartering shot, dropping it as it made the  
brow of the slope - well away from my who was on her knees behind  
me and getting a noise of the cloud of feathers in the air.

Dixie was in at the fall and made the retrieve - a nice large  
cock - a young bird - with the center tailfeathers missing but with  
short replacements newly growing out. The bird was centered and limps,  
from the 55% right barrel. I'm using the 3/4-1/8-1/2 lead now  
in right barrel. This made a wonderful difference in our outlook.

Completed the circle of the basin and saved another bird from a  
similar location with no look at it. It was getting on toward 5:00 and  
we ~~had~~ a long way to go. But we took the far end near the head  
of the run, moving # 5 from near the base of the ledge on the way -  
no view of it. Not too sure I should not work Dixie alone for she  
looks to D. for guidance and D. is none too staunch on grouse in spite  
of her beautiful work on 'cock. Certainly grouse are the most difficult of  
all birds for a dog to handle.

On the way down a path (this area is woven with old log roads)  
I saw B. run down ahead as tho she had seen a grouse. When we reached  
the area we heard two more go out, marking one which we doubled back to  
follow out the shoulder, unsuccessfully. It was nearly dark now and we had to  
take the most direct line to Wilhelm's - thru poor cover. But the pleasant  
feel in my game pocket made the walk enjoyable. Good old country.

Ward 8 - 8 flushes  
2 shots - 1 hit

Dixie: 1 red  
bill

young cock: center tail missing  
crip: graphs, greens, fern



On the next day, Thursday, we awoke to a hard, steady, soaking rain and W. Va. reopened the season for 6:00 a.m. tomorrow Friday. That gave me \$25.00 for a Penna. license. - with one bee hunt and a lovely goose.

We still kept to make it to Watoga as we've been planning all these days.

Friday <sup>20</sup> ~~21~~ November See next page Yesterday's rain changed to a light snow.

We headed for the Pine Grove School area up Muddy Creek to try the farms Denver Cramer had suggested. Left both Shadows & Dixie in the station wagon and started up the old road with Bliss thru good cover all the way. At top, the fields are overgrown with greenberries, grapes and some pine plantings. The deserted house (bad shape) is in a lovely setting with a magnificent view of the Chestnut ridge and middle country. It was quite cold and windy.

We passed to eat among a group of huckleberries about the house and along a grown-up field bordered with stone fences. Behind was a perfect reynolds' indigo stand, not too solid & very much like old New England corals I've seen pictured.

Moving on after eating, Bliss ran into a grouse in heavy hanging greenberry berries, the bird flushing straight ahead, too far out. Following into brushy slashings, I walked into three more that got up separately and behind a dense screen of cover tho I took a shot at the last bird and missed. We changed course and followed these three into a stand of huckleberries (small area) where we refueled at least two of them. I walked thru more dried huckleberries than I've ever seen and failed to move any birds. Ahead was a big basin under Fick hill with many ~~many~~ <sup>many</sup> trees planted in old fields. Doubting back into slashings we were unsuccessful in moving

Friday 20 November Season reopened today after first closure.

Cold and windy with about an inch or less of snow. Kay & I took all three dogs to Pine Grove School area and parked Dixie & Shadows, using Bless. Took old road up the ridge thru good cover all the way to an abandoned farm on top where Denver Cramer had seen quons last year. Excellent cut-over with acres of greenbrier, grapes and brush so dense it was impassable. Followed out to old house with a view of heaven for Chestnut Ridge and nearby Breeries. Magnificent. Someone had planted fields to spruce & red pine.

After eating a bite in hummocks above house near old stone fences and brushy regrowth that looked ~~like~~ like New England grouse coverts, we started east toward more such cover. Bless was in front and bumped a quon that bored straight out - too far to shoot. Following, I walked into another flush, and another, and another - all from pile of brush in old slashings with view of birds too short for a shot, though I tried on then dense thicket and missed. Changing to follow these three birds to a small stand of hummocks we moved two with no shots. While Kay ~~was~~ <sup>worked</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~look for~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~glow~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~do~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~but~~ <sup>to</sup> I circled to the right into good dense cover that probably would have yielded birds if I had wanted to make a swing around to the head of a big basin that is headwaters of a tributary of Shuddy Creek. On edge of hummocks I came to an impenetrable patch of briars with blackberries hanging in dried black masses as I've never seen them before.

Rejoined Kay at hummocks and we circled to follow two of the birds flushed. While Kay returned to hummocks to look for her lost quon, I combed the area with no results. Upon Kay's return, she located the tree we had marked the flight of #1 by. We exchanged remarks while I tried to throw my frozen trigger finger by holding it inside <sup>the</sup> collar ~~and~~ my shirt. Finally, after much talk ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> each other, I began pulling

my glass on — cumbersome with its wool lining — and as I stood there  
the grouse flushed fifteen yards to my left and made a right-quartering  
rising flight in absolute open and on full view of me as I struggled  
and mumbled incoherencies and watched it go. A flight I'll probably  
never forget and a chance I'll no doubt never have again. Those powers to it,  
but what a moment! Ray marked it down over the far brim by a big tree.  
I waded over the steep valley into a hillside of boulders and snow that clung  
to every stem and twig, and did most it out ahead. Following it back, a  
grouse flushed from overhead in a mass of grapes in a tall tree — grapes  
everywhere — and pitched down into the valley. We did not reflect the  
particular bird I was following but I am sure it was a new one from the

tall grapes. It was five o'clock, and cold as the devil and we struck out for the  
car — a long trek down another road that joined ours above the car. We  
think B. may have heard a grouse for she gave evidence of much excitement. She  
did not particularly please me with her work today — needed D. to force her  
and get her into thick cover, and I can't understand, with her nose, why she  
doesn't get some trace of scent in time to point, considering her work on  
quail & woodcock.

at the car I was nearly dark but while Ray drove out the road  
to town, I gave D. & S. a short run along the road. It's all good down  
and we intend to return very soon.  
Moved 5-9 flashes  
~~the shot~~ shot - no hit  
Bliss  
Dixie } quarter-hour turn  
Shadows }

Saturday 21 November Today we moved the quail from the 9-acre  
pine field to our dog kennel to have trays ready to put in the house  
during our trip to Waluga Sunday  
George Bird Evans Papers  
West Virginia and Regional History Center

1641 #31  
Shadows about (Ray was busy at home & left D. & B.) to the Scott Place.

It was late when we started, very windy and cold but snow gone. Shadows was inclined to move out too far tho he hunted hard and amazingly for an eleven-year-old. #1 flushed between us and S. turned back toward me & I saw it cross the ridge road too far to shoot. No more birds for a long spell tho I hunted past the old Scott Place - grapes, apples - and out the ridge along the side. Think S. may have had a bird at one time for he was gone long and came in at last quite excited. Turned back on the top and hunted the upper area back there ~~some~~ grapes that made the ground look like fruit cake. At last reached a transverse road. I remembered taking

up to the ridge road and once nearing a bird. Followed it and as S. neared me, saw a grouse flush just beyond the path on my right - a steeply rising left-quarter that I tried for, instinctively, those tree branches and saw the grouse tumble. I reloaded and sent S. in to retrieve with no sense of urgency for the bird had gone down hard. S. had no idea of the area of the fall and it took a few moments to get him out far enough. Once he was there, I waited for the delivery but to my surprise saw the grouse running toward me with a broken wing or wings. The bird seemed confused, paused not far away and seemed uncertain which way to run but definitely about doing so. Shadows was still searching about me and with the grouse within easy reach of dense tangles of grapes, there seemed one intelligent thing to do, rather than risk a loss. I shot its head off, must as I hated to do it.



It was a nice cove and Shadows seemed as gratified as I. It was late  
and I hunted back along the ridge road except to take a short  
turn to try to find the chestnut tree bay & I had found last winter on  
the last day. Tonight I failed to locate it. We mowed #3 (it could  
have been #1 reflected) and saw it bore out wild for ahead of me.  
That was it. Best a good hunt with my seventh grouse of the year,  
a beauty with a without its head.

Shadows: 1 kill  
1 ref.

Mowed 3 - 3 flocks

adult cove: solid

One shot - 1 hit

crops: full of grapes with some foam tips, *few birch leaves.*

And now I am writing this in Cabin 10 at Watoga on a cold,  
moonlight night after a drive from home (Sunday) thru magnificent  
mountains. High hopes of finding birds tomorrow and, who knows, a  
few grouse feathers in the cabin before long.

Monday 23 November after conference with Wayne Bailey on way in  
yesterday, decided to try the Black Mt. Trail on Cranberry Mountain.  
Sunny, moderately cool and beautiful. The ride to this area from Watoga  
and up Kenison Mt. is spectacular. Located the red pines and began  
hunting below them as per Bailey, using Dixie & Bliss. Stand of  
hazelnuts - largely the big dotted thorn, both red & yellow, with lots  
of fruit both on ground & in shrubs. Looked ideal but we found no one  
home tho D. made a good point <sup>George Bird Evans papers</sup> that could have been  
after the fact. We climbed the <sup>West Virginia and Regional History Center</sup> ~~hills~~ <sup>ridge</sup> - about

4250' elevation with some spruce and much more thorns on top. Still no birds, but a million-dollar view of the Cranberry Glades to the west. On the way up, I heard B. bark at something treed but since she responds to even robins & squirrels I can't count this a grouse. Had bit of time fidgeting a place not too steep to descend to road but returned to the car, a bit let-down. Drove out the road further but turned when we came to nothing inviting.

Returning to Rt. 39 we drove on up to Hills Creek and hunted along stream below road, <sup>using Shadors & Bliss,</sup> making out grouse. With better boots I couldn't cross the creek to follow and now ran out of a path to follow in dense rhododendron. Drove to Hell and Falls road and found it not good looking tho hunted a good turn back to highway. Drove over next divide to N. Fork of Cherry River and explored from the car, analyzing the many tributaries. Some look promising but inaccessible. On way back, stopped at Carpenter Creek and hunted best 20 or 30 minutes in near dusk, using D & B, & leaving K. in car with S. I got well up the ridge past a grouse up strip job, came across feathers when a hawk or owl had plucked a grouse. On level area I came onto Bliss in the path on point - her forepaw raised, nice tail. I stopped Dixie on backpoint as Bliss held, and I walked in past her.

There was no flush and I was willing a bird to be there.



DIXIE BACKING

Finally, after moving in 10 yards the dogs came forward and in a few moments the bird flushed ahead of me from *Abies* on the left of the path - too far to shoot. But it was the best sort of thing -

Bliss' first production on grouse.

Followed out a fork in the path but it was futile for there was too much cover ahead along the run. Had to turn back in near darkness and cut up to right fork of path and walked down the ridge to the car, with Bliss unable to give up hunting the sides all the way. More of this is what she needs.

Moved 2 - 2 flushes  
no shots.

Bliss: 1st production, grouse

Dixie.

Shadows

On way home stopped in Hillsboro & phone for Roy: good reports on grouse in his Black Mt. area & Tea Creek. Man at filling station gave me directions to good bird area on Praying Knob back of Fobler (Sherman Beard's pasture: thorns.)

Tuesday 24 November

Warmer & cloudy but still nice for hunting.

Following a tip from Herb Robinson, Supt. at Watoga, we hunted down Laurel Run on boundary of Park & Cal P. Pine Forest where we'd heard of a man moving 15 one day. Parked near old log house ruins in Burr Valley and using Shadows & Bliss, started down Laurel. This is dense rho., white pine & hemlock - so thick you have to push them. But we soon heard a ground flush from the dogs on the right bank below the road and saw the bird just long enough to comment as it crossed left into forest of pines. Within moments there was another flush into a *big white pine* and over the creek and the take off from there was an impossible shot, #3 fanned (sound only)

into a tree and out out of a tree. A group of three! Soon after # 41  
this # 4 made a similar get-away from ~~left~~ right to left with only  
a hint of the bird crossing. I creaked into big pine woods hoping to mark  
them back out but they probably set me walks under them.  
at small valley downstream Kay heard # 5 go out. Good area but  
poor chance. Robinson had described a tributary valley below this  
with good views from the left side as you hunt up. It is  
possible to hunt around and up one of these to top of low ridge and  
into Burr Valley - following the road back to the car. But we had  
plans to try Ephs Oliver's suggestion of the Divide Trail and had to  
return to the car. I cut thru the big woods making # 6 in little ravine  
below where car was parked. Kay heard the bird from where she was  
climbing field to the car and I made another circle dropping to  
near it. But in this case, you don't see them more than once, and  
seldom even there. Kay picked me up in the car at bottom of Burr  
Valley and we drove thru Hunterville, Mineral Springs to the  
Pine Area and down to the divide between Cochrans & Anthony Creeks.

Here at the trail, a road paving crew gave the information that  
there was grouse seen along the highway and that 3 had crossed  
that exact spot the night before at dusk. This was where a friend  
of Oliver's had made 10 on opening day hunting turkeys.

We drove off onto the old road of Divide Trail and parked at  
about 3:30. The area was typical low-ridge red brush cove with some  
few pines - much cut-over and with



and tearing vegetation - leaves & berries. We hunted a low shoulder, hitting the heads of the ravine (no amount of grapes here as we'd hoped) and missed nothing. During the final  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour of daylight we worked down to the mouth of one ravine to the highway and began hunting back toward the trail, hoping the grouse would repeat themselves at the crossing route.

