

from the top of a 50 foot cherry tree. It went out like a buzz bomb. #3

A lovely day - warm (near 70°) but our new sweaters jackets were perfect. Could wish for more perfect work from Bliss who was pretty tired but she did make a nice point.

Dixie: 1 prod.
Shadows.

Moved 8 for 13 flushes

" 1 for 1 on last turn at Jump Rock Bliss: 1 prod.

Total: 4 hours

One shot - no hit

(Can't blame the lovely Purkey which felt wonderful).

P/c #49

Reservoir Hill & Gates

Monday 18 October

To Cabin 12, driving thru a world completely color as we've never seen it all the way from home via Aurora to the top of Backbone where the color dulled, but it is magnificent in the Blackwater Park around the cabins.

Took an hour's hunt on Reservoir Hill with Dixie & Shadows but didn't move a feather. Then drove to the Gates where we had it all to ourselves! Used Bliss & Dixie tandem. The woodcock banding traps are still here and I think it has made the birds more nervous than normal, as they were two weeks ago when we were here training.

Dixie's bell went silent and I saw her, too far out, on point but working in and saw a grouse flush. Both she & Bliss moved a lot too wide at first but settled down later. Bliss made a nice point and Dixie backed as I walked up a woodcock that rose, following the silhouette of two thorn trees. The dogs had flushed the grouse and while searching for Bliss's woodcock they heard it go out again. We moved two or three cock wild, one of which offered me a good chance flushing from the dog which I passed because I was waiting for shots on points only.

Dixie made a hot point in the densest part of the cover with Bliss backing. I had to bend over and nearly crawl to get in but had to move well ahead before the 'cock flushed some 20 yards from me. I tried a thin chance and missed. We refilled it and another bird before moving into the far covert. There we moved no woodcock but heard Bliss' bell so silent and remain so for a long time while I tried to spot her in the thicket. Finally a grouse flushed with no sight of either bird or dog. On my back Bliss ran into a 'cock in the mud of the cattle path where I think it had been - no shot.

at last I realized that waiting for shots or points was spoiling the sport at least when the birds were this scarce and jumpy. Later in mind flight it may work. and so approaching the main thicket as the light began to fail I shot at a 'cock that flushed from Bliss and dropped it. Regret doing it somewhat as it may not be good discipline but it was not a deliberate bump. Bliss made the find and did a lovely retreat, sitting to deliver. I lay tried for a moment tho' the light was poor.

We heard voices and saw the boys tending the woodcock traps. This part detracts from the gunning at this hour and we circled to avoid them. Too, they no doubt moved our birds and have found ~~some~~.

On the edge of the "dead fall" clearing Dixie made a lovely point and Bliss backed intensely. Again I walked in and tramped a large area but found no bird. Sending the dogs on I saw the 'cock flush from Bliss - a good 25 yards from where Dixie pointed.

Bliss ran into it when it had flushed for a

long low crossing shot and missed. down the main road both
kops worked in and a bird flushed wild - possibly a new one. We
followed, with me walking the road and moments later a 'cock came
back about the cover - a nice clean shot, high & right-crossing.
It folded beautifully and Dixie retrieved this one, also sitting. Too
dark for a movie here. This was a hen, young; the first an adult

male. We'd hunted here about 2 hours

We found Walt Jervis car with the other car and talked
to him when he returned. He was here with another fellow - they'd been
hunting the mouth of Little Blackwater earlier - had Star.

Moved about 6 cock - 12 flashes
4 shots (cock) - 2 hits
Mined 2 quous - 4 flashes

Shadows: earlier
Dixie: 1 prod quous
2 prod. 'cocks
1 ret 'cock
Ploss: 1 prod quous
1 prod cock, 2 back
1 ret 'cock

Saw several twilight flight birds tonight.

Tuesday 19 October Another perfect bit of Indian Summer.

YOKUM RUN - HARMON TRACT & GATES

Today we started for Cabin Mt., stopping to see Gene Graham and
his beautiful tract - and Archibald and Cricket, the same two black
spaniels.

Stopped to hunt the beech cover part way up the mountain
and began to see the parade go by. Two carloads as we were getting
started and three more coming down as we left after a short turn
in foliage even denser than ours at home.

Decided to try the old Harmon tract of Graham Run along the
base of Cabin Mt. Came to a tree

named Burnside and another man who didn't look as tho he knew his name -
a pretty common lot. They hunted where we were going - no luck. Had
found 7 quail in Cabin Mt. yesterday or earlier today - shot 3 - and had
seen about a dozen cars up there.

We drove on out the old road & turned at the edge of the woods,
tearing off the tailgate apron. While disengaging it, a jeep appeared
from out the road - Dr. ^{Albert} Cook & a man named Jenkins from
Frostburg. They too, had hunted where we were headed - no luck. Actually
it is like the opening day of trout season - and no birds evident.
This country is harvesting the results of a it-can't-happen-here
attitude after years of over-gunning.

We worked all three dogs - a foot truck, for Bliss ran wild
most of the time in spite of my efforts and a check cord as her
collar. She bumped a woodcock we failed to find. Later a grouse
flushed ahead of Shadows & I followed it up the mountain slope,
moving it west again, very wild. It's no wonder, for I feel wild,
myself, with the woods full of people.

Hunting on we missed a woodcock that Bliss failed to point -
and I came back over me. I turned and managed to drop it weaving
thru the trees - a young male. Shadows got to it and made a
nice retrieve, sitting to deliver (I'm taking a movie of the procedure).

We hunted on to Yohann Run and down toward Ben Thompson's
overpass, the dogs missing two woodcock way ahead for me -
Dixie's error - and the second close and back over me. No slots.
Hauled to and into Ben's woods and saw a bird that was a grouse flush
ahead of Shadows - dog work was unlearned by today, and it

followed it. Dixie located it but failed again to point and the #7
 cock flushed low and away. I tried and missed. No further contact.
 By now we were getting cool as the sun dropped - us in thin
 shirts and sleeveless jackets so hurried back to the car - a long
 walk.

Driving out, Kay suggested that I try a turn in the flats. Horned
 them and Kay stayed with Shadows & Dixie while I took Bliss alone.
 We had no contacts till Bliss indicated game on the edge of an
 open grass. Though nearly pointing, her tail was flogging and I
 saw her on. She circled unable to establish the point and on the
 return bumped the bird from upwind. The bird flushed toward
 the open area beyond.

Working into that, I heard a flush and saw the cock
 coming right over me from Bliss. Flashed and dropped it as
 it quartered away - entering the bird and nearly decapitating it.
 As the cock's feathers spread and floated down I called Bliss
 to retreat. At first she was hard to direct but once she followed
 my call of hand she soon located and retrieved - an adult hen
 badly shot. That was the deal. No birds on the way back.
 I consider this possibly the one bird moved.

Horned	{	1 moved one - two flushes	Shadows: 1 net (cock)
	{	One shot - one hit (cock)	Dixie
Horned	{	1 moved one quail - three flushes	Bliss: 1 net (cock)
	{	no shots	
	{	1 moved 3 'cock - 5 flushes	
	{	two shots - one hit (cock)	

Devils Run / Island Knoll / Gales ^{B/C #31}
Wednesday 20 October Another warm Indian Summer day but
with clouds moving in suggesting weather, what with a SE wind.
Parked on Canaan Ant. at road above Devils Run and hunted the
south side, up an old road bed that was intrigued me for years. Found a
fair cover but it parallels the highway so closely. Also lack of food
other than greens. Bliss made a lovely point (using B. & D.) and
I was certain we'd contacted a grouse, but it must have been a "has been"
for nothing materialized.

We hunted lower and turned back, working good cover along tributary
& down to Devils Run. Very dense hemlocks here & much rhododendron
everywhere. On way up the ridge Dixie made game & jumped a bush
from a bed in a laurel ledge. For the first time, I associated the pleasant
suspect odored love with a deer. My noticed it too. Coiled up & across
the highway and back to Shadows, parked in the car under spars of
a stinging apple tree. Saw one hawthorn with fruit. The new sleeves
of shooting jackets with thin cotton shirts reveal a new pleasure in warm
weather shooting. When late afternoon dampness sets in we switch to
regular jackets, in this case already loaded with woodcock shells.
Dropping Kay & D. at Ben Thompson's home. I took Shadows & B. to
the Blackwater bridge & parked, hunting upstream on the south side of the
Blackwater toward the "Island Knoll." The alder cover is dense here, with
the river deep and sluggish, crowding you away from the alder coverts.
Part way up, this changes a bit with open grass & ground briars
sloping on the left to the rippled banks of the knoll, dotted with thorns and
some spruce clumps. Along the river the alders mix with dense spruce -
too boggy to penetrate. Here while B. worked the heavy cover & Shadows
the edge, a woodcock flushed from George Bird Evans Papers
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that I dropped. Bliss found it retrieved beautifully, sitting to deliver, an adult hen.
 Further on, I stepped toward a small cove under a spruce tree feeling
 it good prospects and almost immediately heard a cock go up before
 the dogs could contact it. The bird came back - again in a right cross
 shot like the first - but I felt my ~~gun~~ ^{barrels} hesitate and expected a
 miss but the bird fell solidly. B. made this retrieval but with a
 very gingerly light mouth and laid it down before sitting.
 This was a young hen. I failed to mention a second cock that
 had flushed wild between the two shots - banking well out
 in the alders ahead of the dogs. Woodcock seem singularly wild to
flush this year, making it hard to get good solid prints. I
 don't think the dogs are pushing them and I can't think the bells
 would cause reactions more than other years. I use a bell on each
 dog - Bliss' dogbell and Cliff Spranger's ^{little} brass bell that
 Wright gave me on a red collar which I use on either Dixie or Dulac.

Moving on, I was keeping well to the edge of the alders
 which widen here, when I heard a sudden flush to my left where
~~the~~ the heads of a spruce fell on the maroon ground, ^(rubus) and I
 recognized a grouse taking off in the low flight characteristic of these
 Blackwater grouse. I found a split second, fired and saw the bird
 tumble, fluttering strongly along the ground. Calling Bliss to march
 I had trouble getting her to settle down in her excitement. Several
 times she circled the spot but was upwind and got no scent.
 Shadows was on hand now and moved in efficiently, wheeled on a moment
 point, then grabbed the fluttering bird. ^{This retrieval was a lovely thing}

sitting in perfect style — an adult hen with the outer primary on
each wing still in conspicuous quill, our first quail of the season.
We took time out to spread our two 'cocks & the quail in the shade of
the spruce and eat a bit as we had a sandwich.

Our next action came soon and with some element of surprise.
On the edge of the alders and in some hemlock and small hardwood
rustlers I saw B. go on a near-point in some dead branches but
her tail was still flagging. Not sure I waited. A male woodcock
~~darted~~ up with no sound and came 'flickering' low past me to the
left and up the slope toward the open maple woods. I turned and
fired rapidly and saw the 'cock drop. But as this it had bounced
~~and~~ and reflushed, there was the sound of wings and a quail took
off from the exact spot and bore up over the knoll then the open
maples. This was too much for Bliss, who dashed toward the place and
a second quail flushed low and out the old tram road around the hill.
I knew my 'cock was down and probably only winged but it was all I
could do to keep Bliss & Shadows from following the quail. Neither would
believe I had a bird down and neither would settle down & hunt it.
Finally I had to take Bliss by the collar and shake her thoroughly. As I
searched the area on the old road — but I could see no trace of the 'cock.
at last it fluttered from nearby and was able to flutter a foot off the
ground and back tail spread, and down over the bank into the timber
cover. Shadows went in at my command and finally saw it and
caught it, retrieving beautifully & sitting. You don't have to dispatch a
bird when Shadows brings it in. ~~The bird was not mutilated. This was a~~
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young male cock.



SHADOWS BRINGS THE FIRST ONE IN STYLE -

We hunted around the land and circled the far side which is bordered by spruce swamp but made neither game ~~appear~~. Shadows had got so steamed up with the action that he moved too far out both the road-side and the far side and possibly flushed them.

Double over the tops of the maple woods I noted a nice lot of thorn trees for a year when there ~~is~~ ^{is} a clearing on the south side between the woods & swamp.