Just below the Divick trail and almost in the ditch of the new highway, both D. & B. came onto them - two birds feeding under a hawthorn. I couldn't see the action, merely the flush as #1 & #2 rose and crossed the highway into a ravine on the far side. Curbing Blues from running into the road, I got Kay to me and we crossed with both dogs at heel. Sending them ahead, I hunted up the thick little ravine, hoping to have a view of a flush if it happened.

Well ahead I saw Dixie on a nice solid point, then saw her move in as the bird no doubt ran out, and heard a flush - glimpsing the left cross flight at the crest of the ridge.

I hurried up the steep left bank in order to follow when the other grouse seemed to come out of my right ear - of a pine tree growing on the ravine side. I wheeled and threw a frailer shot at it - away-left - and lost sight of the bird. Kay saw it after the shot but said it seemed to glide down into the hillside.

We searched the area it would logically have fallen but found nothing. I was starting to turn

follow #1 when it occurred to me that from Kay's position she had seen the bird at its highest point at the time of the shot, and then had seen it pitch over the shoulder of the hill in normal flight.

We worked around into a maze of brush hills among clackings - ideal hiding and almost too many places for the bird to be. The dogs were working nicely but it was almost dark and I was operating on adrenaline. In the trough of the ravine was a deep gully - tangled with brush and vines and with a log road up either bank. Pulling myself up the far side I tried to get the dogs down into the gully while Kay took the other road up. They made a few short starts but neither would go all the way down and I could hardly blame them.

I kept well over along the edge of the road and near the top of the gully heard the flush come up from the far side and saw the bird as it crested the bank - still below my eye-level - and rising. I swung firing as I went up them, and the bird tumbled onto the hillside above the far road and lay fluttering under a short clump of leafy oak brush.

Dixie was to the fall it and now wanted to Kay came up and Dixie but got nowhere. So I plunged straight down over the



I tried to direct but she hadn't seen search in the gully and her best to call

AT NEAR-DARK.

gully, and climbed the far bank - tree-to-tree - and up was Boy  
 now Dixie was ahead of me and got scent of the bird, wheeling up the  
 slope and retrieving nicely - a young hen which I had to dispatch.  
 This made the day, after a lot of hard hunting, and after my mis- a  
 great <sup>cause to</sup> elation!

Nov 6-6 - : Cal Price Forest  
 no shots

Shadows

Dixie: 1 prod  
 1 kill  
 1 ret

Nov 2-5 flushes: Dicks Trail  
 2 shots - 1 hit.

Bliss: 1 kill

young hen: inter

trap: loaded with hawthorn fruit (red), seeds & leaves.

Wednesday 25 November We drove to the cabin last evening in a  
 gentle sprinkle that increased during the night to a hard, steady  
 rain that lasted thru to past noon today. Then the sky broke and  
 the rain stopped; the clouds and an occasional mist persisted.

I phoned Wayne Bailey from the Supt's. office about 2:30 and we  
 arranged to meet in Huntersville about 3:00. From there we drove in  
 our station wagon thru Minniehaha Springs to the Douthett's Creek  
 road and up the east foot of Brushy Mountain, parking at the  
 Dock Trail there. On the way passed numerous small hollows  
 where the men at the general store in M. Springs last evening suggested  
 hunting.

Parked on trail at the divide and hunted up the headwaters of  
 M. Fork of Anthony's Creek in a gap between Beaver Lick & Brushy Mts.  
 The stream was at flood stage & the shooting and dropping after the rain.

And while there was much white pine down low, the higher we climbed the more the terrain looked like home. I walked into the first bird, flushing it from under a hawthorn beside the path in a clearing - a surprise flush but would have had a shot I believe if it had not flushed in Bailey's direction across the stream. I called "Mark!" only to hear his answer well ahead of where I had been placed. While he doubled back (he shot the grouse) Kay and I went on. After he rejoined us at the next crossing (this stream crosses the path, or inversely, countless times) a second grouse flushed from the mountain laurel beside us but neither got a shot.

The narrow path and wet foliage (both rhododendron & laurel) made it necessary to walk one behind the other and Bailey was good enough to insist that I take the lead, saying, "This is your hunt." This was generous and I appreciated it. But when further along #3 flushed from a tree and out back in a high left-crossing flight well out, his gun went off like an echo to my shot. The grouse tumbled on the far side of the stream. I have no way of knowing if I dropped it or if he did. It's one of the unfortunate parts of hunting close to a companion, tho' I question his shooting at all. Dixie retrieved and was about to bring the bird across the run when she shot better of it and lay down with the bird beside her. I think perhaps Kay's walking in for a word of a possibly unusual water crossing may have disturbed her.

I tried to get Wayne to accept the grouse as his bird but he refused - he is, I think, a phenomenal shot. When I caught Kay's lode and warning head-shake, I knew she felt I'd hit the bird so didn't press it any further. But a shared bird is never the gratifying experience of knowing you've made the shot. (When the bird was ~~shot~~ dressed there were only two pellets in evidence the other wounds with the pellets missing. Compared with a pellet taken from yesterday's bird, these pellets appear almost identical tho there is that shade of doubt. However, two more pellets from yesterday's bird appeared considerably larger than the one taken from the same bird. There was some distortion but I'm led to believe there is appreciable variation in size within any one specified shot.

So again, I'll never know but am giving myself the benefit of the question and counting it a hit. It isn't all that important.

We hunted all the way to the top of the low gaps. Wayne says the far side is even better grouse cover normally and the three birds we made were far below far in this area. It was about dark when we got back to the car after walking the 1/2 or 2 miles as rapidly as we could. No birds moved on this return. Dixie & Bliss worked beautifully together and within good range, tho I don't understand their not warbling #1 bird in that clearing.

young hen: inter.  
crop: ginned with  
shredded wild grapes.

Mars 3-3 flocks  
One shot - 1 hit

Dixie 1 kill  
1 net  
Bliss 1 kill

Thursday, 26 November

A cancellation made it possible for us to keep the cabin our route and so, with a perfect sunny day - just cool enough - we drove to the Williams River country to try out its reputation. Drove first to Tea Creek and began hunting up the valley of that stream. But a truck was parked there about us and fresh tracks indicated any birds along the path would probably have been moved. The cover was not too promising to my eye - beech and maple with no other food in evidence; rhododendron along the stream in flood stage so we could not cross to better cover on far side. After a while we turned back & hunted the hillside back. I had to reprimand Bless of hunting too wide. She is inclined to this more with Shadows, who himself was ranging too far out. While the lesson was in progress (her first light switching) Shadows made a bird that he heard go out wild.

At the car, we drove on up the road that climbs Turkey Mt. but again the cover did not appeal. We ended at about 4500 in flats along Williams River above Roy's house (he had recommended these carts). Finally after covering good thorn area in river bottom with no results, we headed for the "Public Hunting Grounds," a term I don't understand since all the hat. Forest is open to hunting and while the cover was fair, there was little trace of food and no birds. I wish in a sense, I'd gotten touch with Joe Roy & had him take me out. But I don't enjoy a companion, especially one who has shot a partner grouse hunting! A big disappointment for the last day.

Made 1 - 0 flush Tea Creek Shadows  
 no shots  
 George Bird Evans Papers  
 West Virginia and Regional History Center

Friday 27 November Last evening phoned Walt Losen & arranged to meet him on Cheat Mt. at 1:30. The day was perfect tho a shade warm and we drove up from Watoga via Seven Forest, Arbovale and Boyer. There are rumours of birds in the latter area and between the two we discovered a vast thorn bottom that looks like business for woodcock next year. Walt later confessed it was a fabulous 'cove cover' and one of his favorites. We'll see more of it next season. Also inquired at Star in Arbovale and got good reports on grouse in two areas listed below.

Walt was late but he'd arranged to have the local resident game manager take us down a "gated" road to distant cove and we would hunt back. Kay took Shadows & Dixie with her and drove on to Ellins to shop & visit. Gale Sweeney or Sweeney, the game manager, was a likeable fellow and I rode in the jeep track cab with him while Walt took Bliss & Star on the open truck body. Passed several bow deer hunters, a serious tribe, and at last began hunting back along the old road thru excellent food and cover areas. The Dept. had done some cutting of brush and clearings under Walt's direction - the best effort I've seen to date - and we should have moved more birds in these old thorn orchards. Walt took 3 shots - one I would love to have had ~~me~~ coming out of brush straight at him from the road's edge but I did not see a feather. Star made a nice point at one site of flush and a production above me with Walt. I gather she is a good one but today she was reaching to far out - possibly because of Bliss tho B. stayed in front of me, hunted ~~to himself~~ and engaged perfectly.

I took a most climbing rather much in the sun, then felt a bit chilled when I turned the shoulder of the mountain in deep <sup>cool</sup> shadows and think that's when I picked up the cold that developed after we returned home.

In Elkins met Kay at Lewis' (they had engagements that evening) and we had a good dinner at the Elkins Hotel and then drove home.

March 4-4 (did not see any of them) Bliss  
No shots

Reviewing the Watoga trip: The country was magnificent and the Cabin 10 delightful, as was the Park and the Robinsons. Am convinced there are some birds here - a lot in good years. But I question the high mountains as the place to hunt for them. Think the lower ridges east of Watoga would be the place to concentrate with the following coverts worth investigating next time:

Cal Price Forest: Laurel Run (boundary road) down to 1st main tributary and up that to 1st tributary from left. Up that and other valleys to Burn Valley Road.

Brushy Mt. Up Douthett's Creek. Small hollows from right side have grapes and birds. At head of creek, the Divide Trail we took with Bailey. Perhaps over to west side

Divide Trail between Cochrane Creek and Anthony's Creek (new road - any good hollows along the new road.

Laurel ~~Run~~ Creek in opposite direction from above (North from <sup>st.</sup> 39.)  
Top 40 mt along Va. line north from <sup>st.</sup> 39 and toward Forest



For possible further trail: Black Mt, trail on Cranberry Mt.  
Hills Creek east of rt 39.

N. Fork Cherry River tributaries (Carpenter Run etc.)

Williams River area, Tea Creek etc

Joe Roy, mgr.

S. Fork Cranberry River gated from road to  
river & hunt either direction. (long walk.)

Sharps Knob area: west from 219 between

Slaty Fork & Edray, road marked "Mount Minis"  
at Mt Lebanon School

Briery Knob: turn west below Sobler & Sherman  
Beard's pasture land, <sup>on left</sup> partway up. Thomas. lots of grass  
(quote: Hillsboro filling station  
man)

Arbuckle: North Fork of Deer Creek through ford take left fork for 3 miles  
to Block Run. Hunt up Block Run. Also Buffalo Mt. roads.

On road from Barta to Monterey: nearly to Va. line. Old House Run  
(picnic tables on right). Hunt left up stream.

Broad thorn bottom (woodcock) near Boyer north of Arbuckle.  
Land of Heber (Charlottesville, Freeport Coal Co of Morgantown).  
Heber

Saturday 28 November. Back home for last day of grass season before deer. Weather threatening with light sprinkles beginning as we reached the parking spot near Pine Grove School. With rain gear in our game pockets we hunted anyway and had good hunting weather with occasional sprinkles but no wetting rain. Used Dixie with Bliss this time and ~~we~~ <sup>both</sup> covered the terrain better than Bliss alone. Went direct to area of former flushes on top above old house but today the magic was not there. Was it the snow that other day? Heard nothing on wide circle on top so dropped over to the valley beyond. This is grass heaven if quips and can have any

meaning. But still we heard no birds. Not until we'd almost reached the stream when I heard & saw a grouse flush wild and cross. We followed and over there heard 4 flushes - at least 2 separate birds. But no shots.

Returning to original side we hunted downstream about hemlocks & rhod. and heard 2 or 3 more - at least 4 grouse and surely not all the same as before.

We hiked down to an old farm road, abandoned, that led up to an empty log house & barn along good valley and then thru perfect quips and Quebecer cove - loaded - and out to the first solitary barn - cover that surely will someday hold lots of birds again. Today: empty, and at a perfect time of afternoon.

at car gave shadows a chance to hunt along road but we were rather upset and would not enter cover.  
Dixie  
Bliss  
Heard 4-8 flushes  
count (2 new)  
No shots

Two week deer season during which both Kay & I had severe head  
colds. The Indian Summer weather gave way to much rough weather with  
snow.

Monday 14 December lovely day. I felt well enough to hunt so  
called Art and arranged a short session. (Kay still in with cold)  
Hunted around White School area in hope we might meet a few pheasants  
as well as grouse. Started at hollow on "Dollyvackey Place". Art  
got a shot at a grouse which we missed twice, I did not see it. While  
I hunted up the main hollow below road, Art took the station wagon  
up to head of run. I missed one grouse, no shot. There was enough snow  
on the ground for us to follow some pheasant tracks in swamps and around  
farm outbuildings, but saw no birds. I hunted up and around the  
St. Peter's Church - again, pheasant tracks but no birds. I was using  
Shadows alone and he hunted beautifully in fine range and I  
know he would not have missed any pheasants. Good to be out again!  
Shadows -  
Missed 2-3 flushes  
no shots.

Tram

Wednesday 16 December after yesterday in Unadilla, I again left  
Kay at home and took Bliss alone to the Sell Place - hunting the  
Chint Reckert area but not up to the cabin. One or two inches of  
snow in most places, but some bare spots. First flush was after  
crossing the run and hunting the tramroad - then the greenbrier-grapevine  
basin - I think four birds (two singles & a pair) but no shots  
or reflushes. Bliss made a nice point just after the pair flushed.  
Hunted to beyond the old road, then doubled back (at about 4:00) and  
started south along the tramroad

came on grouse tracks going above the grade - at least two. Just as I began following I heard & saw a flush well ahead. Followed and in cool ~~point~~ south of rocks I missed 3 (count two flushes). Followed the one I could see into grapevine and rocky area around the shoulder. Suddenly I realized Bless was on point - nice high head and then I saw the grouse start out some twenty yards ahead. I waited for a better view, got it but way out, fired anyway and saw the bird fall. I was sure the bird was winged and saw it flutter and start along the snow. I tried a shot, knowing it was risky with Bless a stump blocked the view and this time the bird did this for having bird still moving staunchness.



FIRST KILL OVER  
BLISS'S POINT

I was sure the bird was winged and saw it flutter and start along the snow. I tried a shot, knowing not a retriever, but shot. Again I fired stopped. I was glad I Bless have to catch a would not contribute to

after it was over I realized the full significance - Bless's first kill over a point. Her point was a good one with the bird well ahead and my shot a lucky thing - must have been 35 yards (thanks to the 55% repeat barrel and  $3\frac{1}{4} - 1\frac{1}{2} - 7\frac{1}{2}$  lead. The bird was, I think, an adult hen (rounded tips tho I will check further).

It was about quarter to five and the sun was below the horizon. I started down the mountain, crossed the tramroad and began a diagonal course toward the car. In the small ravine or draw that cuts down the slope I came to a couple of clumps of Rhododendron - memory of a bird here in years past. Bless was working the upper edge and I walked into a grouse on my side, a closer flush than any I can remember this year - but

nursed the left-curving rise beyond the rhododendron - took a second try than the tree well out, nursed, and saw the bird climb and top the timber and bore down the mountain - a good escape and I'm glad it made it. No more action to the car. The little run was in flood & I had to cross below the usual place - coming & going. This area very promising this year - first in several seasons.

Moved 8 - 10 flashes

3 shots - 1 hit (over point)

adult hen: inter

crop: grapes, tealeary leaves

Bliss: 1 prod.  
1 hill overpoint

~~1st~~  
Big event.

Saturday 19 December Took Bliss <sup>& Dixie</sup> to fancy bridge on Muddy Creek. Marvelous country all the way up old road to strip job at top. No birds until I had covered some bit of flat (good cover) to east of top field. Saw Dixie working on scent and in a few moments heard & saw the ground flick. Why doesn't she learn to hold? Question advisability of using Bliss with her. On circle on top moved two more on edge of old strip road - and Bliss moved the reflex. No actual view for a shot. Light snow on ground.

Moved 4-5 flashes

No shots

Dixie

Bliss

Monday 21 December Not about freezing; snow crunchy. Took a small gift to Bud Tacknell after our harrowing experience with Shadow Saturday night - out all night wandering farther & farther from home - about 6-7 miles - until Bud found

Am walking up the middle of the road between Sandy & Sugar Valley - headed toward Kingwood - about 2:45 - Sun. Jan.

What a night.

While out at Tichenells I took a hunt with Bliss in the Points of Sandy area. Made 3 or 4 flushes, no shooting. Didn't feel too full of steam. On way back to car walked into a beautiful big covey of quail on edge of woods. Bliss got a prospect on one single but the mass - about 20 - dissolved into the woods - into trees, I think. for two flushed from a hemlock.

Made 3 - 4 flushes

Bliss

No shots

Tuesday 22 December

Cold, some sun, mostly cloudy, icy snow. Ray stayed home with shadows (who is back to normal) while I took Dixie & Bliss to the Hartman place. The house is vacant, the area quite uninhabited. Parked at the "steamer house" and began hunting the upper edge of the strip since - roughly east.

In a tangle of poplars a grouse flushed from a perch above me and bored over the rock ledge. I tried a shot that for a moment seemed a possible hit, for I lost sight of the bird as I fired. But careful search convinced me I had missed - an overhead straightaway.



I can't seem to connect with these out-of-tree shots. Following over onto the flat - excellent cover - I came onto grouse tracks that were a new bird. After some tracking I heard a flush and got a lovely

shot - a rising left-crossing - that I was certainly had made  
but missed. A moment later I heard a distant flush from a  
tree that I think was #1 reflush. With both birds into the  
sun I followed, feeling I had a chance for two but never  
moved them.



Circling all the way to the far end I had no further action.  
Decided to work along the edge of the area where I had moved #1  
but further up I had gone a short way with both Dixie & Bliss  
working beautifully below me. I heard Bliss bark and saw a flush -  
too far out to shoot - crossing right. A moment later a second  
grouse flushed and I think Dixie may have had a point. As this  
bird crossed right - high - I tried for it as a right-quarter thru  
trees - again saw of my shot - and only saw it fly on.

What happens these times when normally they fold? Some days  
are not your good ones. I followed and got a reflush on the first  
bird but both must have gone clear over the far strip since for  
I did not move any from that time on, tho I faced the area.

In far end came across excellent greenbacker berries.



Did not get to cover the far slope when I think  
there could have well been more birds. Neither  
did I get to try the hawthorn bottom below the  
car. This is a must for another try soon.

Bliss & Dixie made a nice  
double point at one time - but the bird  
had gone  
Dixie

Moved 4-6 flushes  
3 shots - no hits

Thursday 24 December Kay had stayed with Shadows Monday

Tuesday. Today was her first time out <sup>to hunt</sup> since her cold. Shadows was quite normal now after his experience over the weekend. Weather was cloudy after some rain in a.m. We went to the Gold Mine Rocks for the first time in years. Leaving Shadows & Dixie in the car, we started with Bliss. Found the cover around the rocks perfect once more - grapes, brush heaps and regrowth to nice size - but only one grouse that flushed beyond the "blue ribbon pour-out."

After a good coverage with no luck, we returned to the car and picked up S & D, using all three in the cover below Summers and the road. This has grown denser rather than opened, and I could scarcely fight my way thru the blueberry briars that are all there the regrowth. Hunted down the Sick Dam road, and up Roaring to below the high rocks and up to the car. Not a feather. Kay saw fox droppings everywhere and I feel James' <sup>fox</sup> stocking program has done for the grouse.

Mixed 1-1 flush  
No shots.

Bliss  
Dixie  
Shadows  
all three worked well together.

Christmas Day - Friday

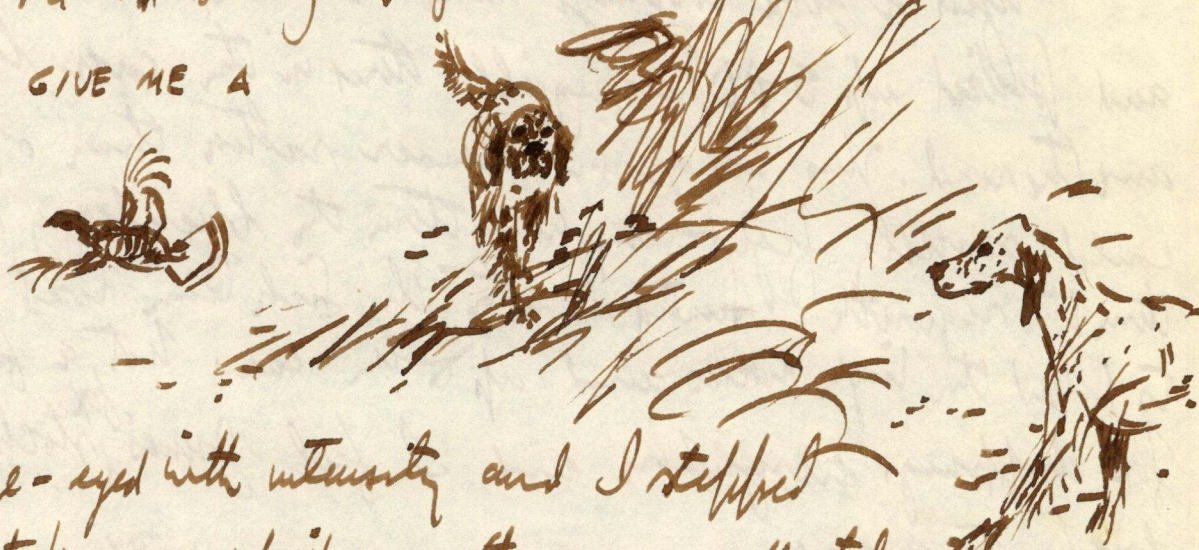
Rain in a.m. with low fog blanketing out even low intermediate ridges. After opening our presents we drove to Upper Darity where we found fog heavy on the Brieries and all ridges but open in the bottomland. Parked at Sapolto empty place and, against all good judgement, took all three dogs just because it was Xmas. This must be most effective. They worked within nice range but covered both sides of the paths which we kept <sup>the</sup> brush dripping wet.



This was possibly the most ideal condition we could have had, for we began moving grass almost at once as we hunted up the lower path. At one place I tried for a right-crossing shot from a tree that I missed - rather well out - and as I fired a second grass left a humlock and followed the first down across the stream. There were four flusks across the creek.

When we reached the upper end in the ravine where we often saw birds, I saw D. point them near down and around a tangle of grapes. Then I noticed S. on point directly at me from above and very solid. I stopped D. where she had swung in from below and held

SHADOWS & DIXIE GIVE ME A  
CHANCE I FLUFF.



Shadows was bulge-eyed with intensity and I stepped toward the bank, not knowing which way the grass would take out. As usual, it did neither and came quartering toward me a few feet off the ground and crossed not seven yards away. I wanted for it to pass some cover then, feeling more interference coming up, fired as it climbed not ten yards from me, missed and tried again as it leveled and disappeared down the ridge, my left barrel <sup>pattern</sup> lodging almost in toto in a cherry tree trunk. I doubt if I will ever make a hit that will remain with me as charly as this double miss will. It is silly, after it's over, but this is frustration.

We had on the way up the lower path moved  $\frac{1}{2}$  across the stream and 2 up the hill. With the 3rd bird still on our side we began the return trip on the middle path. This time we moved one reflex and two more making five on our side. I tried for one of these - a perfectly possible long shot but within reach of my 55% riflet barrel - a long ~~shot~~ left crosser that many have turned as I fired.



Some days I would have made it, but not today.

We hunted to the point of the ridge and dropped to the stream, crossing at the road. On the far side we found the area we wanted to reach cut off by the high water, but we did reflex one bird from a big humlock overhead without seeing it. Hunted down far side below barn, and moved one bird below the road. We saw Dixie draw on a wire point which I held her to but nothing materialized.

Returning to first ridge we hunted up the top road making one reflex over the ridge. No more action all the way to power line and down the lower road once more. The weather had held beautifully with the woods damp and quiet and all three dogs working like demons in nice range, the 2<sup>nd</sup> is inclined to work out with other dogs. Halfway down I decided to climb up to far side of ridge. Kay took the middle road and went back to the car while the dogs and I hunted the far side in near dark. Had two flashes - reflexes I think from humlocks near top of hill. Next time I should hunt it higher. This was the best day yet - and the first Christmas we have hunted - and one of my poorer shooting days.

March 10 (4 new) - 15 flushes  
4 shots - no hits

Shadows: 1 prod.  
Dixie: 1 prod.  
Bliss

Train  
Saturday 26 December The second day of Christmas has always held a certain charm for me - one high spot being a day in '58 or '59 with Ruff & Dixie at the Wallman Place - 3 birds with two prod. by Ruff. Today was in the usual vein. Another rainy a.m., stopping enough for us to go out at about 2:00. Went to Numbly Creek below Coggart and found two men eating lunch at the club house on the stream. A Mr. Davis & Mayo from Morgantown (friends of Lewis Faber. One mentioned that Kinsey had saved a wishbone from each grouse! I had never known this). They had hunted the ridge out to the left and reported 8 or 10 grouse. We decided to try it anyway. Ray followed the Ruckert road and I took the dogs in the wet barrel along the run. One grouse flushed wild from a tree and went down the creek.

Some distance further I heard a flush close by and saw a grouse go into a sapling above the dogs. It stayed a short time and, instead of going down stream, flushed overhead away. I fired and it dropped into rhododendron just short of the stream. This is one of my more difficult shots and it seemed to happen so easily. Dixie made the find and retrieve but did not deliver it to hand tho I'll credit her with it. Shadows found the bird where she abandoned it (some quirk she has at present) and he made a nice delivery, sitting, and they got there to get a movie. The bird was so wet it looked as if

drizzle had set in and we got into our rain gear but it was so early  
I was as wet inside from mist as outside from rain.

There were no birds along the tramroad in the granular cover,  
so we hunted east to the Peachtree road. Putting Kay on the road I took the  
far edge and worked the deep - ranging beautifully - into the good  
papering cover. At one good spot I saw Dixie come in and point,  
then move on in - I think Bliss was behind her but can't say of she  
backed. I was surprised when a quail flushed and tore out in a  
fast left-crossing shot that I centered and dropped from a  
shower of feathers.