This is a good covert, I think because of the vast alder & swamp area adjacent and will bear exploring. It is state land & will be taken in on the new Park I am sure.

I got to the car at 4:30 (fast time) and drove to pick King up at Bliss - with my good news. Four straight hits so nice for me at any time, as if we were a grouse. This latter was with a 3-1-8 woodcock load.

King and I hurried to the Gates - no one there, tho I'd seen two men leaving (possibly fishermen) and we watched to get shots and used D. & B. Contacted a 'cock soon on the thorns to the right and across from the usual starting area. Oddly, neither D. nor B. seemed able to pin these birds and I passed up some chances waiting for a point. After several bumps (unintentional) by both dogs of the same kind we crossed to usual thicket and worked north. First action came with a point by Bliss - slightly uncertain but goes when I spoke to her. Dixie barked. I walked in several steps before the flash, then missed a

lovely vertical rise, right & left. Some Dixie pointed and B. barked. Again I walked in several yards, getting into bad situations, before the cock flushed — again vertical and again a Two-lored riss! What you do to your shooting when you are too anxious. Don't tell me a shot over a point is not harder than a wild flush. The latter, especially woodcock, occur usually over the alders in good view, not too close and seem more deliberate shots. But tonight I was waiting for birds over points.

We marked the flight well out into the east and into alders. Followed and Dixie pointed, Dixie barking. This time I walked & walked all thru the area ahead of her. She moved in and froze again, her head turned into a clump of grass beside her. Still the bird did not near. With



CERTAIN.

Bliss still turned toward the clump, I walked closer and the cock went up and rose thru the thick cover. I took it directly thru branches and ~~and~~ snipped it off the face of the sun and ~~so it fell~~. B. soon located and retrieved, sitting at command. This was an adult hen and had a band on its leg, my first. From the rather weak start, I'm inclined to suspect a pellet from one of my "mixed" shots, this pellets usually drops a wrench. This shot over the lonely point made the evening. If it didn't take away from the excitement and if there were more birds around, I think I'd hold all shots to such points, and I expect to under certain conditions.

We hunted out to the far covers and back past mixed only and other cock here, and on the far side where we'd begun when

we took last try it dark. A good day.

Moved nothing on Canaan Mt.

Moved 3 grouse - 3 flushes in Knoll covert.

One shot - 1 hit grouse

Shadows: 1 net grouse
1 h. "
1 net 'cock

Moved 4 'cock - 4 flushes " "

3 shots - 3 hits 'cock

Bliss: 2 prod. 'cock
3 net " "
1 h. grouse

Moved 5 - 11 flushes 'cock in Gales

5 shots - 1 hit cock "

Bliss: 1 prod. 'cock
2 lacks

✓
ADULT HEN: INTER
CROP: FERN &
GROUND VINE.
(RUBUS)

Thursday 21 October Checked out of Cabin 12 and started home

via Beaver Creek - Mt. Storm road. Weather overcast and mild. We tried the area near Gatzmer at mouth of Little Beaver where the road crew had said they'd seen some grouse when we drove down in our training trip a few weeks ago. Good looking but no amount of feed and no birds (except some wild raisins and one woodcock that Bliss pointed up Little Beaver but did not locate - it flushed later). Another lovely point that looked marvelous - Kay got a moiré - turned out to be a groundhog hole. Poor Bliss was trying so hard. Used Shadows & B. on this team.

Back at car, we drove on to the dirt road that takes off north and to our surprise found it was the old Dobbin Grade into head of Canaan Valley that Ed Filler had brought us down from Stony Run. Parked in sight of the A-frame on a lumber road, leaving S. in car and hunted around shoulder into a fine looking

valley with an orchard of mountain holly loaded with berries. With the grouse used there. There were a very few hawthorns with leaves. Hunted down to small run and started back, with no sign of birds - not even woodcock. On way back and not far above the run a lone grouse flushed back to far side. It was too late to follow if we went to explore other coverts which we planned doing.

Driving on past the place where we'd worked dogs before and hoping to find some blueberry areas, we parked at the first good run that crosses the road on a rising curve with a huge swampy spongy flat on the lower side. Took Shadow with Bliss and started up a fine looking low cover along the stream and soon found a grouse "dusting" roost with droppings.

Soon, Bliss hit roost and began working excitedly on the far bank but after a wide circle went on ahead. I had to take this time to talk to Kay about any blueberries or bushes when a grouse flushed - from the gully of the stream and went over Bliss and toward the distant hill across the open flat. It happened only as round to me with no sight of the bird but Kay marked its direction then to crystallize the confusion, as second bird flushed from the same ~~same~~ spot and followed the first. Tho I saw this one, I had no shot because of intervening brush and lack of alertness. Both should have been lucky chances if Bliss had only worked it out carefully, but she is too impetuous when she hits

#15
scout - at least, some of the tunicis.

We marked the birds rather well to the distant rise, quite a long flight. Shadows pushed out too far ahead and got there long before we did. At past 12, he still hasn't learned to work to the gun. The cover here was excellent hiding cover - blackberry briars and ferns and trees still in ^{colored} leaf. I expected the birds at any place but we heard nothing. Then, working up over the rise to an excellent fern & briar area we found Bliss on point so hot her nostrils were dilating and closing in steady rhythm. I walked in so certain that I said to her, "It's here," but it wasn't. After tramping the cover well, I let Bliss' nose out. I think she was as surprised as I. While I tried to work out the situation we heard a flush from some forty yards to our left where Bliss had gone - I can't tell if she'd flushed - and saw the grouse (or a grouse) flush high and over the hill. Certain we'd find it now, we hunted around to a semi-cleared area near a right-of-way cut them in a straight line.

Pausing to eat and take a breather, we later worked the area on the near side thoroughly but found neither bird. I think the last one had gone on into the far side where the cover looked good for future investigation. There were a few hawthorns here. Worked back to car and drove on about 3:00 p.m. daylight time, to Mt. Storm, where we took David & Bliss into the woods cover at "The Joint." #2

This was at nearly 6:00, and the clouds had lowered tho' the weather was still warm. This cover has not had enough freezing to kill the weeds and vines and is choked with pleasing the mountain under it

looks down. Both dogs began showing ^{signs} signs of heat and worked right into a woodcock that flushed across to the left. It was so small I at first thought it was a songbird but recognized it in time to fire and see it drop. Bliss made the retrieve (this quite a woodcock retrieve!) and set to deliver - an ^{adult} male. That was the story. The we hunted out the rest of the Cove & secured only two rabbits. Bliss made an excellent point on the last jay that she held while I walked all around her but there was no bird. It began to set in and drizzle so we got to the car in time to avoid getting wet.

Drove down over Allegheny Mt. thru rain and intense autumn color that seemed still at its peak. Stopped for some food at the Charming Corner at Red House and then home via Aurora & Terra Alta.

Got home to find a few leaves still here, especially along our lane. A fine trip, tho less game than we had hoped for. Is it just the early season or is it that area still in a slump? Shadows

#1 Moved 2 grouse - 3 flushes Dined
 no shots. Bliss: 1 ret ('cch)
 Moved 1 woodcock - 1 flush
 One shot - 1 hit ('cch)

The next run east of the #1 area we tried, "Two Grouse Run", looks excellent with a large mixed hardwood evergreen ridge adjacent and it runs for miles from up on the mountain. Call it #2, and try it sometime.

Blackwater trip: Had 35 flushes on woodcock - 16 shots - 9 hits
Moved 8 grouse - 13 flushes - ~~one shot~~ - ~~one hit~~

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Saturday 23 October

Rain yesterday gave us all a much

needed rest. Today the rain held until 3:00 when I took Bliss
 alone to Maam Run where I felt I could hunt paths in the wet
 foliage. Drove well out the field above Mitchell place & parked near
 woods. Was surprised at the changes since last winter - woods cut
 and some strip activity now leveled. Still ideal looking cover but
 no grapes evident on the hundreds of vines. Bliss was working like
 Buzz and to work - perfectly - but we found nothing until we
 hunted the lower levels and gave to the flat above the strip. There a
 grouse flushed and this opened Bliss's range from sheer excitement.
 Had two refushes on the bird - and followed into the good ground cover
 a few miles of the long, narrow field. There I walked into #2 which
 Bliss later pointed - very high & stylish - but the bird went ~~to~~ too far
 out. Followed into hollow behind Fearer's but could not relocate in the
 vast area of brush heaps here. Excellent cover for birds. Even
 appeared to be a few beechnut burrs but did not see grapes.


Bliss works best solo. Today she searched everywhere with a high
 head reaching. Should be more birds here. Bliss: 1 prod.
 Ward 2 - 5 flushes.
 no shots.

Upper Dority

Monday 25 October

Perfect weather, cold & clear & damp with
 some of yesterday's slushy snow left in shady areas. Hunted the Upper
 Dority area, parking at the second bridge and using Bliss solo. She
 looked good, her range and coverage perfect but for some reason she didn't
 have her usual uncanny nose for grapes. First contact came ^{along} ~~at~~
 the lower road ^{the second} at the Ravine where we had our wonderful action last

Christmas Day of my birthday - Bliss bumped a pair of quons.
#4 she flushed four rhododendron in the bottom in the V of the
forks. Finding these well down, we decided to hunt the bottom
further up the right fork. Walking the path with Bliss not far
ahead, I was surprised by a flash from the path in front where she
should have hit it. I have small room to talk for neither did I
hit it with right or left barrel, tho the bird climbed in full view.
No doubt I fired too soon for it was a close shot but it was about
the best opportunity I'll have - ever.

As I fired I heard Kay call that
another quon had flushed behind me, and 
at that moment, as I stood with my gun empty, a third bird
flushed from the spot where the first took off and came back over us!
We continued to the crossing, then doubled back and climbed the hill
where my missed bird had gone. No luck. Later Bliss winked into
rhododendron but did not point, and one of these quons reflushed up
the hollow. That was the story the rest of the hunt back the middle
road. Bliss either missed or bumped ~~the~~ ^{three} quons birds. Finally on #10
below the middle road she hit ^{the} quon and really worked it correctly,
with the quon flushing wild then no fault of hers.

At the car I rested and ate some more before taking Dixie &
Shadows out on the far side of Dixie for a half hour. Shadows ran
wild and flushed two birds across in front of me but too far out
for a good chance. I tried and missed each. A third bird flushed
from the top of a tall tree where it was feeding on grapes. The
shooting was miserable on my part and the day work less than
could be desired. But this is a ~~very~~ ^{very} ~~poor~~ ^{poor} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~any~~ ^{any} ~~the~~ ^{the}

grapes improved even over last year when we mowed 12 birds #19
in several visits. Grapes are scarce but in some clumps.

Mowed 13 for 17 flushes

4 shots - no hits.

Bliss

Dirie

Shadows

3 1/4 hrs. first turn

35 minutes last turn

Tuesday 26 October More lovely weather. Today Ray stayed home
SUGAR VALLEY BISHOFF
with S. & D. & Jay Castiel & I took Bliss to Paul Linton's "Oakberry
Grove" above the mill in Sugar Valley, Va. This proved beautiful
country, grapes, some hawthorns with fruit than I've seen in this
area but only two grouse. It also proved too open for Bliss to
restrain herself & I had to be severe - teaching her to turn back at
the whistle. I nearly gave up.

at 4:30 I cleared out & went to the Bishoff place, driving
well up the hill to the woods. We began moving birds in the
thick cover to the right of the road almost from the time we
stepped in. It was too close - brush as well as leaves - to move
them gently for the birds. Bliss was a bit more within decent
range but missed most of the birds. On one flush I called her in
to get the count and saw a second bird later off. She had passed
within yards tho I'd say the ~~bird~~ ^{wound} was adverse. Later she drew
into an uncertain point, then stiffened at my encouragement
and it proved a long production.

Turning, I worked back along the woods just below the
field and we mowed a grouse from a tree - but I

fumbled my safety and missed it. I can't seem to hold a hit below other birds as I know I should.