Dixie made the find and a miss retriever this time tho' Kay  
could not reach us in time for a shot of it. This was another big  
cock - an adult, I think, and I doubt if it had an uncrushed bone  
in it. That 55% right barrel when centered is lethal, tho' I would say  
the shot was all of 20 yards. This was fine medicine for a string of  
9 misses and surprising how quickly I recover!

We hunted on the dream cover to the lower Peachtree from  
place but tho' we made a big circle around the tramroad and below  
and back to the Peachtree road and down to the car, made nothing else.  
Grapes are thick up here. We heard the two men mid met fire at two  
birds on the Midford Jenkins place. and no doubt they heard me fire at two!

adult cock: solid #2  
young cock: grape, fern, grass  
cock: solid #2 stripes, buds

Moved 3 (2. new) - 3 feathers  
2 shots - what you want

George Bird Evans Papers  
West Virginia and Regional History Center  
Dixie: 1 prod.  
Bliss: 2k  
Bull: 1k  
Bull: 1k

Monday 28 December My 58th birthday. A good cold day after drizzle that froze on trees & shrubs in all high places. We decided that Upper Dority was our best bet for sure action. Drove thru fog on high country and found even the lower ridges iced on hemlocks & with frozen drops on every bush down in the Dority valley. Parked again at the old Sybolt place and again took all three dogs.

Going up the lower path we moved two that were only sounds. At the upper end in the ravine where Shadows & Dixie pointed Xmas day a grouse came at us and over my head and back down the path with no opportunity for me to shoot. I was expecting it and still was helpless. Feel it probably the same grouse that I missed on Xmas. As the dogs worked on Shadows pointed on the far bank of the ravine. I walked up but nothing happened. Kay and I remarked that it must have been where the bird had been working and I ordered Shadows on but he refused to budge. Dixie came up and stopped, honoring Shadows for a moment and then moved in beside him. As I stepped back a yard or so I saw both Shadows and Dixie solidly pointing into the tangle of greenbriers & grapes just above me. Dixie was peering down almost at his feet like a close quail, then moved in a step and a grouse struggled out of the vines and ran along the ground for a few feet before it could become airborne. Kay had dropped down in a declivity in the path to give me a shot and as the bird bored across between us -

turned and fired, taking it as an away-left. The quail tumbled at the shot and I automatically called to Dixie to go fetch. I should have been more fair but Shadows bumbled it in his own way, since, after all, he had been the one to nail the point. He got there first and delivered beautifully, sitting and quivering widely - a young cock with most of its tail feathers gone by now. I had to dispatch the bird. A lovely birthday present.



A TIGHT ONE.

I think this was worth mention: the point was by Shadows & Dixie as was the one three days ago, not over 25 yards from the other site. My shell was on the path even less than that distance from my two shells from the other point - but this time there was rejoicing.

I regret that Bliss was in on neither of these. In fact, I am not aware of her having any points these two days tho she worked magnificently and didn't quit covering the truck sides until the last minute. She did, I think, work out a bit too wide today and I'm going to give her some solo work next.

We hunted back down the middle path - moving two (by sound). Hunted the upper path and over to the far side of the hogback ridge where we made two birds almost where I had calculated. My bird a

look at one of them and we followed it out to the hawthorn hillside where again Kay was the one who moved it down and across the creek. Hunted down the ridge on that side making a reflex or two - hard to distinguish now and here, and around to the bridge on the far side, moving one (Bliss looked "tired") and finally walked the road back to the car, taking a short try at moving the bird Kay had put over to this side with no results. a fine day - perfect way to spend a birthday - and a fine court with a lot of birds to come back to.

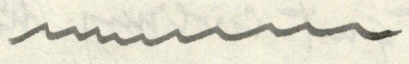
We heard a double shot (as at grass) and a single later on - fired well up about the power line when we were on the far hillside. Aside from a deer bow hunter one year, this is the first evidence of hunting we have encountered. Hope this is not a beginning.

Moved 9 (no new) - 12 feathers

One shot - 1 hit (over pt.)

Shadows: 1 prod.  
1 k. over pt.  
1 ret  
Dixie: 1 prod  
1 k. over pt.  
Bliss: 1 k

adult  
young  
corks: inter.  
crops: acorns, grapes



Tuesday 29 December a fine clear mild day, like November.

This was what we'd been waiting for to go to Mt. Storm. Got a good start and drove direct to Abram Run at Pt 50. This thorn cover is evidently early stage <sup>George Bird Evans Papers</sup> while there was still hawthorn ~~cover~~ here, all we found was one of my empty shells. Kay

went for the car while I took the dogs - all three - across the #65  
highway and into the cover (hemlock & rhododendron) on the left side  
of the stream. Nothing here.

Rejoined Kay & drove up the mountain to the Towering Oaks road,  
parking at the same spot. Inquired as to who lived in the back place  
that is posted - a Mr. Hers from Maysville or Scherer. Again, used  
all three dogs and hunted the road. Bud Cox recommended until  
I saw a grouse flush near Bliss who was working a bit wider  
than desirable (because of the other dogs, who themselves were in perfect  
range). We bore off to the right to follow the bird and got into fine  
hemlock & rhododendron cover but did not refresh the bird for certain.  
Heard a bird go out.

I realize now that we did not get back to the main road  
until we returned at sunset but we did find a number of log roads  
into much better cover than I had found the other time here. For  
some time we moved nothing, then after crossing a small run  
(which is the Johnmeyer's Run further upstream) we moved on  
that took us into good brushpile cover and while we did not  
refresh we worked along log roads until we came to a vast  
thorn thicket. I thought we must be near Abram Run - there were  
fields beyond - but I believe now we had veered to the west  
and were not too far behind the Mt. Storm Lodge. At any rate,  
this will merit attention next woodcock season for I believe during the  
flight there should be a lot of work in here - small openings within  
the thorns. And in early season there should be a lot of work in here - small openings within  
the thorns. And in early season there should be a lot of work in here - small openings within  
the thorns.



logs found a grouse on the edge that took us into more good country with slashings and tree-tops. It was about 4:30 and we had a long trek to the car but we followed the bird. Day walked into one that she felt could not be the same. But we followed it and while the dogs & I hunted out countless possible spots Day walked into two more and then a third. Going over to her I saw Bliss on point and number 4 flushed in the same easterly direction as the others. It was not very light, what with the sunset and a few clouds but we pushed on thru rough cover - no paths here - until I

found a log road at about the distance I expected the birds. The dogs had not had a chance to cover the area before a grouse flushed to my right from some slashings 25 yards away. I turned and took it as a rising straightaway and saw it tumble in a cloud of feathers only a few feet off the ground.



I stood and sent the certain Dixie had found it. reappear, still searching, I called to Shadows to find it. In short order he had it and was working his way back to us thru the thicket, his head held up as he proudly carried the bird.

Oddly, he laid it at my feet instead of setting it down as he

has done so consistently, but Kay suggested that the mouthful of loose feathers which seemed to bother him was the reason. It was a nice retrieval - an adult hen, I believe - and centered hard. This was the last bird we saw - #10 - but feel we've located a good section. I played the turns as we walked back thru a lovely evening woods. The drive west on the top of big Allegheny Mountain was magnificent - the mass of mountain and trees etched against a ruddy sky with huge clots of red clouds. A good day.

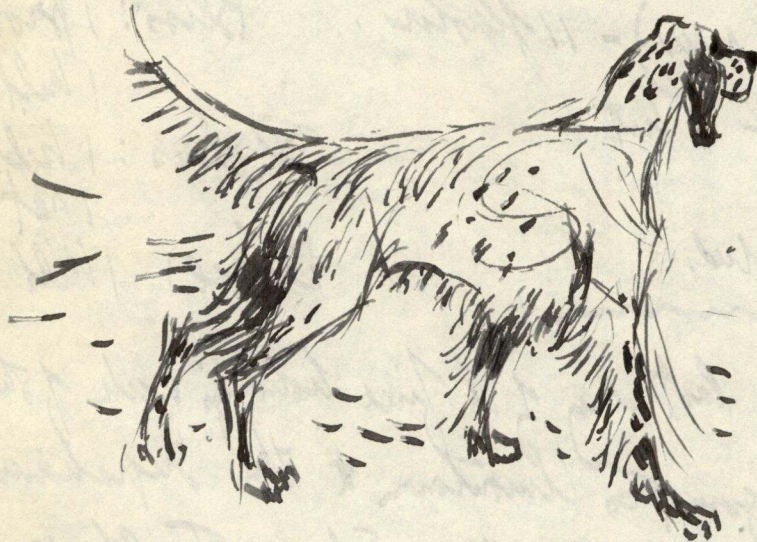
Moved 10 (9 new) - 11 flaps. Bliss: 1 prod.  
One shot - 1 hit. Shadows: 1 kill  
1 ret  
Dixie: 1 kill

adult hen: inter  
crop: grapes, acorns, long seeds, seeds  
fern, daisy, ~~sunflower~~

Thursday - New Year's Eve and last day of a fine holiday week of shooting. TWBD  
We stepped yesterday - going to Mountain & the Ingrahams. Today felt it was to use Bliss solo to bring her into closer range and give her a chance to handle the show alone. Drove to the Hartman Place - a cool, sunny day. Parked at the "steambath" house and left two unhappy people in the cage.

Bliss worked beautifully - a fast loping gait but holding in excellent shooting range. We heard an bird leave a tree but saw nothing of it. Covered the near edge along the strip since then doubled back on the flat with no birds to reward a very hard working little girl. At one place, I saw ~~Bliss~~ but soon moved on with no bird there. After ~~starting~~ but look along the

far edge close the strip mine then, expecting birds but finding none. Finally about 4:00 I turned west and again cut down to the north edge where almost immediately Bliss hit a point. This was not simply a fine point, this was the best one she has made ~~and as good as she can ever do.~~ There she stood and it was Truff standing there again - head high and turned left into the breeze, the tail a proud banner, her hot breath vapor on the cold air after each inhalation.



OLD RUFF, TWICE.

I said, "Stay, girl" and I knew she'd be there till dark if the quoss would hold. Taking a moment to glance back to see that Kay was getting it on film, I walked in below. The quoss flushed 60 or 80 yards ahead and banked left over some large boulders. I waited a moment and fired as it straightened away - low - and it tumbled out of view behind the rocks. I knew it was going to run and there was a problem here with Bliss not a retriever, get and the high well of the strip mine a few yards down the slope, stopping there, I tried to

more fast without importing a sense of breaking shot, reloading and speaking quietly to Bliss, "Dead bird." She came at once and when I made the opening on the far side I saw her standing at some rocks on the brink of the cliff. She was ~~at~~ <sup>not moving</sup> and I felt she had located the bird but this I'd prefer going in from below to head of the gorse there simply wasn't room. When I got to her from above, she had moved into the pile of rocks and I saw a small feather floating and knew the bird was there if I could reach it before it went to ground in the crevices or over the cliff into the water below.

Bliss looked up, grinning, and stepped out to make way for me and I had the gorse in my hands - a big adult cock and quite able to hide. I dispatched it, hearing Key fall and exclaim somewhere behind all the action and again lose her footing and roll over as she hurried down the slope, but she was upright again and taking no notice of it all, - a wonderful moment for all 3 of us. I suppose there will be other times like this but I wonder! The gorse is about the largest of the season, with an interrupted tail band.

We hunted around the ridge to an excellent looking covert that extends all the way around the shoulder. There appear to be no paths and it is thick but it looks worth investigating by driving on out the road to the large abandoned house and across the fields.

On the way back, Bliss held ~~another point~~ <sup>another point</sup> for a few moments

but then moved on. At the car I left Kay and picked up Dixie & Shadows and took all three dogs into the bottom Hawthorn stand. Hunted up a good ravine on the far slope - ground paved with red haws - most small but a few big ones, red & yellow. On the way back, Bliss made a good solid point in the bottom that looked like a woodcock had it been earlier in the year. I stopped Shadows & Dixie to honor the point, walked in, found nothing and sent them on.

Slipping a deep little run to reach Bliss point I splashed icy water up to my knee, so hurried to the car to get dry. This was a day none of us shall forget soon.

Mixed 2 (no new) - 2 flushes.  
One shot - hit (over pt).

Bliss: 1 prod (kill)  
1 kill

adult cock; inter.  
crop: grapes

Shadows:  
Dixie:

Monday 4 January '65 No hunting since New Year's Eve.

Today sunny and lovely with some snow on ground. Perfect for Nat. Storm trap. Hunted the Towering Oaks road covert, heading for our bird concentration, while making a circle with all three dogs we missed the blaze turn-off and ended too far east. Finally located the thorn area and got to the right place, too late in day. Mixed 4 birds that were probably same as before but no shots. Even got ~~so~~ off road on return (about New York area). Lots of grouse tracks & they walked me up by its tracks. Also flushed the bird in the thorn thicket.

Mixed 4 (no new) - 4 flushes  
Shadows Dixie Bliss

No shots

Tuesday 5 January Another fine day so drove to the long awaited Custer Pierce Land. Found that it now belongs to Wash Waybright who was hospitable but held little hope of grouse. He was correct. Area disappointing except for one small covert near bottom. Heard one grouse four times. Bliss made a production that I lay got to see in the darkness when we were following the grouse. - had no shot.

Discovered two things: that Youngsougheny River heads at Silver Lake and flows thru this area, joined by Rhine Oaks. And that the bottom land in the flat below where we hunted looks like a hot woodcock covert (though Waybright was not too aware of more than a few).

Heard 1-4 flushes

Bliss: 1 prod.

No shots

Shadows

all dogs working well together.

Came home via Gellin.

Wednesday 6 January

<sup>Snow gone!</sup> Took Bliss alone to Crab Orchard, climbing the rear approach. She hunted well tho a bit wide, something new for her. May be result of working with other two dogs tho they've been models of good range. I heard first two by sound only with a last solid point after #2 had gone. On path on west edge of flat Bliss heard a bird that went into a tree. While she barked and I hunted for a flush a second bird flushed from path ahead of me. After #1 had gone (no shot) Bliss came back and ran into a third. ~~It~~ <sup>Two</sup> went out the ridge but I was unable to locate them. Hunted down all steep ridge toward car, came out on slag pile too far north. Had to follow woods back to car and it was nearly dark when we arrived.

Heard 5-5 flushes

Bliss

No shots

Thursday 2 January Cloudy and warmer. Took all three to the  
Big Sandy valley behind Gerwin Branson. Moved one (heard Dixie  
back tree) in the same hollow where we'd flushed the only bird last year.  
No more action all the way back up the valley to the good piece  
behind Branson's land. Still no sign the dogs combed it well. At  
last area I pushed one to the left of the path and I was so  
shocked by the impact of seeing a bird to shoot at I shot - with no  
earthly chance. A second sprang flushed with no further shooting.  
Followed but no reflexes. This country is good (lots of food) but  
I'm writing it off.

Heard 3-3  
One shot - no hit

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| B |

Friday 8 January Our 34th Anniversary. We took all three dogs  
to Upper Darity. Mild <sup>sunny & then</sup> cloudy. We began hunting the lower  
path and almost at once I saw Dixie run into a grouse that flushed  
from the upper side of the path, crossing into the bottom. Ray heard  
Bliss's bell stop just before this and saw her come from above the  
bird after the flush and we are counting this a productive. On  
up the path we moved nothing until approaching the upper end when  
I heard a grouse thrashing its way through greenberries above the path.  
Alerted, I waited, saw the bird emerge and cross left-high back  
the ridge. I took it as a high left <sup>George Bird Evans Papers</sup> and it folded.  
West Virginia and Regional History Center

falling onto the hillside just above Kay where she was getting it on film. Dixie came in and made the retrieval - a big adult cock with an interrupted tail band. With this fine luck we turned back to hunt the area above the Sybolt house, but first climbed to the middle path to return where another grouse flushed above me and gave me a wonderful look at it but I was not shooting.



The area behind Sybolt's house is a killer ridge, beautiful paperwinks but steep as hell. We hiked well up the valley, climbing constantly - and laboriously. At the top I saw a grouse more out ahead of Bliss who was working entirely too wide - a new fault - and flush over the top. This hillside was paved with grapes and should hold a dozen grouse. On top we passed in a field and ate some lunch, then hunted back the top on that side thru excellent cover - new cutting, but no more birds. Nor did we reflush an one that came over. Going down to the car was nearly as hard as coming up - steep. But our day was a supreme success with a beautiful big cock. Yes, Dr. Morris we think of you.

Moved 3 (no new) - 3 flushes  
" 1 near behind house - 1 flush  
One shot - one hit

Bliss: 1 prod.  
Dixie: 1 kill  
Shadars: 1 kill

adult cock: inter  
crop: grapes & acorns.



Tuesday 12 January Snow and plenty of it. Fall ~~Sunday~~ <sup>Saturday</sup>.

Today sunny. We drove to Herman Dillow's via Hudson. Woods lovely but on the third day of snow, untouched by new fall, we found no grouse tracks until we hunkled down the left side of the hollow (Herman says it's called Sovereign's Run (sp?)) to the big overhanging rock. There, as I passed to point out the spring to Ray, I heard a grouse flush from overhead - either from the brink of the rock or from a hemlock. It was too late to try for it by the time I had whirled. Moments later Ray heard another flush from somewhere above the rock. We found the first grouse tracks - deep in snow - as we started on down the path, then a second set. Within a few seconds there was a flush that came out of the rhododendron on the left of the path - Ray saw the grouse bore back into a hemlock near the rock. It flushed after we put the dogs in and went around the shoulder. That was the extent of action. The woods was too full of snow to follow in direct line but we located a fine path by hunting down Big Sandy at the base of the hill, then up the slope to this log road which took us around above the big overhang but to no birds. I note this path especially because it will be worth using in some future time when grouse come back.

The falls and pool at the cabin were splendid with snow & ice. We hunted around the cliff on the left side to the power line and back thru the hemlocks where I hoped to find #1 grouse we'd flushed. Voluck, a nice chat over coffee with Vernie and Herman - and "Buddy" the beagle, always pleasant. Herman says deer hunters reported lots of grouse in the upper led and over the ridge from his farm. Next time I'll take the upper led and  
no shots.

Thursday 14 January Mean sleety snow kept us in yesterday <sup>'64/</sup> #75

Today we tried the Dwight Gibson country or Laurel. Got off to a bad start trying to curb Bliss in her newly acquired fault of ranging out of control. As a result, lost control of my temper - a bad thing to do.

Couldnt see any results on Bliss. Dogs moved one grouse out of a hemlock near cabin below Gibsons. No refresh. No tracks until ~~on return from~~ at head of tributary where Kay saw ~~one~~ ones at left edge. Hunted top flat and crossed to far side of tributary on way back to hunt upper slope of cover to about Gibsons. No luck. Very cold. A good visit with the Gibsons, an coffee. Nice couple.

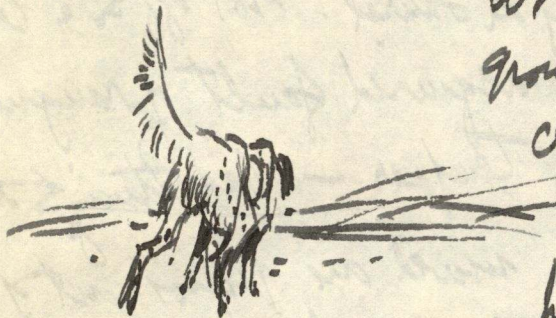
Moved 1-1 flush  
no shot

Bliss  
Shadows } these 2 worked perfectly as  
Dixie } they have these days.

16

Friday 15 January <sup>Cold.</sup> Snow still with us but well off shrubbery. Back roads too icy to risk so tried the Scott Place. Car tracks leading back the road gave us pause but there was new snow in them so discounted chance anyone had been in today. It was very cold. We used Bliss alone in order to get her back into her former fine form. Noticed oddish grouse tracks - two - crossing from right into left cover. at the forks of the road we came on a gray Penna. Chevy station wagon with a dog crate and two gun sleeves. Disappointed, we decided to pull out - hearing a distant double shot - and headed for the car via the cover on east side when the grouse tracks had gone. Soon encountered more, and fresher tracks and heard two distant flushes and saw Bliss wildly excited. It was her only wide ranging of the day. Kay marked one bird and I the second. Circling thru a rocky area I found Bliss on point - a solid low cover with tall grass. Before I

could reach her I saw her move in as the grouse flushed.



LOW & SOLID.

We followed and eventually flushed this grouse from the woods fence line - a right-crossing shot thru cover as the grouse cut low, outside the woods. I missed.

In the hollow down the fence line we heard a grouse that could have been a new one and as we followed this up to the top we heard the other hunters returning. It was Ted Troth - a bad break - and a man named something like Silling. Said they'd heard about 7 and had a bird apiece. Troth seems a decent enough person on the surface but I know him for a game hog. Regret his knowledge of this place but am sure he's been coming here for several years.

After moving my car to let the Penna. men out, Kay & I hunted the right side of the first part into the hollow toward Ferris, moving 3 grouse by sound from the thorn cover. Bliss made a good point but nothing materialized. Shortly after a grouse flushed from where she was working and came back over my left side - a fine high corner. I fired - aware of an intervening tree - and must have stopped my swing - a good chance missed.



We followed and moved two <sup>others</sup> after some circling, we approached a small clearing near the head of this ravine and a bird flushed wild from the edge, heading into the main woods. Again we flushed one wild on the follow-up and continued toward the east edge of the woods. Much snow here and light falling at after five o'clock. While I worked down the slope Kay walked into one of the birds and marked it angling down into the lower part of woods.

By this time it was getting dark but the snow magnified what light remained and we followed Kay's lead. Partway down the right side of the hollow I heard Bliss' bell go silent and approaching, saw her on point along the run well below and ahead. It must have taken me a full minute to reach her — head high, tail well up and forepaw lifted in mid-steps — a picture point. I waited for Kay to arrive and



JUST LIKE RUFF.

Bliss didn't wear a hair shirt. I pointed her out in the half light. Kay began taking movies and crawled on her knees beneath my gun for a good long footage of the point. Still, neither Bliss nor

the bird moved. I was in a limited position for a shot and I made a short run around to the right, climbing on a pile of snow covered rocks and only hoping I could do it. When the bird flushed it came out in a wide open right-crossing rising flush that was perfect. I centered the bird which fell across the run with a mass of feathers floating down from the point of impact. The 55% is a bit light of that range but it makes a clean kill. Bliss went in to search at command and after a few circles lost the scent and began mouthing the bird. I've stayed clear of retrieving lessons and think it wise so far, but since she picked it up I let her carry it back to Kay where she seemed to think she should go — (another ham?) Then I made her sit and deliver. We hope it is all on film. The emotional impact of a

perfect episode like this may be overdone, but to Kay and me -  
and bliss - it was in proportion to its importance. The walk <sup>through</sup> up <sup>the</sup>  
deep snow - 6" down, 6" up with each step - and across the  
field and darkening woods was lightened by the weight in the  
back of my shooting jacket and the joy in our hearts. A perfect day.

Heard <sup>6</sup> (all new) - 15 flocks      Bliss: 2 prod  
3 shots - (hit (count))      1 hill w/pt.  
1 ret, see first)

adult coxer: intact  
crop: empty

Saturday 16 January: Weather good but with forecast of snow. Went to  
Muddy Creek, Fancy bridge, with all three dogs.

It soon started to snow and continued all the time we were out, adding to  
a heavy cover on the ground and rocks. We hunted east on the rocky slope  
in marshy grassland cover and began moving birds - the first soon after  
we crossed the rail fence - a sound that led us out and a bit lower.

Standing on a path at a big tangle of vines as the dogs worked about  
and just beyond, I heard a grouse dig its way out and saw it come  
directly at me, passing my face a yard or so away. I wheeled and,  
unminded, fired without pointing near the bird - a foolish reflex.

Kay was behind me and I called to her re the shot and the direction  
the bird had gone. Probably a minute later as I stood in my same  
tracks I heard a second grouse coming out of the same hole and  
this one nearly brushed the opposite (left) side of my face.

I was going to handle this one properly and I turned and

tried for it as it reached its peak - probably 12 feet overhead - and missed. These close risers, leveling and going away overhead, are probably my worst spot, particularly because they look so possible. I



think the fault is a lack of swing. The bird is there and there is little feeling of overtake. The high

vicar approaches with illusion of acceleration and a faster wing comes naturally. There is a way to handle this shot but I have yet to find it.

We circled above to follow back and moved out a two more. Feeling to reflush any of the three that seemed to hold up at our level, we worked into the area above the strip mine where I'd moved two on my first trip in here. While the dogs worked (all mine ranges) beyond the transverse "road", I stood waiting for a shot. It came, perfectly in the open, from right to left at the lower end. My hands were stiff and cold but I wanted that magic moment, mounted and swung them, pulling just as the bird neared the left side - and all I did was tug at a locked trigger. Forgot to push off the safety. This did <sup>not</sup> mollify my disappointment at the other miss.

We followed east again and in the good tangles I heard a quail flush from above and came my direction - a ~~left~~ right-crossing short glimpse thru an opening in the vines, well out but one I've made more than once. Not today. We followed this bird and rather well, for from another tangle of paperpines and brush the quail came out - again one near me and up the left side to level of like #2 shot earlier. I did the same as I did before

and the bird did likewise - kept going. It's been years since I've had this shot, it seems, and today: three of them. At least I was consistent but my explosion was louder than the gun. We followed up onto the flat and failed to find the bird again - at least up there. Came out on the far corner of the Forquer field and at nearly dark with snow falling.

Hurried back to the point of entrance at the rail fence below the strip mine moving one grouse that could have been a ruffed. We were pretty bushed by the time we got to the top of the long road back - and that road now covered with an inch of new snow on the icy spots. Wonderful cover here, lots of birds. I was shooting without my glasses because of snow falling on lens - a good alibi - and also questioned the tighter set of barrels for this close cover. But the fault lay in the man. Too anxious.

March 6<sup>(2)</sup> (new) - 9 flashes 5. } worked well  
4 shots - no hits 0. }  
24 degrees, falling snow

Monday 18 January - It isn't often that I return to a covert so soon. But not having harmed the birds, I was eager to go back to the Fancy bridge covert with Blinn alone. The day began sunny - Kay stayed home with a tender ankle from Saturday's hunt and kept Shadows & Dixie company. I made the long drag up the ridge on the old mine ~~road~~ a lumber road with lots of snow still on the ground. Today we made nothing in the areas as before and since I was anxious to see the land beyond - whether it can be

reached from the ad crossing at the nodan mill - I hunted further.