Following back and across the hill road, I worked into the cover beyond. At the grown-up road I saw Bliss turn and point into a tangle. I waited, confident, and then

it exploded, but instead of coming out like a civilized bird it bored up and over me. I tried for it shooting almost straight up, saw the quiver wheel at the start, one leg fly out and that for a moment it was shot off. As I stood with my mouth open waiting for the bird to fall, it began to tower, called off and dropped down over the brink of the distant strip mine.



If I'd remember to use the left barrel, as I did last year with the Wolford bird, I'd drop these birds

instead of lose them.

Bliss & I worked down to the strip mine level but the woods were so dense & the terrain so rough below that we were helpless. So we came back to the car. Regrettable. I will ^{not} count this a hit, for it ~~was~~.

Sugar Valley Knob moved 2 - 2 flashes Bliss: 2 prod.
Berkhoff Place " 8 - 11 flashes
2 shots - (~~hit~~ lost) (not counted as hit)

Wednesday 27 October Another beautiful day. We went to the Wheeler Settlement, parked below Mrs. Craig's and used Isaac Bliss. This was a mistake, for ~~Bliss~~ ^{Bliss} proceeded to move a shadow

wide and D. went to pieces when I wrestled for B.

Oddly they both passed up a ^{large} brush heap with 4 grouse in it. We followed 3 of these and again they bumped their three and never did locate them, tho I practically put them on top of the birds. We flushed one a tree and after they left with D. to go back for the car, I circled and got a try at a bird that flushed wild from me. My charge sliced into a tree trunk and roared into some saplings. Later B. did not want to wheel to locate it, head off the ground, but the bird flushed. Finally working up the run at the foot of the hill I saw a big grouse was out in front of me and a moment later B. who did not know it had flushed, but a wild point - an almost production.

Peeking key up at Mrs. Craig, we drove out the road past Calvert's - everything here now posted by "Berge Bros." and parked at the upper ravine, working S. & D. down this. Saw a grouse fly wild from a high tree. Later at the lower path & saw several sets, they heard another. That was all. We came back via the "old

Sam Place" - no hydrangin down showing as before - and I was so bushed I could scarcely make it to the car. I've got to build up some energy somehow or stop hunting a day or so.

March 14 14 flashes in first cove (Mrs. Craig)
" " 2 " 2 in upper hollow.
One shot - no hit. Bliss
D. did

This worked better alone. D. worked well with S. -
kept this in mind. Called Harry "Bud" Shadwin
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adjacent to Mrs. Craig.

FANCY BRIDGE SOUTH

Thursday 28 October Today cold & windy. Stayed home & rested until 3:30 when I took Kay to visit Mrs. Engelhart, and used Bliss who on left ridge above "Fancy Bridge". Did not hear a single bird. Why?

About 2 hours. Made nothing. Bliss.

Friday 29 October MT. STORM Driving past Verdine Matthews' road, saw 4 grouse on road! More perfect weather & off to Mt. Storm to find some woodcock in the big thorn thicket, since it is time the flight is in. Drove in the old back road of route 42 as per the top map and parked in a pasture within a quarter mile of the big basin of alders & thorns - perfect looking for 'cock. And Bliss & Dixie and worked to upper end. B. promptly hit a spirit-shilling point just within the alders. I stopped D. on a back point and walked in, passing for Kay to get plenty of film for B. was like a statue and I felt the woodcock would hold obligingly. Finally with no choice but to walk into the sun and flush it, I stepped in and a grouse exploded taking off low to the ground thru the alders. B. moved in as the bird flushed and I made a try, to no effect. The bird topped the alders - a big cock - and would have given me a good try had I remained outside - but how would I have got it to flush?

SIMPLY

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We were unable to relocate the grouse which I think crossed the #23 flats to the wooded hill, so proceeded to search the area for woodcock. We never heard a one. Once to the edge of the large woods on the north we paused for lunch. Soon after starting out Dixie made a fine point in the dense thicket ahead and held while I walked - a crawled - up, ^{with} the bird flushed some distance in front of her and we followed. We had another flush that appeared to be another bird, later verified by finding a quail about where Dixie's bird seemed to be going.

Altogether we heard 4 grouse with two flushes in the thorns or alders or within the big woods - before heading for the hill where we were parked. On the way I heard a flush in cover where the dogs were working and, waiting, got a good view of a grouse left crossing but rather well out. I should have used the left barrel, especially with these open barrels but I didn't - and missed what I think was a good opportunity at about 30 or more yards.



These all appeared to be ~~about~~ at least cork quails tho' that's jumping to conclusions but in this cover I wonder if you'd ever get much shooting. The dog work was lovely - never saw better points by both dogs, the poor Shadows paid the price of no work at all.

3 hours.
Missed 5 or 7 grouse
2 shots - no hits.
Bliss: 1 prod. 1 buck
Dixie: 1 prod. 1 buck

Found the three-hour session much more suited to my limitations of blood sugar timing and must try for that to avoid the fatigue that hit me the last two days out.

Saturday 30 October

Upper Dooty revisited - probably the best

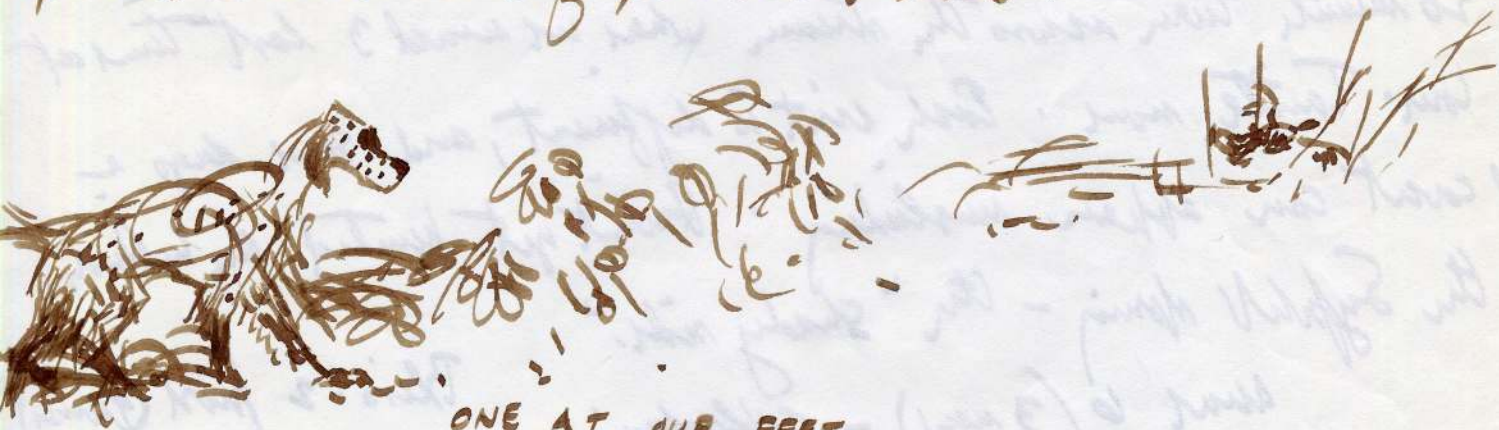
grass cover I'll ever know, and not a soul but ourselves there, even on a Saturday. Today I and Bliss alone, and King and I took the lower road as before but with rubber pass so we could cross the stream. * No contacts at all until we'd started up the "Humble" path when a grouse flushed wild across the stream from Bliss who was working for ~~scout~~ on our side. Learning that bird for later we went on to the crossing, ate some lunch, and hunted well up the path with no action.

Returning by the road above we found B. morning out too wide, her first offense that way today, but she eventually found birds on the hill in open woods above the road and pointed, for King heard her call so silent and then two flushes. After we got her back in front of us and working below the road, she looked at a tree grouse - making three new birds for this area.

Once back in the flat of Rhododendron near the springs of the stream a grouse flushed from a humlock. Some Bliss but scout and pointed into Rhododendron in front of me and almost at once I heard a bird start out. I tried for it - almost a miss shot as it emerged and turned around the corner, missing. Following it up the left tributary we had decided to turn back when I saw B. but scout and work into a grouse, flushing it up over the hill. I got her in and reprimanded her, then started back the hillside above the path. I saw B. above me on point, holding her trophy.

near for the bird just flushed and I approached, ready for a 225
new one. I had to wade knee-deep in greenbrier and B. held all the
while but no bird materialized. This does wonders for your tensions.

Further on I looked up to see B. coming down the steps toward me
and a moment later turned to see her, wheeled around pointing into
some rhododendron. It was an intense point, her head and eyes aimed at
the thick cover within a yard or so of us. Coined for a flush from
our feet, I waited - only to hear a surging thru the rhododendron
and was about to discount it as a rabbit when a quon came out
the upper side and bored along the ground not more than two feet
up. I swung but not fast enough, for the bird disappeared and my
pattern threw a circle of spots on the bushes.



ONE AT OUR FEET.

I know my quon misses me because I'm not waiting that split-
second to focus - to see the bird, then overtake. But each shot
seems to take me off balance even when I'm ready.

★ I've completely overbooked a lovely part of the day - a
flush near the forks of the tributaries - a large woodcock that
went up from my feet, that flew the way a bird is supposed to

fly, and that dropped the way they should - solidly hit - B. came in and made a perfect retrieval - a large adult hen - and to B's surprise, for she thought it was a grouse. Why can't I do this on the grouse shots?

after Bliss's last point we worked around the hill to Grouse the bird hadn't been sprinkled - the low take-off looked odd - but there was no trace of it.

Hunting back down the lower path, Bliss worked every moment like a thoroughbred - hitting the hardest covers all the way to the car. No birds - which suggests that the low road is not the one to take in late afternoon.

after car, found for a bit and a breath, then took S. & D. for a 20 minute turn across the stream where we missed 3 last time at this low. Taste, none. Each visit is different, and some days a good count can appear misleading. Haven't yet hunted the bushes along the Sycamore spring - the "shady side."

was 6 (3 new) - 8 flies

2 shots on points - no hit.

one shot - woodcock, no hit

Bliss: 2 (prod Grouse)
1 ret (cock)

Shadows
Dine

9 Monday, November To Dority begun in cut concrete road #27
A new well, a new start - with all
the inhibitions of the past ten days wiped out.

I just can't believe it. Started down the log road thru marvelous
cover, using Blin solo. On a small rise at the edge of a big
clashings the first quon flushed from the path at the brow of the hill
and I fluffed it. Couldn't hold back as a shot too short & focus.
No more contacts till we worked around the far edge & down over
the loamy mountainside, Blin working nicely. Heard #2 go out from
B. near the hemlocks in the ravine. No refresh. Followed the
ravine down and at the old dead & apple tree Blin made one
from down briars in the ravine.

Followed down and don't know of the pointed (the way back)
but heard four flushes - one giving me a long try as it rose up the
far bank in fairly open slashings. I missed right & left, but feel
perhaps the distance rather great.

Followed the bird up and around a hollow, hollow of briars and
brush and finally marked it perfectly. B. didn't get a point, tho she
was within yards - but merely turned at an take-off. This was it -
a perfect distance, wide open and I had the gunpoint to hold
for that perfect second to focus - then the god damned tree,
right in line with the bird ~~in line~~



Finally a try as it bored down and a miss.

I just can't believe it. In 40 years of grouse shooting I have had
slumps - bad spells that nearly drove me nuts for a week. But
never - repeat, never, have I had a series of so many shots that were
either slanted against me, or that I just fluffed. You reach the
point where you'll nearly fire the gun at the sound of a bird.
Why did I have to shut my big mouth about not wanting to
kill a grouse? I am dying to kill one - any grouse, all the
grouse I've been missing for more than 2 weeks. I can't believe it.

If I hadn't been doing better than usual on woodcock -
10 birds ~~with~~ ^{with} 17 shots - I'd think I'd lost the feel of
the Purdue. I'm tempted to match the Fox on grouse till I
get on the grouse but I think it would be a mistake.

The weather today was lovely - cold, windy on top but in the
hollows quiet enough and with beautiful clouds. That cover is a
hellish place to me there but wonderful grouse shooting. Didn't
get to the "grouse house". Came out late tonight at Mrs Bruce Cromer's
house and called the street way to the car. Poor Dixie & Shadow -
moved out again. Tomorrow we go to the Canyon Valley for woodcock
and I hope it breaks the spell. I can't believe it.