Saw one grouse flock from Bliss who was working too wide. Following I got a fine solid point that must have been where the grouse had reflushed wild. The excellent grapevines and hashing cover runs well out the ridgs but now where the shoulder turns away from Muddy Creek the character changes and becomes rather open.

Doubling back we made two birds just within the good cover - one going up over the tops into more excellent grapevines (this is vast in here). I finally walked into the grouse but had too short a chance to shoot. I soon found myself on tops when they & I had been Saturday and here Bliss made another fine point that did not yield. These are too hot to be anything but recent scent tho

I found no tracks. Try now it had started to snow again.

I tried the woods above the strip mine with no luck. Heard a flush I did not see that was one of our former birds, but I count all three moved further out the ridgs as new ones. The long drag back down the ridgs seemed endless as usual, but Bliss never stopped. Halfway down she took a cast straight down over the side to the creek, then along the bottom and back up the road to meet me. What a worker!

Bliss

Made 4 (3 new) - 5 flushes  
No shots





Tuesday 19 January Lovely day, not so cold, sunny, but lots of snow. Kay & I took all three dogs to Herman Dallas' to try the upper tract. This is good slashings cover with lots of gaps in places but we made a big circle and moved nothing until signs of fresh tracks above the old abandoned Cale place. Our only view of a bird - and I say saw it - was in semi open edge near main tributary below Hudson where there were two sets of tracks. I had felt I heard the other go just before. No luck or reflex. Disappointing but always fun to visit Vernie & Herman who are so cordial. Lovely old mountain house - and their nice smooty beagle Kay calls Baby.

Moved me - 1 flush  
No shots.

S  
D  
B. Dogs worked well.

Wednesday 20 January Today I went alone with Tyler to the Scott place, hoping to find it unvisited. I was mistaken. The same track station was used enough car tracks & has been used daily. Lots of snow still on ground and fairly cold. I made nothing in the first area where we'd found them before. Today there were tracks everywhere, lacking the cover. A shame he has to work this place so hard. At last I got away from the footprints for a short period in the area this side of the path to the old Scott homeplace, but at the path - more tracks.

I'd got a late start and it was about 4:30. I could hear the other hunters ~~approaching~~ returning voices sitting closer.

'64/#83

Just at this point I lost hearing of Bliss's bell below me, I  
that I was at the small triangle of thicket at the juncture of  
paths and I started back the lower fork. Suddenly a grouse  
flushed from the center of the triangle - sounding close - and I  
got a look at it leveling and heading for the ridge road.  
Then Bliss came to me, eager to have me know she'd been  
pointing it. She'd held it beautifully, even with my whistling  
bee.  
Some day.

My friends the Pennsylvanians, were getting closer now  
and I had no intention of letting them find that grouse. So I  
headed Bliss up the path toward the ridge. The bird should have  
landed about opposite the intersection but I had no trace of it.  
Decided to take a cast south out the right side (Mc Grew slope)  
and soon came on fresh tracks of a new bird in nice rocks I  
was not familiar with. Shortly the grouse went out ahead and I  
almost had a shot. We followed and I am sure I heard a new  
one flush. This is excellent cover and I want to explore it after  
the season. One small quarter-acre clearing is a strange phenomenon  
here.

By now I was certain the others had got to their car - there  
had been more calling but no shots - and I headed back the  
ridge road. It was cloudy and becoming dark but on an impulse  
I took a right cast into the woods where Kay & I had followed  
a grouse. Tenth, nothing, so I cut to the transverse path and was  
interested to find no footprints here. <sup>Something turned me</sup>

out the path - "just for a few yards" - instead of back and  
 within a minute a grouse exploded from behind a rock just to my  
 right. I got a look at it - straightaway and rising - as it  
 silhouetted against the last light of the day, fired and saw it  
 tumble. I was using my more open barrels today and yesterday.  
 Bliss came in and I gave her "dead bird." She cooed a few  
 times, but the next - I could see the grouse invisible in deep snow  
 and picked it up, retrieving it nicely. I have trouble getting a  
 sitting delivery but insist upon it, and she is immensely  
 proud. Regret this grouse was not dead and if many of them  
 make the crying sounds this one did, even when apparently  
 unconscious, I think I would give up shooting. This Bliss holds  
 family to the bird she does not kill it as Shadows does on  
 delivery, saving me the unpleasant task of despatching them.  
 But it was an exciting culmination to a day and a good shot.  
 The bird was, I think, a young hen. The walk back to the car  
 was lovely with a streak of blood-red in the ~~sun~~ sky on my left.  
 I will not shoot this court again this year, having taken 3 birds.  
 I wish Truth would do the same. The drive home was accompanied  
 by a magnificent post-sunset expanse of red sky under clouds

young hen: inter  
 crop: empty

Ward 4 (3 new) - 4 flukes

One shot - 1 hit

Bliss: 1 prod.  
 1 bell

George Bird Evans Papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center

worked beautifully

Thursday 21 January Dixie's 7th birthday. A fine sunny day and we took off for Mt. Storm, all three dogs, of course. Drove thru high, newly cut snow drifts in Terra Alta approach but the fields were bare in spots. This wasn't the case on Mt. Storm where we found eight inches of snow in the woods. Parked in the towering oaks road and very shortly moved a grouse from right edge of the road. Bliss had been there and don't think she had a point but after the flush she returned and pointed so staunchly we couldn't miss her and for a while we expected a bird under the snow.

We took our blaze tree markings ~~to~~ this time and found four grouse tracks in the first turn-off. Shortly heard a flush and a grouse rose thru cover - left-crossing and rising. It wasn't close but I was using my tegite barrels and I tried for it, missing right and left. The last try was probably much too long.



We had no further contact till we'd made the last turn-off and crossed the run. This bird, apparently a young one, flushed from a dense pile of slashings and took us into the west, where we'd made the four or more two times ago. We not only failed to reflush this one, or find others, but came out in an unfamiliar looking version of the thorn thicket I was headed for. The rail and wire strand fence was there but there were tree tops and cover that is not in the hawthorn thicket. Baffled - we could hear distant traffic on Route 50 and dogs barking at, I suppose Mt. Storm or the trailer camp, - we kept along the fence to the left till we

reached the little alder run in the thorn thicket that I know is at the extreme left. Where was the part we knew? There was no point in keeping at it and it was about 4:30 so we headed back, working an old log road till we came to our earlier tracks. This snow showed no human tracks, for days, of any sort - a pleasant situation, but not too many old grouse tracks and no fresh ones in here to speak of.

At the main crossing of Johnnycakes Run, we turned west up the right side into hemlock & rhododendron for a final cast. All three dogs were working beautifully, criss-crossing both sides of the path independently of each other like cross-hatching and in nice range. I don't remember hearing it - I must have got some sound - but suddenly I was looking at a grouse cutting across from right to left. I managed to swing and fire instinctively and felt the bird was out of sight at the report but saw it disappear falling. There was a huge cloud of feathers ~~drifting~~ and nearly suspended in the air above the middle of the path and as they took a moiré of them they settled in a large spread on the snow. The opening about fifteen feet wide and the bird was into it when I first saw it. A fast swing, instinctively done is amazingly swift. I saw Dixie move in toward the side of fall and I ~~was~~ was glad she was going to have the retrieve for her birthday, and just for the ~~fun~~ fun I saved the dead bird Dixie.

Fetch." To my surprise she turned and came back out. <sup>41</sup>#87  
 It was then I saw that Bliss was already there. It was a  
 very sporting thing for Dixie to do - giving this up that way, and  
 I know one elderly gentleman and know still another who  
 would not have been so much. I ordered "Fetch, Bliss" - I've



A FAST SWING.

I've done nothing about training her to  
 retrieve, other than, accepting the  
 birds sitting but since she's  
 taken to bringing them in, I  
 want her to know the command.  
 She took a careful hold and  
 delivered the grouse beautifully. I

had to force her to sit but she held it perfectly while I lay took her picture.  
 The grouse was centered head - a young, I think, cock - rather small.  
 I had the ruffs uncommonly small - then after stepping off the  
 range of the shot - 20 yards - found some few sections of the ruffs  
 shot out and among the feathers on the ground.

This was a perfect end to our last trip we are now, this  
 season to Mt Storm, a fine coast - bless Bud Cox. Next year we want  
 to try the thorn thicket for woodcock and grouse. At the car, talked  
 to a chaps named Serke or Sert who lives in the road. Said there  
 are usually grouse in the hawthorn thicket and run - and woodcock,  
 which he had only recently come to know. Our drive home was into a

lovely clear golden-orange day - typical of Mt. Storm. Bliss: 1 k  
 young cock: semi-inter  
 cock: buds, ~~inter~~ 3 shots - one hit. 1 net. 1 k

Friday 22 January Tried an ad covert I haven't gunned for years -  
the Beshoff Place above strip mines back of Paul Siston's. Parked at

Siston's - very warm with melting snow and soft mud - and took  
all three setters to the excellent cover which begins at the  
top of the strip. We followed the road (the Siston boys say they've  
moved lots of grouse along the road and out above the high wall.  
We moved none on the way up. So cut over into the shady valley  
on the left slope (it runs up from opposite Falschmiers). There we  
began having bird action but no shots. Heard two and later  
below the barn (this is beautiful gasping tangs) saw the two  
gals work into a tangle. Mares' bill went silent before a grouse  
flushed out - and I suspect D. of doing the pushing out - We  
followed up the hollow but think the bird must have come out  
the rocky side - very nearly cut-over.

Went up to speak at the house only to find it abandoned. Then  
saw a man crossing fields far below and apparently paying no  
attention to us. I walked to him and learned that he was Beshoff.  
Very gracious about my hunting - as long as I didn't cut his fences.  
This is incredible to me but it must happen for I've heard it all  
my shooting life. "You ought to get plenty of birds. They fly up  
everywhere around - pheasants."

With this lovely sound in my ears we circled the west brink  
of the farm - perfect cover all over with many gapes. We saw  
heard #4 flush down over. Didn't follow but returned north just

within the perfect grass cover below the fields. Hearing Bliss #89  
call go silent is a businesslike sound, and I hurried up to  
find her pointing. I could only see her stiff tail, her head was  
lost in cover into the right. I was behind an unwieldy mass for  
a shot but felt I had one chance if the grouse came up through  
the small open area above. Shadows came in from the right,  
unaware of Bliss and I stopped him on command. Then I saw  
what I thought was Dixie coming into the front of the scene but feeling  
it could be Bliss rechecking and perhaps reconsidering, I made the  
mistake of not stopping whoever it was. It was, of course, Dixie,  
who pushed too far and the bird went out low and down the slope -  
not even topping the whip-size growth. Bliss had held like an angel  
but seeing Dixie break, took after the bird till I stopped her <sup>short</sup>.

Why does Dixie insist on doing this? I gave her a good scolding  
with a shake that evoked a hideous scream, so she understands.

Following down the beach of gentle slope we heard the reflex.  
Then within a few moments another grouse flushed on the edge of  
the stripmine refill and the thick cover. I saw it just too late to try.

These two took us back to the original road but I came up -  
surprisingly close. Both birds completely baffled us. If they  
didn't dissolve, they had to go over into short pines or even  
further. We elected to go back up the cover to the left of



the farm road and down into the hollow facing Eardly's. Way in the bottom we heard a couple of flushes - and they saw one mouse go across to the far slope. I forgot my way around to beyond the barn and up, and we met at the barn and took the road and a long walk back to the car. One pigeon found a ~~dry~~ dry, we could climb to the beginning of the cover above the strip. This is fine bird country, loads of grapes & greenberry berries and I hope to go back next week - our last.

Moved 7-8 flushes  
No shots.

Bliss: 2 prod.

Shadows: 1 backpoint

Disce: one loud yell.

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Monday 25 January Last week of the season. Cold with ice on trees in higher elevations. We decided to take Upper Dority as possibly our last chance - and it turned out to be that. Most of the snow had gone except in shady areas. Parked at the usual place (Sypolt's) and hunted up the "lower path." Moved, no birds until well up. All three dogs were hunting nicely. Bliss is inclined to mark out too far when not alone - this unlike her early season trait. My first awareness of a bird was a high uncoiler that went just over my left shoulder from the section above. I didn't have quite the "dwell" I needed before mounting but I tried - shooting vertically - and the bird kept on into the hollow across the stream. My dog heard

two flushes - one we estimated as going higher toward the top edge of the corner near the power line.

We decided to go on to the "jeep road" as long as we were this far so early but before we reached the powerline I saw Shadows stop, wind and stiffer into a nice point toward the slope below the path. Within seconds I saw, not heard, a grouse flush from well down the hillside and cut across the power line around the shoulder. A nice long point for the old boy - all of 40 or 50 yards.



STRAIGHT UP.

We marked this bird and followed, eventually seeing it move from in front of Bliss as she worked up a steep laurel slope - no fault of hers that I could see. It too went down into the bottom - across too much water to wade - one disadvantage of counter hunting.