Moved 6 - 9 fenders
4 shots - no hits

Bliss
and had well -

GATES
Tuesday 2 November. Cloudy weather morning over looked threatening
but it cleared and became even warmer in
late afternoon. Drove to Gates in Gansan Valley and hunted the
usual area, starting about 2:30 (standard). It soon became apparent
that the flight is not in. We'd hardly get started when cars
began arriving. Dixie had made a point in the area near the
"dead fall" chimney and I walked into the bird before I reached
her, missing a fair rising straightaway. Soon Bliss pointed nicely
a bird that rose quietly and gave me no shot.

We'd started with Shadows & Dixie but found no birds.
Two cars - 6 men - arrived and we'd hurried back, as they drove
to the river, and got going with D. & B. Meanwhile a third car -
single man - arrived and all this gave me a feel of people on
my heels. (alibi). Found one of the first birds and followed it
back to the area near car. Another flush put it over the far
edge near the big aspens. Here, as D. & B. worked the area I walked into
the cock (they'd nearly stepped on it with no points) and it rose
under my nose. I wanted to avoid blasting it, then missed it myself &
left it wide open!

Circling area west of big aspens we lost Bliss. Hunting here
beyond morning - we'd given me trouble morning out today - I understood
repeatedly until a cock flushed from the thorns and as realized B. had
held a point all this time.
We moved altogether about 7 birds. I goofed on the best
chance, taking a split moment to head a need for better vision and the
cock flushed with no sound. I was too late to shoot.

I can't remember ever having less feel of birds being here. If
 the flight was in last week, they're gone now. But I expect to
 see more later on. Very poor shooting. This made a lovely
 3rd point at the cove near car when we came in, D. laughing.
 (May tried a movie (may have been too dark). The flock offered no
 shot.

Ward about 2 miles for a flock. Bliss: 3 (cock),
 3 shots (cock) no hit. Dine: 1 (cock)
 Shadows (cock)

Wednesday 3 November Ray stayed home with S. & D. and I took B. to
 the Bishop's Place. A hot day, sunny, but near 70°. Hunted thru tender dry
 woods, dense and brittle. On hillside where I'd searched 7 last time we
 didn't see a bird unless some went out as didn't hear for the noise.
 Hunting back the top, I worked around to the shady east slope. In the
 dense tangle of grapevines (very few grapes) B. pointed rather hesitantly
 at first but establishing and holding. Nothing flushed so we moved on.
 Shortly I heard a grouse flush ahead some distance and marked it
 out the ridge.

Near the area I expected it, Bliss made a lovely point, very solid
 this time, and with a high head pointing up the ridge. Walking a grouse
 up in that stuff is no breeze. The bird flushed as I moved to



Bliss and gave me a tenth-
 second look. I tried for it
 and I dropped from view
 as I fired and I missed
 I thought I had hit but this

Walking to the top of the corn, I decided to hunt it out to the left^{#31}
not draw a blank. After passing for a breather & a bite of food
I came back the road past the barn.

Sending Blin in to the right edge I was about to follow
when the fence turned when the quon suddenly flushed from her
and came into the road, coming straight-away and low, down the
road. I had the foresight to aim my left barrel and held
exactly on the bird. I couldn't have done it more deliberately or
more accurately but tho I tho at first it must have dropped, I
saw the quon sailing far down the road and back into
the thicket over on the right. Just how it is that every shot turns
out wrong this season I can't say. Many of my misses have been
the type I've hit over and over again. But not this year. I
managed not to get too provoked this time but I am quite ready
for some decent luck. Stopped this shot off and estimated it
at about 50 yards. Too far for the modified left barrel
I was using today. After this the woodcock barrels stay
down from ground hunting.

Blis: 2 prod.
Mark ^{new} ~~1~~ - 3 flaps.
2 shots - 0 hit

9
Thursday 4 November To the Whitell Settlement for a return trip.
This time, having got permission via phone
from Lindsay Burge, we parked at Old Sam Place and hunted
above the road, using Shadows & Discs. The day was pleasantly
cool in the shady areas and we hunted up the mes ravines with
papermills and ropes. Near the Treasurer's road Discs down
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working below me in the draw toward a grouse that flushed down
past me - a left crossing shot that I fully expected to make -
surrounding them and firing as the bird cleared some tree trunks but I
missed. I'm using the lighter 55%/70% barrels now for grouse.

Along this in a tangle of greenberries, Dixie saw another grouse
and then barked trees. I hurried up toward her but she bird flushed
and came toward me low, swooping past and just missing my
head as it landed down the log road. We turned and followed but
oddly didn't see either one.

Heading back, we continued south from the point of flush
and soon saw #4 flush ahead going toward the run. Again, we
followed and failed to locate. We saw her pass a number of brushy
log piles etc with rocks but I feel Bliss would have spotted it.

After eating & taking a breather, we turned back and took the path
lower down where I've flushed grouse other years. I was watching
Dixie, who had been acting high-strung in her eagerness to please
and getting nervous. She hit scent, but he was down and
began to trail around while the grouse flushed some yards
above her. Now, I may be wrong, but I think Bliss would have
worked it head up and probably been more accurate. I sometimes
give up hope that Dixie will ever make a real grouse dog, tho
she has her days. She can track but he, too lacks what it takes
to please.

about forty yards beyond this point of flush I walked into a quon that flushed below the path where both dogs had passed it by. A lower than eye-level away shot - that for a moment caught me off guard & I fumbled the safety but mounted and fired and - of all things - saw the quon tumble! I can't believe it! But that wonderful sensation that wipes away all the inhibitions of more than a week's miseries. Shadows & Dixie came in for the find and Shadows located it - zeroing in on the scent in beautiful style, perching up the bird from a hole in the small stream and retrieving. Dixie was in part of him & he laid the quon down without sitting but we weren't finding fault with any small part of it. a big adult cock.

Returning to the car, we reflected on the last bird.

Drove down the road to hunt the ridge above Calvert's valley and enroute saw a quon on the road. I let B. out



SHADOWS
DELIVERS

but she missed any scent and as she ran around the car (still twenty yards from the bird) we saw it stretch its neck as it watched her. then flatten in the leaves & almost disappear. As the blinds moved in on it a second quon flushed from the left margin and the bird in the road flushed and followed - straight down the road. I walked towards them but I wasn't anxious for a shot. We got a reflex with no dog work - as usually happens, the dog does everything wrong under these circumstances and

passed up this way? I never really am interested in a shot at quail sighted under these circumstances & we soon moved on.

Down down, Bliss worked nicely making two impressive points in the grapes near the old Ford house ruins (logs) but no birds were there. I'm pretty convinced that quail have just flushed at such times.

Moving to the upper side of the road we hunted up the mouth about Carver's hollow and scored 2 more. Later flushed one wild below the road. There was eleven new quail and the feeling is that they are beautifully distributed over most good cover everywhere up here. A wonderful place to come back to - soon! And a new viewpoint now that I've had this bit of luck - a lovely cock quail and, as Kay reminded me, one to make me think of Dr. Morris!

ward 11 (all new) - 14 flushes. Shadows: 1 bill
1 net
2 shots - 1 one hit
Dive: 1 bill
Bliss

adult cock: wild
crops: grapes

DORITY HEAD

Friday 5 November: Tonight life is exactly as I would have it - a matched pair (brace) of quail hanging on the porch: yesterday's big cock and a young hen from today! We returned to Dority Head but parked at head of valley log road beyond Cramer's. And Bliss and did not get to car in time to even give S. & D. a turn.

The weather continued dry - the woods would explode, not burn - and fairly hot. Could not get Bliss to more than sample sides of the road on the way down thru beautiful quail cover all the way. Kay heard a wild flush (my hearing is not sharp enough to catch them that far out) but we had no net.

locate any birds at the old shack where we'd moved 4 before, but largely because Bliss, who is getting tired after every day hunting for two weeks and more, would not penetrate far enough to the other side. That left me to plunge down and across and in some ward two - one up the hollow, the other around the ridge to the south.

Followed both but failed to contact them. Instead we met a Methuen boy (grandson of Verdie and son, we think, of Donald who lives beyond where we parked). He was a typical mountain boy, carrying a deer rifle he was careful to explain was for his Grandpappy. He agreed it was beautiful cover but "dull" after they cut it out.

We worked all the way to the "jougail house" where we ate, rested, and circled the rhododendron cover. Finally, turning back, Bliss made a guess from the bank above the wreck of a house. We marked it and we followed, getting a stone-solid point in the bottom that just had to be the guess. After much tramping about, we found the fact that no bird was there at present.

Trudging up the barren bottom land we came again to the excellent cover in the slashings and at once saw a bird go out ahead of B. and drop in the bottom near the shack. As I worked the left side, they took the path on the right - and walked into a grass that flushed below the path, and came right over her, loosing up and around the steep hillside.

Giving me the line of flight, they stayed on the path while I fought the briars up the hillside. Bliss was working well now and quartering the area about me efficiently.

pointing, in front and a bit below me, with her head turned up the hill into a tangle of brush and vines only a bit denser than the stuff I was climbing thru. As I maneuvered for position, which didn't seem to be there, up and around above - feeling every change of mine only precluded another view - I could see her head pointed down into the tangle in front of her. The sun was well down behind the



IN THE COOL OF
THE EVENING.

far shoulders of the valley and I felt I could have smelled the bird if I'd been any closer. But like the point down the valley, this seemed to be proving empty. I took several more steps and I can't remember if

Bliss moved a not, but I heard the quail take off - all of thirty yards ahead. There was a silhouette of the bird cutting high and right into the hillside and I was trying for it with the left barrel and it was falling. I saw it as Bliss ran in for the retrieve, fluttering on the slope above me. For a moment she was searching, then she had it, trying to hold it in her mouth. Long training with the quail has disciplined her not to catch a running bird or grab one fluttering, yet here was a bird just shot. Still, she couldn't kill it, as Shedons would have done, and it waded her grasp, fluttering and rolling down to me where I caught & dispatched it, tossing it out. I got Bliss to retrieve it tho she didn't seem to believe as she has the woodcock this year.

Two things are important here: the apparently empty ponds #37 that
 one has made when it seemed evident there was body scent present but
no birds. I suspect these grouse are running out. At least, this one
 must have. The other thing was the shot. Instead of surrounding
 them the bird as on a close crossing shot, I reverted to the old
 "pointing out" swing, using the left barrel and coming up ahead of
 the grouse and surrounding them "thrust", not them the bird. I think this
 a worthwhile thing to try with distant left barrel shots when
 a fast swing them is too inaccurate and gets you too far ahead. The
 "fast swing them" will be on all other situations.

That made our day and we took the
 long climb up the road to the car with
 light hearts and a wonderful glow.



POINTING OUT.

In daylight the bird - a young hen - proved to have a reddish-
 golden color to the bar markings and the small tufts are a semi-red -
 And so a beautiful piece of grouse - a big cock and lovely hen - hang
 on the white log wall of the porch tonight, and all is good.

young hen: inter. semi red	March 5 (1 new) - 7 flashes	Bliss: 1 fresh (hill over)
cock: blue gapes, leards (rubens)	One shot - 1 hit.	1 ret.
		1 kill

9 HOY MILLER used in AA
 Saturday 6 November Plans to hunt with Wade Foster changed when
 we learned the Herman Godes recital was not
 tonight so Kay & I went to try the North country and the logs

number of grouse Dick Muthy had reported near his father's house.

We drove through the gate at the old parking place and left Bliss in the shade in the car, leaving Shadows & I out for a change first. It was terrifically hot (we expect a closure due to dry, fire hazard) and it soon slowed Shadows to a respectable range. Doves hunted nicely today too. It has been years since we've been in here and it looked nice to see these old roads again. At the ravine with the humpback where Ruff made his famous point and I may double, we hunted up one side and down the other but found no grouse at home. On our main road, which seemed longer, we at last came to the old home site and found that area recently timbered. What it looks ravaged it actually is good even now and will be better during the next few years. Timbermen, without meaning to, do a far better job of improving grouse habitat than the game biologists who do nothing. We saw droppings on a drumming log below the slashings. We worked our way back for some pieces below the road, crossing the rhododendron margin but it was too much work with no results, so we returned to the road where Kay continued with the car and I hunted about.

In the old meadow fields about the car and the first home place I let S. & D. work the tangles about me where the greenberries come in blue with berries. Even the "rippling" in the old fields looks

like blueberry bushes with fruit. As I stepped thru a gap in a fence row I felt it important to not pass up the good corner below and behind me. I would have done well to continue instead, for as I turned to the right, I sensed a motion and in my left eye caught the jet speed of a grouse - silent - pouring into the cover from behind and the left when the dog had moved it. There was no time to consider - I simply mounted and tried to overtake as the bird disappeared but saw it rise at my start and pitch on into the hollow beyond the road.

Joining Kay at the car we rested, then changed dogs, taking Bliss into the hollow when the grouse had gone.



We heard a flush as she was working out to side at one place and count of the reflex.

Our route up the hollow to Dick Muller's father's was empty tho Bliss gave me one perfect point that she held while I crested her, and it turned out to be a dead cat! She tried!

Returning toward the car, Kay separated from me and took our path while I made a big circle below with Bliss. On the way back up the slope Bliss did some of the nicest work I've ever seen, not excluding Ruff, which is top praise. Hitting scent, she began to weave, head at shoulder-height, at top speed - left & right, pouring

toward the road in wide swings. She paused nearly on a point at several places but only for a moment, then plunged into the thick margin along the road. In an old briar tangled opening about I saw her get to a stop in a lovely point where she held motionless as I hurried to her. The grouse was still further above her and flushed too far out for me to shoot. But it was perfect dog work, no faltering, no ground trailing - simply fast head-up location of a bird ^{and} no



FAST AND POSITIVE.

one could do better.

Flushed with the pleasure of this experience, I headed her on into the briery field between the two thickets where I'd missed my grouse earlier, on the way to the car. Just under the gap and standing in the identical spot I decided to re-visit the spot, but this time I would not turn - and I'd do it right. I had just decided the bird would have been too close when I heard a flush above from the same woods. Peering in the fading light for a distant form, I saw a grouse boring straight at me. It was too late to take it winging so I whirled and fired as it went over my left shoulder - almost directly over me - missed, and held on it going away and missed again. The bird went forever. And I stood there wondering just how in the hell I always

hunted down into the first hollow, finding the cover much poorer by
growth. In the rhododendron, I saw D. on point only to discover
B. pointing just beyond. A big cock quince flushed just too far out to
try for but it was a lucky double point & I think D. had the scent
as well as B.

We followed well down to the end of the woods and got two reflections
and a third up on the slope with another flash point by B. No further
contact in excellent brush heap cuttings that run all the way to lick.

D. moved #2 on the way to dick and that was the end of action
all the way up to the headwaters basin. It was getting late
but we pushed on, for I was eager to see what the upper forks held.

Among other things, there were no quince, not even vines, and few
if any grandier berries - a few acorns. Kay heard two very distant
flushes. It was 5:00 pm and we were still heading away from the car, so
we had to turn back without reaching the big rocks. In the bottom
on the west fork I saw D. but scent and drew to a tentative point,
then heard two quince, both going into trees and then taking off with no
chance to shoot.

Passing to rest & eat at the lip of the ridge we decided to hit
a straight line down thru the cover rather than head for the road and follow
it - a longer route. To my pleasure, I came out within yards of where I was
needed for on the old tram road and darkness nearly caught us before we got
to the down road. On the last half mile we flushed two birds from the tangle
along Huffman's field but only heard them. It was a long, rough track with
almost no trails left - only laurel patches and brush and

blers and I'm convinced not worth repeating. Much of the cover is too big now. We were out about 4½ hours and were glad to reach the cars.

March 8-12 flocks

No shots

Bliss: 2 flocks

Dixie: 2 flocks

Shadows . . . all worked well together.

Friday 12 November

Upper Parity

Moved only one bird up the lower road, none all the way from "that" to the "crossing".

Returning, Bliss (alone) flushed a bird on left prong. Following, we worked up "jeep road" & B. moved another that I tried for out of sheer frustration: an impossible shot. Shortly later, B. working to wide "bumped" the #2 bird we were following.

Keeping up the jeep road to the head of the ridge I heard a flush from the thorn thicket (again, no point that I could tell) and seeing the grouse crossing on the skyline to the right I swung ahead in a "pointing out" shot with the left barrel and tumbled it beautifully — fully 35 or 40 yards. The grouse was still fluttering when B. reached it and I took much coaxing to persuade us to pick it up and retrieve tho' it was nearly inert — a lovely big but young cock bird, hard hit. This was one of the clearest and best shots I've made in a long time.

Waking up and along the upper edge we heard another grouse flush and I tried for it in a long, away shot. I should have used the left again but didn't, and the bird flushed but went on strong & far.

Following, we worked the top of the upper field and King tho' he heard the sound of wings but saw nothing. Later, Bliss made a point in the grander tangles and I saw the grouse flush down into the woods below, followed immediately by a second grouse beyond us. Thus I think we saw two birds.

rested, then headed into the last woods. In the bottom we heard ^{'657 #49}
 a grouse near up and over toward the path. Not far beyond Bliss but
 a fine point and I walked well ahead of her to flush the bird just
 out of gun range. Followed and flushed it ~~near~~ ^{toward} the power line and then
 got an excellent point that must have been where the bird moved out on
 us ahead of our arrival. A good day - and a good shot!

Count 6 - 2 flushes
 One shot - 1 kill
 young hen: most complete interruption of tail band ever seen.
 (no actual net)
 c/o: 1 hen, assorted leaves, few quail-like berries

NORTH BRANCH
Monday 15 November

Back to Washington - Cabin 18 - with Pigeons in
 cabin 22. Shell at home ill. Ed Filler came out

and we hunted in Canaan Valley, parking on Rt 32, and going down the
 North Branch. Moved birds in big spruce woods at beginning - less
 trying no shot. Later, down the more open alder stretch we approached
 a spruce clump and I moved a grouse from the alders - very low straightaway
 flight that I missed - did the bird turn as I shot or why do I miss
 them? With the gun open, reloading, a second grouse flushed from the
 exact spot but a shot would have been dangerous to the dogs - Bliss &
 Dixie who had missed these birds somehow.

Len was using Tanning, the engaging bithany (unexperienced) and
 both Bliss & Dixie were giving me a rough time. I spent the time whistling or
 redding or actually ~~whistling~~ ^{whistling} Dixie. On return trip (mostly barren
 repeat ground) we jumped a big buck with about a 6 point rack & Bliss
 took off in pursuit. Suddenly I saw the buck in trouble - his head

a rock caught in the top strands of a wire fence. To see that enormous body flailing around in the air like a boss on a plug was frightening. This last avulsion was by then in spots of my running and yelling and whistling but she had the good sense to stop and only bark. I was sure the buck would break its neck but I saw him get free and bound on. Only when I'd called Miss in and was in the act of punting her did I realize that my pulse was too rapid and I was feeling "heart jumps" - an uncomfortable sensation from too much violent exertion. Fortunately I'm in good shape and it meant nothing seriously but it's a warning not to go all out in these situations.

Coming back thru the big woods we had to flush - one crossing the hard road where Ed missed double try at it. She had said to us to go on & hunt the west side of the road without him and so we followed on up - good country. I saw a big grouse flush up the valley - a wild flush and we followed it, reflecting it from whod-know along the run near the pipe line. The bird drilled straight for me and, dodging, I turned and made a quick try just going out of sight low. I saw a flurry of tail feathers explode and expected the bird dead just beyond, but had heard Ed's gun; wondering why. We could not locate my guess the dogo tried. I gathered about from a mass of tail feathers and some underwing flank feathers all shot completely free of the bird with ~~no~~ ^{with} no bird.

BALSAMS & BLACKWATER HEAD

Thursday 18 November

Yesterday brought the blizzard and closed out our hunting. Today, Ed Fuller came

and we hunted the Balsams and Blackwater Basin country. Moved out again in Balsams - a possible long shot if I'd been ready and looking but I was examining deer tracks. Further on, Bliss found a woodcock - old with 4 inches of snow - and I don't know if B. failed. The flush was a short one and we now got a reflex that gave me an away shot that dropped the bird crippled but able to flutter a foot or so off the ground. As a result, Bliss would not touch it and I had the unpleasant duty of dispatching the bird - a young male. These are the things that I dislike, the wounding.

Beyond the Cove Run Balsams we separated from Ed & Ben and I climbed up the right side of the big spruce stand to the head - we thought where we were to meet Ed. I suggested that Ben start back while I reconnoitered around "the point" to meet Ed. The point turned out to be a mere arm of the spruce stand and I found myself going farther and farther. ^{Ben's high} I followed at two separate trail points. I no longer shot. Finally, I followed an opening in the dense cover, with large deer tracks, till I crossed a branch - the main one - of Blackwater - and came up to a rhododendron well that spread up a steep shoulder in front of me. Deciding to go on, rather than turn back, I pushed up and then the tangle and confronted a set of fresh turkey tracks in the deep snow coming down into the tangle. I fought my way around and over the shoulder striking another set of tracks - possibly the same turkey - and at last felt I was free of the main spruce stand and headed down the other side. By now, I knew I was going to find Ed, simply intended

hunting back down and crossing to rejoin the stumps. But it wasn't
that simple. A huge arm of spruce swamp confronted me,
extending out of sight into the north. I tried several cutbacks only
to come to dead ends and at last I creaked and found a flat
with small beaver dam back-ups frozen, that I could hop over
via tussocks of grass and haircap moss. at last, I got across this
arm (I think possibly Club Run) and came to the main stretch
of swamp and muskeg along the Blackwater, getting fairly wide
down here. I could see the far shoulder of Cassin (the same had
been long down behind the mountain) and I knew I had either to
cross that stretch or try to go down to the bridge via the "Kull"
which I think I was on at one time. I actually believe now, I was.
But Plio and I worked our way over and at last found an oblique
beaver dam to cross and finally pulled ourselves out onto the
far side and into an open stretch with thorn trees, all the way we'd
mowed nothing - but had seen a trail net of turkey tracks well up.
Blowing my whistle and calling with no results, I hurried on -
strangely not fatigued though getting pretty tired - and heard a shot a two
and felt I was might have gone back up searching for me. Then I
came to Ed's tracks taking an old road that short-cut to the Sand River.
Not daring to abandon Leo I finally reached the far gap and
picked up his huge bearing tracks and at last overtook him at the
head of the Babans. He had not seen Ed. That person was at the Sand
River waiting. It was a few days ago as most of Ed's safaris are,

but an exhilarating experience - "Har the challenge . . ."

Ed then proceeded to tell us where we should try to find grouse tomorrow after he left for Cape Batteras - places he'd found birds years ago - as all of the other places are he takes us.

Bliss: no points etc but she worked in both ranges.

Mixed 3 - 3 flushes
no shots
Mead (woodcock)
(shot (cock) = 1 hit

MT. STORM

Friday 19 November

Cloudy with forecast of snow flurries but Leo & I headed for Mt Storm via the new road. Soon

after leaving Davis we ran out of so much snow and into blue sky and sunshine. Beyond Bismark no snow at all and much sun, but at the Towering Oaks road found about an inch of snow and clouds again.

Using Bliss close with Sessie Britton Tammy we hunted out our usual way, depressing for a turn into the hemlock run where I put two - and

two thunks perhaps three, guess over him for two shots. No replies. No further birds until the thorn thicket where I started Sess down the edge at the woods road first while I took the thorns. Heard three - one of which I saw start off the ground but it ran out of sight. The third proved a nut for Sess as I called "Mark!" and Bliss found and retrieved a nice adult cock. We hunted a wide circle of the thorns with no further action, and no more contacts all the way back to the car - including a contact into the hemlocks again. It was a lovely day and

we hunted nearly 4 1/2 hours. Bliss worked closer - was a bit stale at times but hunted hard and made one point in the ^{humbles} ~~flats~~ on the way back that must have been a "soon-after-the-fact". My luck does not seem to be running so much sport this trip:

Moved 5-5 flushes
no shots. Bliss (retrieved Lewis bird)

I wonder if there aren't more birds here that were covered up?