We worked on over to "Pattersons Hollow" where we ate some food before starting back. The sun had come out too brightly and all the frozen water that coated the shrubs like glass suddenly began to melt and we found ourselves in dripping thickets.

At the power line, in the thicket on the upper edge, exactly where I had felt it could be, the grouse was only heard, flushed - again chased of Bliss - and I in the glare of sunlight and melting ice without waiting for that magic moment and it went on.



again I had it fairly marked. We moved it from the right edge of the middle path, out of dense greenberries and at a perfect range. I held off for the perfect moment - sure I'd drop this shot - and the grouse literally climbed a tree trunk, spiralling around and staying exactly behind it all the way - no shot.

We hunted down the ridge and then back up the top edge and over, moving another bird that went over, we think. Down the far side into the cold shadow and snow we hunted, the dogs combing the cover but no birds showed. Finally one exploded from a hemlock over my head and bugged the foliage until around and out of sight. I marked it down the ridge but we couldn't locate it. Could have gone clear to the stream. We took one more circle in the fading light - out the lower path to a descending road that led us into the flat area encompassed by the curve of the stream. This is so rough - rhododendron, brush, no paths - to go into in wet weather, so we hunted up to the next descending path and took it back up and around to the car. This is a fine covert, unspoiled (I've only heard one shot fired in it in all the time I've hunted it, and think we found that shell near the jeep road today). I took two grouse from this country this season, leaving ten I am sure of - possibly more.

Moved 4 (no new) - 8 flushes  
2 shots - no hits

Shadows: 1 prod.  
Dixie

Tuesday 26 January

Cloudy, windy, sunny at first but later an odd pink misty quality to the air blanketing distances. Learned later this was from a Texas dust storm.

Conditions were bad - too windy - but we had to try it and went back to the Bishop's Place <sup>with Bliss alone.</sup> The day was uninteresting. Heard no new birds and only three - the first two were the same we'd heard at the end of our other day. Today we started in reverse, hunting out the crest of the strip mine. Almost immediately a grouse flushed over my head, full in the hazy sun, and back to disappear over the strip mine to all appearance. Moments later the second bird flushed down over into the strip of cover below the filled in strip area.

We followed and had a nice point by Bliss (was using her alone) but nothing materialized. We hunted around to the upper edge and into the Evelyn valley and back along the bottom woods - saw grouse droppings several places.

Heard 3 (no new) - 3 flushes  
no shots

Bliss: one new - good point.  
She worked in good range alone.

Wednesday 27 January

Today was the coldest day yet. I hunted alone with Bliss in about one inch of new snow. Hunted up Little Sandy on the north side (Siders, etc.) in what must have been a hundred acres of perfect grouse cover: slawings, paperies etc. We made one bird soon after starting. Bliss hit the first Turkey and I sent her

into the cover on the left side when the tracks led. The grouse made out  
wild and went back down toward the car. Rather than retrace my  
tracks I left it for later. There was no trace of it or any other bird in  
all the area we covered, clear to Castles.

I ate at the Beaver Hole - magnificent scenery and rocky  
brawling stream - but not a bird or was a track anywhere up  
there. I hunted the upper edge coming back (there were handthorns  
in the thicket behind Castles). I realized that Shadows or his wild  
nights' wandering the set before Xmas had taken this road - what  
a miserable, forlorn experience for him alone.

On top I walked out on the knob at the high tension line  
for the view of heaven and got my ears frozen stiff.

Puzzled by complete lack of grouse in perfect grouse  
cover and food, I hunted to the car.

Made 1 - 1 flash  
No shots

Bless

Friday 29 January "The twentieth grouse"  
Yesterday too mean - snow and wind - to  
hunt. Today Kay & I took all three to the Fancy Bridge country & our  
last trip this season. Cold and trace of snow precipitation from time to  
time. Also some sun and snow deep on ground. Heard 1st bird at top  
of long climb, just too far out for a try. Following, we worked down  
a slanting log road but did not reflect. This we found fresh tracks  
& another bird. Bless gave me a lot of trouble today, changing to birds.

Had to correct her repeatedly. We climbed the ridge and hunted out to the "two-bird gapwind" but found it empty.

Worked on out the ridge toward far end where I worked 3 last time but today we felt too limited to go all the way. Time seems to pass so rapidly. So at upper level where I had refueled one of a pair on last trip we turned back and hunted toward the strip mine. Cutting above an unpromising stand of alder type growth.

I was approaching a good area when Ray heard a bird go out below - just where no bird should have been. On the chance there might be more I dropped into the area and flushed a second, both going down to the "two-bird tangle" but we could not locate them. It was going on five and we hunted in the increasing cold to the piece above the strip mine, but there were no birds apparent today.

In the last light of the day we started down the rail fence on the way out with little hope left for any action. Just to be certain, I covered the tangles along the edge and suddenly saw Dixie almost go into a point. But she passed up her chance, choosing to road on in - her weakest feature - and I saw a grouse flush well below me. It was a long shot through some cover and I am surprised that I tried it but it was a good impulse. The bird was a rising right quartering flight and I caught it before it got too high. at first I thought I'd missed for there was a second or two before it faltered, then settled vertically - obviously a cripple. Dixie

needed no direction for she saw it. She saw it and was after it.



THE TWENTIETH BIRD

I waited, certain that Dixie would do the job - if it could be done. In a few minutes she came from well down over the snowy slopes with the grouse in her mouth. They got there in time for a picture of the retriever - a young hen that had to be dispatched. It

was a lucky shot. Was using the open barrels and wonder if the other set would have been more decisive but at times like this I'm most grateful for any break. Shadow had to be permitted to retrieve the bird and everyone was happy.

The long trek down the ridge seemed short tonight, the view even more spectacular! This was the only bird I took from this covert - one out of nine. Gay Falkenstein had saved about 6 last season, but below the traps mine spoil bank. A good covert.

Mixed 5 (no new) - 5 flashes  
One shot - 1 hit

Dixie: 1 k, 1 ret  
Shadow: 1 k  
Bliss: 1 k

young hen: inter  
crops: empty

Saturday 30 January

Last day. Very cold, snow still in everywhere. We decided to go to the Bethel of Place since

back roads were too risky. This time we hunted in reverse, starting up the hollow below the traps mine and around toward Early's. Bliss barked tired and I got to her in time to see a large grouse flush from a tree and go up the hollow. We refrained this one from a tree above me but failed to relocate it on the Early side. This incidentally is

excellent cover once you get over here and, after eating a bite, we continued on up this side, seeing tracks. Toward the lower edge on a log road we heard one flush and it sounded as if it crossed to Bishopps.

In the head of the hollow on the left prong of the Y, we heard Bliss bark again and that a bird must have been and then gone on to the left head from her actions. There we found good grasshoppers and cover on top but no bird. Instead of hunting on over we returned to the Bishopps slope. (Saw large tracks well up the left Y and considered them possible musquash sign.)

To my surprise, we missed nothing on the Bishopps side, tho we hunted most of it, until we topped out near the barn. There Bliss made a dash that was obviously at the sound of a bird. We wanted to hunt the far ridge above the main beginning and moved on promptly in the face of a better drop in temperature. Very near the site of Bliss's nice point here our first day we flushed what was probably the same grouse and saw it bore back to the country as it left.

With fingers that were without sensation, we doubled back down after one more nodding for Bliss who had been working beautifully the early part of the afternoon only to open up wide later on. She is proving a problem tho I'm sure it's working her with the other two dogs that does it.

As we moved on out the ~~the~~ light toward the car I heard a



flush and saw Shadows come in and go into a lovely bird point.  
 I was certain it was the hot site of the flush - as the tracks  
 later showed - but he didn't know this and held beautifully.  
 Devil came in and looked at my command. Bliss came in and for  
 a moment didn't want to stop, but I insisted and she went into  
 the nicest most stylish backdrop I've ever seen, holding it  
 while they got a movie, and not ~~one~~ <sup>one of the three</sup> stirred until I sent  
 them on, a pretty piece of work.



A GOOD SHOW.

Going on sound alone we followed back across the road to where  
 the other bird had also gone. Then we found fresh tracks that seemed  
 too numerous to be merely a landing bird and we flushed a large grouse  
 from a tree which could have been #7. Too far to follow, we turned back  
 and walked into another flush on the bank of the strip mine. This  
 one corroborated them over - ~~we shot~~ <sup>and must have bagged</sup>

the very margin of the high wall and doubled around the ridge. Dixie and Shadows hit scent and worked excitedly in one place beyond this - not a full flight - and then another grouse flushed from the edge of the hill road and went back into the area across (where we'd missed the two). It was after five o'clock, the temperature mean and while we could have followed for another try, we chose to doff our caps at these grouse and wish them luck for another year.

The thermometer on Paul Sinton's porch read 10 degrees after we'd walked with the wind in our faces across the field and our cheekbones felt as numb - as marble. The end of a fine season.

|                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ward 7 (1 new) - 11 flushes | Shadows: a good non-just. pt. |
| No shots.                   | Bliss: a fine backpoint       |
|                             | Dixie: " " "                  |

SUMMARY

Probably the best part of this grouse season has been the dog work, especially young Bliss' first year. Her early work as woodcock promised much, for she was handling them after the first few days like a finished dog other than retrieving which I have postponed until she is thoroughly staunch. Early grouse season looked rather hopeful with birds as scarce or worse than '63. But from deer season on the fine weather and more grouse gave me what I wanted for Bliss - experience. She showed herself to be Puff's double granddame.

97

and, above all, staunchness with his same high head and style.

I couldn't be more pleased. I have checked Puff's first season in 1947 at age 6 mo. Our season then was only the one month of November. Puff made 9 productions with two kills over points (111 grouse in that one month). Bliss made 10 prod. (3 kills over pts), 3 ret. <sup>and one retrieval. 21 days.</sup> with 54 days (153 total birds)

I am not going to let her work pleasures, indefinitely. Her style in grouse is perfect, hitting scent with head up and "zeroing" in to hold solidly. I am almost afraid I'll have to admit she is going to be as good as Puff! She did not retrieve until toward the last of the season and I did not encourage it. But having seen the others do it, she decided it was time and retrieved three birds beautifully with a solid but soft mouth.

Dixie pleased me, working in a most comfortable range and manner. She still has a tendency to push her grouse too closely, pointing and then moving in too close. She may feel she must flush the bird for me. I wish she wouldn't. Her retrievals are lovely and usually perfect - an occasional touch of temperament. Was disappointed at end of last season to have Dixie go sour on the training quail (probably because of seeing Miss B. in house & having been cautioned not to hurt her). But am delighted that in recent post-season work she is back to normal on them with chance for fun for all of us.

Shadows, at past eleven, is amazing. Works like a young dog and for most of the season with too much range. Used the three dogs as a team for entire latter part of season with few exceptions with Bliss solo. Found it put Bliss too far out as she got older and will not continue that next year. After his experience getting lost in the

weekend before Christmas, Shadows is a new dog - a <sup>#101</sup> was - and worked  
in at lovely close range. He handled grouse better than ever this year  
and, of course, is the most reliable retriever I've ever had, bar none.  
Even woodcock. Oddly, I don't think I've ever had time point a  
woodcock within my view, probably because I have worked him so little  
on them.

I have three beautiful, lovely gun dogs - Bliss top on grouse & cock;  
Dixie excellent on cock, fine on pheasants & grouse; Shadows excellent on  
pheasants and ~~cock~~ <sup>fine</sup> on grouse.

As for my shooting used the Purkey gun barrels 50% & 60% on  
cock 46.8% and on early grouse. Changed to lighter barrels 55% & 70%  
for grouse and found them deadly with 3 1/8 - 7 1/2 loads. Average of 40.2  
on grouse was one of ~~my~~ <sup>my</sup> best but in my total records. My 20 grouse kill was  
highest since 1959; 22 woodcock my highest to date. My 6 pheasants  
with 10 shells is a 60% average, using the Purkey one day and the  
old Fox the other (no shots on third day)

We found some good new coverts this year and hope to explore  
~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> good new woodcock prospects next season.

We hunted more days this year than any previous season.

# Pheasant Shooting

Friday 5 February

Our first post-season hunt was at Arthurdale.

A lovely warmer day, sunny mostly but cool enough to enjoy, with snow still on the ground. We took Shadows alone, leaving Dixie at home with Bliss, who is not to see pheasants in the field.

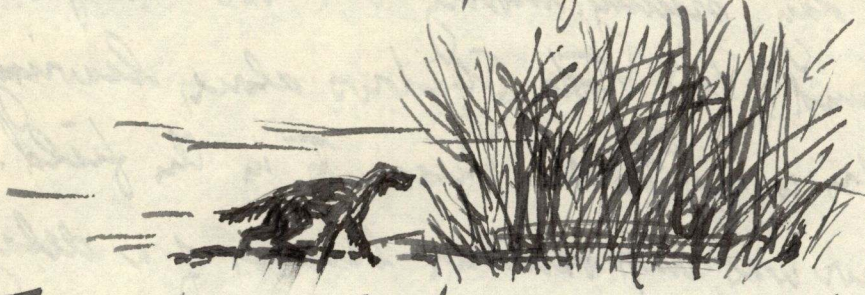
Our first hour was unproductive because of a delay in the release of birds. Finally this was accomplished and we got into action. Actually, this is unsatisfactory, releasing birds so immediately before contact, if only for the gunners state of mind. Shadows located a pair of cocks promptly and pointed. I could see both birds on the snow. One ran out my direction but the far one flushed first and I passed a long try. That bird flew all the way ~~down~~ <sup>down</sup> the frozen lake and out of our ken. I called Shadows back - he'd been working beautifully close so far but this late action was too much and he took a bit of huddling to get back in. When he did come in he bumped the second cock, probably feeling there could be no more (inexcusable). It too flushed toward the lake but I caught it rising steeply and right-crossing, shooting through some bit of cover but folding it.