PARK-PIPE LINE

Saturday 20 November Last day of our Blackwater Trip. Sunny at times, warm, lovely day with much of snow gone in Cabin area. Less & I hunted the "corner" area he'd marked birds in when about the first morning, except that I discovered he'd been much farther out the flat beyond the pipe line. I used Bliss & Dixie first, being unable to leave Dixie & Shadow ~~at home~~ any longer. Both worked well but the only sign of Lewis birds were one set of tracks along the little run that I think is "Tank Run".

Returning to the car, where Bliss made a hot point while I was relieving my bladder!, I met Less and suggested a turn at the pipe line corner. He declined, needing a rest, and I took all 3 dogs and started up the pipe line with the dogs working over on the right. At the crest of the first rise - 30 yards from the car, I saw a big grouse run out from a humlock and saw Bliss near out (she may have had a point) only to have my Ploveroid clip-ons flop down half-way and obscure my view as the bird flushed.

Moved on to the power line, ~~on the way~~ ^{on the way} beyond and heard

Bliss working at a tree grouse. By the time I could work in & see she had stopped and I assumed the bird fledged. But at the next moment a grouse blew off a head high bunch of heath in front of me - avoiding me; seconds later I heard another and saw a right quartering bird well out having left the same group of trees, then a fourth and fifth fledged and I glimpsed a bird well out and "away-right" which I tried for, foolishly using my right barrel. The bird faltered, then towered well above the bushes and went into a right slip descent. Hurrying up and expecting a grounded bird, I saw all these things



THE WRONG BARREL.

to search, which they did thoroughly. At one place Dixie made a hot point with Bliss pointing beside her but I found only the tracks of a bird taking off. This must have been the grouse in spite of the towering reaction for we found no other signs. There had to have been at least five and perhaps six birds in this group.

Following the two fowlers beyond the power line Bliss again looked toward me in a tree. I fought my way to her thru slippery rocks and snow and clump cover and saw the grouse perched above me in a bare tree. Fumbling for footing I measured to a ~~point~~ ^{place} where I could hope to see it if I took the ~~pipe~~ line and sure enough it did. I wheeled to try for it after it passed over me but my finger touched the right barrel by accident, driving me off-balance from the recoil and I helplessly attempted the left barrel as it swooped across the open pipe line. A miss.

After following with no result, I returned to the original site and was half-way across the pipe line when a grouse fledged out of range and flew from one tree deeper into the evergreens. Knowing it was a grouse, I tried anyway to penetrate and follow. Whether it was the same bird or another - it

seemed a bit too soon - a grouse came out of the hemlocks and over a small opening where I was standing.

It seems a possible enough chance when you see it and try, but I have rarely made one of these unless Sir had a bit under morning. This time I fired overhead, missed, and turned (it almost feels like turning over) and tried to hold just under the departing bird going away high. It only bucked and sailed on, leaving me in a ragged state of mind.



Rejoining Les who had perked up with all this action, we started back toward the pipe line, Les having seen what he thought was a grouse of the original flush. He took the road - a good choice - while I took the inside cover. There was a moment when Shadows was mistakenly gunned (I don't understand why he doesn't freeze as he does on pheasants & quail) and the bird sailed out and down the road ahead of Les. We continued and I was at the very hemlocks where the bird - I think this same one - had flushed when the rocks along the pipe line in front of me took form and exploded. The grouse flapped over the rim and bored out across the right of way in a straight-away offering. This time I that I held off the superannuation and fired - absolutely certain of this one. The grouse faltered a hair's breadth at the report but bored on with a few small feathers floating down to taunt me, and I obstinately fired the left barrel as it disappeared in the cover at the far side. If ever I understood the old gunner who said "The damned bird flew with your heart shot out of your body" it was now.



less and the grouse sailed on below the road and into the marginal cover along
 Washwater. a thorough search by the other layer dogs suggests that it
 crossed to the far side. Circling back to the power line I stepped to the
 edge of the pipe line - power line intersection and had a grouse explode from
 a humlock to my right and give me an open left-away chance before it
 reached the screen of the big humlocks. I fired, certain of the shot, and
 missed. This is when you reach a bitter lay - eight shells and only
 counting near-hits or clean misses. I am ^{not} counting the accidental shot but
 I think this my worst day in years. The cover here is dense and nearly impenetrable
 and yet I've shot grouse such as several I missed. I question the shells worked
 Sears 3 1/8 - 1 1/8 - 7 1/2 - and the Purdey (I think my Fox a more perfect fit for
 quick shots) and yet I know it is all nothing but my own overage too quick
 shooting. I've made too many brilliant shots with the Purdey and with these
 shells. I was using plastic-piston hard leads (3 - 1 1/8 - 8) in the left.

In the afternoon Sears & I drove to the Beaver Creek new road and
 tried the run where Kay & I had moved 2 birds earlier this season. Not a feather.
 Returned and picked Kay up at 4:30 at the cabin and tried to get off in time to shoot
 the last light at the Falls. But saw it was too late and we returned to the pipe line
 corner and circled the area well, but did not locate a single one of the 6 or 7
 birds I'd missed. But it was nothing to share the last 3/4 hour with Kay. Did get a
 lovely point by Bliss that proved empty, but it had my pulse pounding!

Moved 6-12 flocks
 7 shots - no hits
 Bliss
 Pisci
 Hudson

Tuesday 23 November

Our deer season (2 weeks) started yesterday and closed our chance to hunt grouse for that period. To make up to Shadows & Dixie for their back-seat role last week and earlier, Ray & I took them to the Rockwell Preserve for pheasants, taking Bliss along for a short exercise turn. Found a new manager in charge over Lee Shafer — Lou Scarmecchia. Found also, to my pleasure, that I was to shoot on their Five Forks area. We followed Ed Morrison in the Preserve truck and came to the land at the end of a side road off the Dinner Bell-Five Forks road. This was a much more extensive spread than the old Haas Farm — perfect grouse country (the Glades) surrounding large flats of swamp and game plantings, with sedge sprinkled with several quail feeders. The day was cloudy, very windy and cold as hell with a threat of rain overhead.

We parked at the top of the hill, pulling into the old field on the right. Waiting for Morrison to return after releasing birds, we finally let Dixie & Shadows out — to Bliss's disgust. D. immediately hit scent below us on an edge and pointed and three quail flushed. Their quail carry-over seems most effective, tho there are occasional pheasant or two.

Started D. & S. down over the hill along the road and soon saw Shadows pointing into a brush pile on the far side of the road, with Dixie beside him. As I walked in, a pheasant ran out and started up the hill, still running. Trying to flush it, I hurried behind with Dixie moving in and when the bird flushed I dropped it on an away-slightly-rising shot. Dixie retrieved but laid it down a few yards from me with the expression that this was the heavy lead

I sent Shadows in and he retrieved it very ^{we took it to the car.} beautifully. #61


In the standing corn - broken down - on the left of the road intersection I thought there might be another bird but we swung the dogs into the planting on the right side - a dense matting of kafir corn, sorghum and possibly canary grass. Here Shadows went completely wild, driving straight out the rows away from me in spite of my whistle. That way he bumped a cock pheasant and chased it for a quarter mile back toward the car like a puppy. He ignored my scolding when he returned, plowing on out the food planting, bumped a second pheasant that went to the swamp below, then at the end of the road he swung into a point but only for a moment. Moving in, he disappeared in a tangled corner of quailbrush and brush. Trailing up, yelling at him, I heard a pheasant cackle as the bird rose but it failed to show. Dixie came up and both dogs circled a clump of the tangle, giving the impression the bird was hiding there. After some work, however, they moved away showing evidence of scent suggesting the bird had run out. Where it ran, I don't know for we couldn't locate it.

Hunting back along the corn below the food planting Shadows went out of hand again and we saw only one thing to do with him and we did it. After holding him in the car with Bliss we started out to have a nice shoot over a well-mannered dog.

Dixie worked beautifully, pointing some quail in the corn on the far corner of the crossroads. Circling down into the big flat below we worked the swamp golden swamp grass and suddenly Dixie was pointing again. Expecting quail

appear and ruin ahead of her. Hoping to ~~put~~ put it up I ran after it for several yards and it flushed giving me a wonderful chance in wide open space. But my trigger wouldn't pull and I came to, realizing I'd failed to push off the safety. Recovering, I fired my left barrel as the bird went thru some bare branches of a tree on the old road and didn't touch it - a come-uppance for a man who has shot as long as I have. Kay marked the bird as going well up to an area where Shadows had performed so badly. (Who am I to talk!)

Moving on down along the old road, we worked into the crab thickets and slashings on the right side, hearing a grouse flush would. Dixie, for some reason, was beginning to go a bit stale, pausing every few moments to stand and look back, and we decided to head back.

Doubling up to where Kay had marked the pheasant's flight we hunted out the trees at the far end of the food planting. In a small clump just short of this, Dixie turned, cringing, and then halting, finally going staunch. I moved around, failed to see any bird, then as with Dixie and I creaked at I heard and saw the pheasant dart back into the dense cover toward the lower side. I stood at the end to cover and Dixie made a circle to join the bird. It flushed out the road side to my right.  I fired, missing it somehow, and fired again as it quartered away and that I missed, only to see the bird tumble after an extra wing beat ~~that~~ falling in the field beyond.

walked in, set for one of the big ones, only to flush a pair of quail. #65
Doubling back the heavy cover on the far side of the road we worked out
the cork patch to the briar clump where the pheasant dissolved on us
yesterday, took the road back to a pile of posts and had a little flourish.

After that we started out the kaffir corn - sorghum planting. Part
way Dixie began making game and finally came to an old point, her
head turned down at her feet and her tail beginning to wag. I moved
up and saw a pheasant tail sticking out of the mass of stuff at
her feet. I moved closer and came to the conclusion that she'd found a
dead bird. Checking, I touched it with my foot and to double check,
gave the stiff form a second prod with my boot. There was a
sudden movement forward as the bird disappeared and came out the other
side of the mass of dead stems and rose in a perfect open shot. I
swearing, sensed my safety was still on and by the time I could do
anything about it the bird was too far off to try for. Such a damned
fool trick - two days running!

After that fiasco I looked up to see, at the far end of the
planting, a pheasant watching us. As we approached slowly, it moved
toward the end but always that white collar showed that it was a
hundred yards away. Then, losing it, I moved on and let Dixie work
out the area on this edge of the road. Finally she pointed from the
far roadside, standing beyond the low thicket and pointing toward me
with the cork between us. Careful to not send it out the other
side of the thicket, I waited. Then the bird moved out and flushed back
into the road in front of me - a rising right-crossing flush, acutely
climbing - and I swung up there and finished dropping the bird.

I felt it hard but but to my surprise it required some dispatching. This is what I most regret about shooting - the ones that aren't clean kills.

Having bagged one bird at last, we took it to the car and picked up Shadows ~~who~~ I just couldn't leave out of the fun in spite of what I knew to expect. So using both Dixie and Shadows we started down the hill again. At the bottom Shadows worked out the edge of the corn and above the road where one of the quail had flown, hit a lovely point, walking beautifully. Moving in, while Shadows held Dixie back, I prepared to flush the quail. Suddenly a pheasant rocketed out of the area between Shadows and me, going, I think, straighter and faster than any pheasant I can remember. It should have been a set-up, taken at the top of the rise but I was so close I had to shoot directly up. I missed and as the bird leveled and bored off overhead and quartering away right, I arced over and tried to get ahead as I fired with the barrels canted, and missed again. I think the answer should be to turn and from a level posture fire a shade below the bird, especially if I can wait for it to get out a piece. Day worked it into the



STRAIGHT UP AND FAST

pieces in the flat across the road. As shadows moved in a quail flushed a few yards from where the pheasant had gone up.

From then on, Shadows worked in perfect range and manner for the balance of the day. It should be called his day, and done in red. We pushed on into the thick crabapple cover beyond the flat to try to find the bird I'd feathered on my first shot. Working in from the left we got into nice dense grass cover with greenberries and good tight second growth. The sun was well down and it was shady here. I saw shadows wheel into a beautiful point in some briar tangles ahead and to my left, freezing into immobility. I walked around him, expecting almost anything, perhaps a wounded pheasant - or a quail.

It went out, a pheasant but far from wounded. At my shot it came down, fighting to maintain



THE DOG I THOT I HAD.

altitude but coming down. Shadows was in and had it in a fine retrieve, sitting to deliver, grinning from ear to ear. Kay got a movie of this if it will only show in this dark light. If this was my "feathered" bird, it wasn't injured. Or it could have been the one I'd kicked out and let fly away, if it came into this general area. And again it could be an entirely new bird.

Pushing on east toward the stream we got into very dense cover and heard three, I believe, quail flush. It was rather late and too dense to follow tho we tried. Working along this deep, slow running stream we came out at the old farm road. There Kay left me to go to the car to release

Oliver. I worked - Shadows & Dixie in the cover.

As I approached one of many piles of brush and tree tops, a grouse flushed, turning to the left. I made a fast moving and fired taking it as a left quartering shot and that it appeared to go down at an angle, just as a second grouse flushed straight out from the same brush heap. Dixie ran in toward the first bird it was gone some bit of time and I had hope that I'd made a hit. Fighting my way around to where she had disappeared I was let down to see her emerge from the tangle of brush empty-mouthed. Giving her a hopeful "dead bird, go fetch", I saw Shadows come on the scene, push into the pile of branches and saw his tail begin to thrash excitedly and then reach deeper and come out with my grouse, quite dead. I suspected he'd found it alive, despatched it and then delivered it to me, sitting. I also more than suspect Dixie had found the grouse still fluttering had refused to pick it up and walked away - a treacherous thing to do. I say this with some conviction, for she had refused me pleasant retreat yesterday and the bird she'd had killed over her today - both still fluttering.

Eager to show my grouse and share the excitement with Kay, I worked them to where I heard her whistle. She had handled Bliss as a point on a quail on the way from the car. After our meeting and scolding, we hunted ~~on~~ ^{along} the edge toward where Kay had marked Shadows first bird I'd missed with barrels. In the deepening twilight I saw Dixie point behind Kay and a pheasant ran beyond some crab-apples. I fired and it came down but I could tell it would be a runner. Hurrying after it, I saw it flutter off the ground a foot or more, running and fluttering ahead of Dixie in hot pursuit. Unfortunately, Shadows was not at hand but Bliss joined in the chase. We cornered the bird,

in a brush heap, and finally all the dogs had it "tried" in ^{the} 269
of the hills with D. & B. both barking like deer dogs. It was too close and too
dangerous to shoot at it and I suspect and wrong to neck - a less messy
way to dispatch them, I find. Again, I hate to supply these birds. I
was using grouse hats 3 1/4. 1 1/2 - 7 1/2, having run out of my 3 1/4. 1 1/2. 6 which
I prefer for both barrels or pheasants. I shot the bird on Shadow's point
with the Ely 3. 1 1/2. 6 shells, several years old.

It was a good day, as was yesterday 6 pheasants & a grouse. See Paper
had said the pressure license, 3 day, was not good for wild game, but my license
card specifically states that it is for any wild game in season. But I'll not worry
him with details.

grouse: 6 shots (pheasants) - 3 hits
young cock: 1 shot - 1 hit
trap: about 10 birds, including towns.

Dixie: several points on pheasant &
quail / hill quail
Shadows: 2 points pheasant & quail
1 ret pheasant.
1 k & ret grouse

A good way to pass some of the deer season at home.
Wonderful cover for pressure shooting

Bliss: short period worked. hit on quail.

BISHOFF

Wednesday 8 December after deer season. Monday & Tuesday were
too much snow on the brush to hunt, but today was lovely. Still snow on the
ground in most places but rather mild with partly sunny. We first drove
to the Scott Place only to find the usual tracks (no doubt true) back
the road. Rather than take the time to determine if they were today's
tracks - looked like more than one day - we moved on to the Bishoff
place. Too soft to drive up the hill so parked at Paul Sinton's and
walked, leaving Shadows & Dixie parked in the car.

Bliss was a bit wild after the long lay-off, but settled down
by the time we reached cover and

I was walking up the road and was about to swing right when a quoness flushed from the bank to my left and started up the road, low and straightaway. I had the good sense to ~~wait~~ ^{wait} a split second before mounting and fired, holding a steady on top of the bird and saw it tumble fluttering in the road. Bliss ran in at the shot and went to the bird, even taking hold as it struggled but when I ordered her to retrieve she left it and came to me. I have a problem here with birds still fluttering. I moved up and dispatched the quoness - a nice large cock - then had Bliss retrieve.



She did it after much coaxing but laid the bird on the ground at my feet and not delivered to hand. I was using the 50% with $3\frac{1}{4} \cdot 1\frac{1}{8} - 7\frac{1}{2}$

We hunted around the ridge to the right moving nothing until we worked the greenbrier - crabapple thicket beyond the old house. There we saw #2 bird - a new one, I think - but did not follow far enough to flush. I am throwing off a head cold which has never really developed and yet has hung on nearly 2 weeks so we did not want to stay out too long this first day. Circled back to the house (abandoned) via an excellent tangle of greenbriers loaded with berries but made nothing until we'd passed the old barn. In the cover on the right we heard two quoness flush near each other & can't be sure Bliss was not pointing one. Should mention she'd made a lovely point soon after the shot and we think there must have been a bird ahead of us.

We missed a 5th flush well along the road coming back, probably a ~~5th~~ ^{5th} ~~one~~ ^{one}.
 Missed 5 (one new) - 5 ~~flushes~~ ^{flushes} Bliss: 1 kill
 One shot - 1 hit
 adult cock: inter
 crop: leaves, twigs

Thursday 9 December

Some days are memorable, and almost unbelievable, simply because very nearly everything happened wrong. Four hours later it can be viewed objectively or, at least, less emotionally. But while it's happening it erodes ~~your~~ perspective.

Today was perfect, weatherwise, sunny and mild much of the time with the snow going fast. We went to Upper DORITY, that covert to dream about, and began working in the usual manner with Bliss solo. I expected her to be a bit wild after so much time out of the woods, even after yesterday and she did circles in casts that left some terrain untouched. In one of these our #1 grouse flushed from below the lower road.

All the way to the rhododendron bottom at the fork we heard nothing. Then, working up the "jeep road" Bliss moved on to the left shoulder above us. These things happen and I know she doesn't do it deliberately but I called to warn her regardless. Shortly on her way in from another circle she nearly stepped on me. Again I called to her, sternly, and she came in to me contritely. She swung to the right shoulder and in a cast much too wide stayed out of touch until we had nearly reached the head of the draw where I had heard two more flushes, exactly where I wanted Bliss to have worked.

Swinging her around and toward the line of flush I heard her bell work into a gneissier tangle at the edge of the power line and saw a grouse go straight up the level — just too far to try for. Another clumsy bump even if not deliberate. Pushing her to go on I was unable to keep her ahead of me and soon she began working recent below and just across the power line and had two more out — I saw one so all the way to the stream. ~~Seen from the shoulder~~

single bit of dog work (actually 5 flushes!). Working on along the '65/72 upper margin Bliss made a convincing point but it proved empty, then another flush.

Dropping down and back we pushed thru greater tangles toward the "middle road" when I saw Bliss freeze in mid stride with an actual jerk. It was a lovely point headed below the road and I gave her a single "Stay" and knew she would as I forgot my way toward her. Moments before I could break into the clear the incredible happened: I ~~was~~ saw Bliss break point and move down over the edge and immediately saw the grouse



COULDN'T BE BETTER.

flush with no chance for a shot. I got her back in and gave her what I considered she had coming - a thorough shaking and chewing out, then stood her up and made her hold.

By this time I had no idea where all the birds had gone except this last one and we finally started down the middle road. Again, about me I heard Bliss's bell working and another grouse flushed. Not long after, there was a repeat and this time I was so tant I let off a right barrel try that was too far out - possibly the left would have worked but I can't control my response when I've been needed as much as Bliss had done today.

We moved two more on the way to the car - ^{jumped a fat gray fox.} one that Bliss had not even approached in her wide casts. The other, a possible reflex, that she was on the verge of pointing but had not yet established point. At the car we put her in the car with the Stewards & Davis out on the far side for half an hour & made one more point.

Dinner made one point that was below where the bird later flushed but she didn't follow it up for a producer -

On more calm thought about Bliss, the idea occurs that perhaps she did not move in & flush her point but broke when she heard the bird start to flush - understandable but something she still is doing. Even so, I'd rather think that for I've always felt sure that she did not push them out as long as the birds held. Perhaps my lesson well to some good anyway, and I still know she was not careful enough on her other birds today, tho' I tho' hunting conditions perfect - damp and calm. As I say: one of the old days!

March 12 (noon) 16 flushes Bliss: one prod.

One shot - no hit Shaders & Disc

in GD "Numbers"
CLINT RECKERT

Friday 10 December

This was Bliss's day. Snow nearly gone, and by the latter part of afternoon, clear gone.

We went to the Clint Reckert place, parking at Sello and using Bliss rd. The woods was damp and quiet and moderately cool. However, a fine mist was almost falling when we left & we carried rain gear.

Bliss worked beautifully, not underfoot but within a good range. Her first production was to the left of the path in some ~~woods~~ ruins and the bird flushed toward Reckert Run. Very shortly I saw Bliss hit scent and try to pin another grouse but this one flushed as she came on it. We tried to follow this bird beyond the tram road (which is very dim now unless you knew it years ago) but we failed to locate the grouse.

Heading toward the tram road but staying above it, I saw several she had lost a glow while she went back to search I took a circle in some good tangled cover. Bliss ~~was~~ ~~pointed~~ ~~up~~ ~~as~~ I moved up, she

took another step or two and held again - pointing intently just in front of me. I felt I would best handle this by circling in about. The quail surprised us both by flushing below and behind her and I took a fast try, feeling my shot too low.

Kay rejoined us (without her gun) and we followed my bird - Kay having heard another flush below as we approached. We kept above to skirt a rock basin then started down into Rhododendron. I was surprised to see - Kay hearing another flush that I caught a reflex of the bird I had missed. As we dropped lower I realized with something of a shock that we were at the big rocks on the tram road - rocks that I remember on my first hunt in here, I don't know how many years ago. As I came out on the tram road I saw Bliss to the left of me pointing into the base of one of the boulders from the middle of the path. I thought it might have been the site of the flush Kay had heard but she was solid and then I saw the quail flattened out a few feet from her. I think this one of the few times I've seen a quail tight under a point.

I called to Kay that I saw the bird, while she was taking a run of the point, and at the same time I tried to keep my eyes above and away from the quail. Bliss started to move a step closer (I don't know why unless she thought my talking raised some doubt) but I stopped her. Still the quail held. When as I stepped back it flushed (I was still breaking the rules by watching the bird) but I had only one place for a shot - between some small trees if the bird flushed up over the rhododendron & rocks. It did and it dropped at my shot, falling into the rhododendron - rocky pile leaving feathers floating. Bliss moved in to retrieve and I heard Kay say she was out of paper. I could hear Bliss's call

I didn't, but we at least moved grass - most of them
after we reached Cuff Run. Bliss was working too wide, of course, tho
D. & S. stayed at nice range. Following a grouse the dogs had flushed,
Bliss slammed into a lovely point under a hemlock near the
path below the Cuff woods, but Dixie didn't stop in time and the
grouse flushed beyond my range. But it was a nice point.

We worked the path all the way to the bottom below the
Cuff strip mind, then I realized we couldn't get back at the
bottom of the ridge. Retraced to the top and hunted down to the
lower path - moving only one bird at the low point and two over
hemlocks at Cuff Run below the path - big grouse, both, that
circled down and back up the creek. It was nearly dark by now
and we had a real drill to get out of the woods, finally pushing
straight up to the dim skyline, then a long trek along an open
cornfield to the Sisler house. Went in to speak to them (learned
the dirty white pup was the puppy of the other black & tan dog).