Shadows retrieved immediately but oddly did not sit to deliver.

We moved on toward the area below our car. I tried to bring Shadows in close to work a



lot of weeds when I expected another bird but he was hell-bent to  
reach out. To my delight he hit scent and froze on a lowly point  
about 70 yards ahead at a small copse of brush and saplings. I moved



up with Kay  
taking a long movie  
sequence all the time

The pheasant was on the far side from Shadows who held solidly. For a bit  
it seemed the bird would not fly unless I forced into the thicket but  
finally Kay put it out and I dropped it going away. It rolled over  
in falling and I felt it was only winged but Shadows soon had it  
and delivered it dead (again not sitting, but this time with the wing  
over his face and eyes).

We went to the car and dropped off the two birds (meeting a  
silly sort of person named Wadsworth from Morgantown who was merely  
looking on. His setter "sets quail" very well. We finally got out of sound of  
his voice and back into the car along a swampy area that leads to  
the lake).

There we expected two more birds which had been released but found  
neither birds or any tracks in snow. Deciding the birds had sailed on  
across to some thicket on the far side we creaked and hunted toward  
that arm of the frozen lake.

In a small point of cover along a fence one of the pheasants  
flushed unexpectedly from Shadows. I tried to get it too hastily, then

brush and saplings as it was still low, missed, and fired again as it  
 rose going away. The bird faltered at the shot, appeared to continue  
 normally, then settled too soon. I got Shadows and myself over the  
 fence and ran hurried up, ordering him to find the bird. I saw it  
 in an open snow area, standing erect and looking ready to take off.  
 As Shadows moved into it I stopped him and he pointed. Instead of  
 flushing as I walked up, the bird ran and Shadows pursued it. The  
 pheasant had no trouble taking off and I dropped it solidly but  
 almost onto Shadows who brought it in, sitting nicely this time. The  
 cock, a large one, was still alive and had to be despatched. I got a lot of  
 use out of this bird - two luts and one miss. Suspect the first lut was  
 only one or two pellets low in the cock but enough to bring it down -  
 poor shooting. The second shot - a left-crossing - was rather a  
 fair hit if not an outright kill. Am using Peters 3/4 .18 .6, a load  
 that does the work when put in the proper place.



We worked the upper end of the  
 swamp and edge of pines, finding  
 two sets of tracks but no birds.  
 Ending at the car (about 2 3/4 hours).

The far side of the lake (below trap mine) and the cover beyond our last  
 bird might yield birds that have been out & escaped. Shadows: 3 prod.  
 Moved four out of four released. George: 3 net.  
 5 shots - 4 luts, 3 shells.

Wednesday 17 February We took a second trip to the Arthurdale preserve, using Dixie this time. The day was partly sunny, clouding over in latter part - what we wanted - and the snow was gone. We'd had the birds released well before we started but still located them promptly along the lake front after a short turn to take the edge of Dixie.

She pointed first on ground scent, tho a nice point, and worked up a bit too far ahead of me. Pointing again in cover near the water she disappeared and I feel boys once more. But the pheasant flushed (probably Dixie pushed too close) and crossed the lake out of range. I walked in, expecting a second bird which soon came out too close. I was using the Fox (while the Purkey fore end was being repaired) and I found it a bit strange. I shot I waited but know I shot too soon and missed as the bird rose over the water's edge. Turning above me, it gave me a fine single right-crossing shot but again I fluffed it, catching the 28" barrels in alder branches - a good alibi, at least! Ray marked this bird going back toward the pines of the big hemlock and said: "I think that bird went just about where you killed the one on the steep bank once before."

We let it go for later and moved on toward the clumps of cover where Shadows pointed our second bird last trip. There Dixie pointed, rather indecisively, and I saw a pheasant crouched with the sunlight splashing off the burnished form of him. There is something odd about this spot of cover that holds birds tight. Dixie worked around to the far side and stopped as I saw a second cock move. ~~But neither bird was in a mood to~~



flush, stirring restlessly first to one edge, then the other. At last they moved in taking waves of Dixie and the first cock started out and rose in a right-quarter flush that I dropped at about 20 yards - very solidly and gratifyingly after missing my first right & left scandalously. Dixie ran in for the retriever and I let the second bird go out without a try - there's no fun killing two birds so soon. - The flight was a long, low one that settled, or appeared to settle, in the marsh at the upper end.

We made no more birds all the way to this swamp, and not even in the entire area there where we were certain we'd find the pheasant. After some bit of circling, covering a gully and the upper end of the lake shore we returned to the car for a breather. It was 5:00 p.m. and we had only one pheasant.

Knowing ourselves twenty minutes before going over for the four birds which they had "marked" it, we hunted up the edge of the woods above the swamp where we'd seen tracks of two "wild" pheasants on last trip. At just about the correct place, Dixie began trailing up the hillside at a nice close range and working the edge. She paused at one clump of dead grass and nearly pointed but her tail did not freeze and for some reason she began to wave or above. Just then the dead grass exploded and a big cock flushed, coming past me only feet away. I turned as it climbed and caught it at the tree tops. It folded and came down the branches, hitting the ground

with a solid thud. Dixie located it and retrieved, a large cock very hard hit. (It proved to have a crop full of acorns, and so was not one of the birds released today. It also had a deformed foot that appeared to have possibly been shot and well healed. If so, it has been out a considerable period, tho' the foot could have been per-damaged).



all this action happened within ten minutes. Returning to the car we drove over to the pine planting and parked, starting Dixie toward the high bank. She made a circle on the far side of the old roadway, crossed the bottom and then came back at my signal and began working the bank. Dixie handles most comfortably. At the top of a steep tangle of blackberry briars I sent her down over where she forced her way into the thick stuff, evidently working scent, then she went solidly on point. Even so, I was surprised when a cock came up cackling and leveled off going away well below. I dropped it, solidly, in the field - the Fox open barrel shoots hard with 3/4 1/8 .6 loads.

I hurried down and put Dixie over the fence and she promptly retrieved the bird.

It was an exciting termination to a good day - when we had to really hunt our birds.

But with a wife like Kay - amazing, for the pleasure was not 30 yards from where that other bird had been! - and a dog like Dixie, I'm all set. 5 shots - 3 hits (Wheasants) Dixie: 3 mod. 3 hit.



WELL BELOW EYE LEVEL.

a third hunt at Dittmunds site Shadows. No birds left to release. Heavy cock. No shot. ~~at Fox~~ Thursday, March.

DATA 1964

GEORGE

58 DAYS (KAY 46

50 SHOTS - 20 HITS 40.0%

153 BIRDS - 290 FLUSHES

SHOTS AT 17.24% OF FLUSHES

6.9% OF FLUSHES HIT

WOODCOCK 47 SHOTS - 22 HITS 46.8%

46 COVERTS { 22 HOME  
16 BIG MTS.  
8 WATOGA

3.32 BIRD/COVERT GROUSE

SHADOWS 11+

33 DAYS 3 PROD. 1 BACK

10 KILLS (1 OVER PT. 5 K

6 RET. 6 RET.

LIFE '53-'64 31 PROD.

97 KILLS (1 OVER PT.

41 RET.

282 HUNTING DAYS

DIXIE 6+

41 DAYS 5 PROD. 1 BACK

14 KILLS (2 OVER PTS. 20 K

11 RET. 6 RET.

LIFE '58-'64 101 PROD.

90 KILLS (15 OVER PTS.

65 RET.

240 HUNTING DAYS

BLISS 9 MO.

54 DAYS 10 PROD. 2 BACK

18 KILLS (3 OVER PTS. 19 K

3 RET.

8 PROD. 9 BACK

| COCKS          | HENS     |
|----------------|----------|
| 7A (38, 42     | 4A INTER |
| 3Y (15, 12, 1? | 6Y "     |
| <hr/> 10       | <hr/> 10 |

COVERTS FOR 1964

- ✓ CUSTER PIERCE (RT. 50
- ✓ MT. STORM (BEHIND LODGE ALONG ABRAMS RUN - FARM RD., TAKE RIGHT FORK [COX] AT ABRAM RUN & RT. 50; THICKET THIS SIDE OF LODGE.
- ✓ SANDY (GERVIS BENSON)
- ✓ MUDDY CREEK (FAR SIDE, CROSS AT OLD MILL DEEP HOLLOW
- ✓ SNOWY CREEK (SISLER & CLAY STEMPLE
- ✓ ROARING (GOLD MINE
- ✓ WHARTMAN PLACE
- ✓ MUDDY CREEK (FANCY BRIDGE, STRIP MINE
- ✓ POINT OF SANDYS
- ✓ DORITY UPPER & MID.
- "      LOWER
- ✓ PINE SWAMP (TURN AT WHITE OAK SPR.
- ✓ MASON RUN (TAYLORS
- ✓ GARLETT
- ✓ SCOTT
- CLAY FURNACE COOPERS ROCK
- W. SCODE COOPERS ROCK (GRAPES
- ✓ PINE GROVE SCH. [DENVER CRAMER
- MACOMBER (RED ROCK SCH.
- ✓ CLINT RECKERT
- ✓ MUDDY CREEK (JENKINS
- ✓ CHAS. GALLOWAY
- HOMER MILLER
- LARRY SCHWAB
- ELSEY
- WHETSELL
- ✓ DILLOW
- CONNELLY
- EVAN BISHOP
- ✓ BISITOFF PLACE (PAUL BISTON

BLACKWATER-CANAAN

- ✓ KEMPTON (STRIP MINES [FRANKHOUSER
- OLD CLEARINGS & FIELDS ABOVE LANEVILLE (FLATROCK RUN
- SPRUCE ON TOP CHEAT MT. [WALT
- CANAAN MT. (EAST BASE
- ALDER RUN (DOWN
- ✓ DOLLY SODS (BEHIND BEACON
- STONECOAL (DEAVER DAMS - RIGHT
- ✓ FISHER SP. RUN, FAR SIDE

CHERRY GROVE (BILL RINGER)

- WOODCOCK: ~~BOYER - ARBOVALE~~  
~~THORNS / TOWERING OAKS~~  
~~MT. STORM #1 & #2 & ABRAM~~  
~~NOAH WAY BRIGHT~~

PLEVICH CAMP (D...)  
 LEFT TOP OF CANAAN  
 (GROUSE)

George Bird Evans Papers  
 West Virginia and Regional History Center

HOME

- UPPER DORITY 6.8.0 / 4(1).4.0 / 10(4).15.0 / 9/12.1 / 4(1).4.1 } 12
- LOWER DORITY 2.2.0 2
- HOUBERSHELL 3.3.0 3
- GARLETT 0
- LITTLE SANDY DOWN 3.5.0 3
- MASON RUN 1.1.0 1
- PENNA. WILHELMS 8.8.1 8

BLACKWATER

- WOLFORD 1.1.1
- DOLLY SODS 2.2.1
- KEMPTON 1.3.0
- GATES 2.3.0
- SAND RUN 1.1.0
- { BACKBONE TRAIL 1.1.0
- " RIM RD. 0
- RESERVOIR 2.2.1

- PINE GROVE SCHOOL 5.9.0 / 4(2).8.0 7
- SCOTT PLACE 3.3.1 / 6(5).15.1 / 4(3).4.1 11
- WHITE SCHOOL 2.3.0 2
- CLINT RECKERT 8.10.1 / 3(2).3.2 10
- MUDDY CREEK (FORQUER 4.5.0 / 6(2).9.0 / 4(3).5.0 / 5.5.1 9
- FORKS SANDY 3.4.0 3
- HARTMAN 4.6.0 / 2.2.1 4
- GOLD MINE 1.1.0 1
- CRAB ORCHARD 5.5.0 5
- GERUIS BENSON 3.3.0 3
- BILLOW 3.4.0 / 1(1).1.0 4
- LAUREL (GIBSON 1.1.0 1
- BISHOFF PLACE 7.8.0 / 3.3.0 / 7(1).11.0 8
- LITTLE SANDY N. 1.1.0 1

- STONY RIVER DAM 3.7.0
- ABRAM 4.5.1 / 0
- MT. STORMS #1 2.4.0
- #2 2.3.0
- #3 3.4.0 / 10(9).11.1
- GORMANIA 2.5.1

CUSTER PIERCE 1.4.0 1

CHEAT MT. 4.4.0

99

WATOGA

- { GRANBERRY MT. 0.
- HILLS CREEK 1.1.0
- CHERRY CREEK 1.1.0
- { CAL PRICE: LAUREL 6.6.0
- DIVIDE TRAIL 2.2.1
- BRUSHY MT. DOCK TR. 3.3.1
- { TEA CREEK 1.1.0
- WILLIAMS RIVER 0

4.4.0 / 4.4.1