This country is simply ruined by the strip jobs - like the road -
and now they're about to start on the Cuff side again. Tomorrow I'll
use Bliss solo and hope for some shooting.

Moved 9 - 11 flushes

Bliss: 1 prod

No shots

Shadows

Dixie

Shadows is a game old boy in the woods, all the way.

UPPER DORITY (use p. 89 TUSL)

Wednesday 15 December

Day much like yesterday but threatening
to sprinkle earlier. Went to Upper DORITY

and parked at foot of middle road. Used Bliss solo and that young lady
started to hunt much too wide. After several reprimands, I brought her in,
used a switch & shaking lightly, the work her walk at heel for fifty
yards or more along the path. Was ^{George Bird Evans Papers} ^{West Virginia and Regional History Center} beautifully far from

then on she ~~was~~ hunted like an angel and in perfect range. She did not
#1 grouse from below the path then she feathered up - and my whistling
to her may have flushed the bird.

The drizzle set in very soon and became an almost progressive
increase till it became a steady rain. We had gone fairly well up the
middle path when Bliss made her first point, standing on the edge and
pointing down over. The bird was well down and impossible as a shot.
That was our last contact all the way to the "jeep road" and ridge where
last time we had moved 7. Today, none. Finally circling the upper field
and upper road back to the same "jeep road" we started back the lower road,
and still with no birds. Some days like this are excellent grouse days (we'd
seen one along the highway near Roaring Creek bridge) but on others, the birds
are covered up under a log or sitting in hummocks.

Half-way along the lower road, Bliss lit scent on the upper slope and
began quartering the hillside furiously, doubling back down and freezing in
point twenty yards below at a tangle of paperbines. I was certain the grouse
would flush either out of the vines into a hole in the cover or Bliss or come
up over the path.



A SPLASH BEHIND THE GROUSE.

Just as the grouse flushed below
Bliss while Kay was getting a mail
and I tried for it right-crossing
and rising but knew I had to shoot too
soon before time to swing past.
The pattern splashed a perfect
circle in the wet twigs, showing
my shot in line with but just
behind the grouse. These things

can't be helped but are frustrating, even so. The dog work was perfect and
that's the most important. We continued along the path, feeling there was a
chance to refresh the same bird ^{who came just before the down end,}

When Bliss turned to the left edge and pointed down toward a large #79
mass of Rhododendron. I waited and she moved a few steps and again pointed.
Nothing happened, so Bliss moved on to establish the point more positively.
I had stepped on a few feet to try for a better view. I heard the flutter
and the bird came out well down over ^{swaying as it rose}, but a chance for a quick shot
if I'd remained where I was first. Again the grouse flushed on down
along the base of the ridge, crossing the place we usually park and
either went to the far side of Dorothy or down the margin on the near side.
We dropped to the road and decided to hunt on, hoping for another
flush. We had covered the flat edge quite rather well and I was almost
on the verge of saying the grouse had crossed over when I saw Bliss
on point again just ahead, turned into a very small clump of Rhododendron.



HOW DO THEY
DO IT?

I walked to her and stood
waiting but nothing happened.
The way out was going to be
across the stream, going and
nothing but a flash of take-off.
Trying to do it another way (and
this year I have ~~never~~ rarely done
it right), I walked in front of
Bliss and the clump of cover.
Still she held, and by the way
she was staring at the Rhododendron
between us I knew the grouse was
holding tight. At last, I stopped.

on a branch of the Abotokindon and it was like kicking off a charge of dynamite. The grouse came out inches from my foot, rose perpendicularly as it spiralled around a small tree. I called to Kay to be careful and she dropped. If the grouse had stayed on course and missed over her head I might have had a chance, but it continued around the tree like a winding staircase and I even stepped around in an effort to reach it with a much-too-close shot that was simply an impossibility. So much for my efforts to make a shot. There has been a lot of them like that this season and I do get a little fed up with the lack of breaks, tho I'm glad that bird won the chance. It deserved it.

Followed but got involved in the damndest mess of beaver ponds and had to give up, quite wet now. At the car clamped into dry gear and had to pass up Shadows & Dixie, poor kids. But Bliss is really making up an impressive number of products this year, and today, after the first few minutes and the lesson, her work was close to perfect.

Moved 3 (no new) - 5 flushes
2 shots - no hits.

Bliss: 4 products

BILL RINGERS

Thursday 16 December Today a bunch ^{paid} of us. Last February we passed a good looking grapevine court on the Cherry Grove - Hazeton road, ^{poor} named with Bill Ringers' name. I cleared with Bill today and after a late start (Joe Hoizdos) we parked, and hunted Bliss solo up thru the most extensive grapevine tangles I'd ever seen. The weather was overcast cool and damp but no precipitation. The entire ridge has been cut over within the last few years (I must ask) and there is no way to penetrate it but to follow one road to the top and we ^{had nothing} ~~had nothing~~ ^{Bliss} hesitated to

push them it and I can't blame her. But at the top we found a flat #81
of crabapples and quince and grapevines with considerable cleared
areas between (from grazing) and Bliss let herself go much too widely.
We made nothing, however, and I was about to double back to the
first hillside when we began hearing flushes - four in single order,
three of the grouse going well out to the other cover; the third we could
not see, but all had flushed from a general area but rather scattered.
Bliss, unfortunately, was in other quarters and I had difficulty getting
her to work within range. We finally crossed the fence and Bliss then
ran into one of the birds rashly.

We followed into more good cover (Horners) and Bliss made
a stunning point into a large grapevine tangle. I walked in as Ray took
a move but nothing happened. Bliss moved in and pushed the grouse out
with no chance to shoot. I reprimanded her but felt it didn't take "sometimes".

We had no success in relocating and covered a wide range before
leaving and returning to the original cover at site of flush. There with our
hearings taken on the first bird's flight, we hunted down over into
the big tangle. There I saw Bliss wind into a grapevine mass, then
point nicely and hold as I walked in behind her. But at the last moment
she pushed on into the pile of cover and the bird flushed - an easy shot
that I dropped rather nicely. While it is much the best way to present
me with shots in this situation, there are other times it does not work -
as the previous point - and I must persuade her to hold ~~strongly~~
strongly, at least until the flush if not longer. This time however,
she located the grouse, I could see and I pushed thru the mass of

branches to her, rather than ask her to work back to me with the gun
 in her mouth. But she seemed to feel she had to do just that,
 carrying it toward my first position. I walked ahead, calling to her
 to fetch it to me. This confused her and she proceeded to push under
 a ~~fallen~~ branch and bury the bird. I had to go dig it out (still not
 entirely inert) dispatch it, then lay it down and send Bliss to retrieve
 which she did nicely, sitting to deliver! The trials of an owner of
 an adolescent gun dog! This was a very small hen.

We headed for the car to take the other dogs to Beaver for the
 last half hour. Followed the road down (as wind come up) but at the
 bottom Bliss worked over to the right and crossed a wire fence and
 went on point. I approached, staying on the near side of the fence, and
 she moved in and stopped at my command. But in spite of further
 orders she broke and worked ahead. Since there was no bird there
 I did fault her for going on. But in a wild circle ~~then~~ beyond, she
 ran into the grass which came my way - rising acutely. I swung
 up then at and fired quickly and folded it against the sky in front
 of me. Its momentum was so great
 left shoulder well above me, and
 me. I really got bad bit of shooting!



it came on over my
 landed stone dead, behind
 Bliss: 3/4 (1 tail) ^{2 rest}
 Shadows 2 ^{2 rest} bills
 2 bones.

Bliss retrieved nicely, sat to deliver. COMING UP!
 What a day. Not over two hours; and what a court. We drove to Beaver & gave
 S. & D. a half hour with no birds heard.
 young hen; into
 crop: leaves deep soil, rubus
 (Cottley) found traces of membrane on the ^{the} remaining but this is definitely a small
 bird and surely must be a quail
 George Bird Evans Papers
 West Virginia and Regional History Center

JUNE'S

Saturday 18 December

#83

Lovely cold day, overcast with
traces of snow most places, some sunshin
in late afternoon. Started for Hartman Place but changed our minds
enroute and went to June's, having received such an appeal on his Xmas
card. Parked at Summers' and used Bliss solo, hunting down the log
road. Not over 100 yards down she hit a lovely point on the right edge,
stretched out and my strongest impression is of the green stain of
Robertson on her tail.

The grouse was there but
didn't give me time to
walk close enough,
flushing down over with
no opportunity for a shot.



A GREEN FLAG.

We saw tracks a bit further
along that could have been the same bird, or not. No further contacts until
across the bridge and to the right of the road to June's, opposite the sawmill.
Here we heard Bliss bark, track and count it #2. Further on down the
ridge she made a beautiful point that she held till I'd walked clear to
the moss where I saw fresh tracks and the take-off.

Today Bliss worked perfectly and in fine range, covering all the
ground in style. We hunted the bottom out well - no birds - then went
up to June's house and had a nice visit - too long for the good of the hunt,
but gratifying to see him at Buddy's happiness (and fat condition). June
says he made a lot of quail all the way to the bridge - both sides - and
to Summers - in groups up to 4! We shall return.

We, however, failed to contact more than one - in the gulleys on
the left of the road, no shot - all the way around near Henderson Rocks and up

the ridge the sun a few tracks on the upper areas. At the car we picked up Shadows (one year ago thought he got lost around!) and Dixie and used all their dogs, hunting out the thick cover parallel to the road and toward Dick. Almost immediately encountered grouse tracks, all over the place but no grouse. Finally, the tracks were so thick I thought we'd cornered them but at the point opposite the corner of the woods on the Summer side they disappeared. Kay was about to leave for the car and I was just starting the dogs onto the upper side when two grouse flushed fifty yards up along the edge of the woods and the field. I saw one and Kay the other. While she brought the car down I searched the area about but had no results. It was nearly dark - 5:30 - when I returned to the road and joined Kay. This was a good day, lucky to be out, but not quite enough action to be ideal. We may try this again with a clearer idea where to look for the birds in the first section.

Wound 5 - 5 flushes

No shots.

Bliss: 1 prod.

Shadows & Dixie

Monday 20 December Cold with a light cover of snow. Kay stayed home with S. & D. to recoup after touch of virus yesterday. Art Thomas and I went to Lutteran Hill to try covert. John Livingston described as full of grouse during deer hunting. Parked at old Claude Feathers place (no house left). Cover on lower looked good, lots of crab thicket, some grapevine, lots of blackberry briars but no fresh grouse tracks. Bliss worked well and within good range. Cereled head completely and started down edge of dead-grass field when B. ran into a hen pheasant. I saw her leap high in air & suspect the bird was running

around in front of her for she didn't point. Moments later a second
hen flushed and I missed a long right-crossing shot that was ~~about~~
shaded too far out for me, tho I dropped a quail at least that far
on Upper Dority. But there is something about the down pleasant flight
that is difficult for me on long shots. I at least had seen to fire the left.

We hunted down into the dense crab & thorn thicket toward the
strip mine that runs around the hill, separating this area from the
Hartman Place. Art saw the first pheasant run out on him, and I
saw earlier tracks they had laid. Then as I crept to meet art, I
came to some large, fresh grouse tracks leading toward a little run.
Calling Bliss into work the area I took several steps and heard the
grouse flush. It gave me a wonderful chance as it crossed an
open area beyond the run, left-quartering and rising. I waited that
important split second, moving up thru and fired and saw the grouse
drop hard hit. Bliss made the retrieval nicely, getting to deliver, tho
art did not get to see it. A large cock but, I think a young one.



Just below and where the grouse
had flushed, I saw what also
appeared another set of smaller
grouse tracks with the large ones.

art flushed a second grouse on the brink of the high wall and later got two
reflexes, trying a shot at it. He reflexed the other hen pheasant. That was our
day. Tho we hunted the far side of the road around the church and back thru gravel
enough thru cover - lots of hawthorn, very large & red. But no more of John's birds -

young cock; inter
Crop. greenish brown, One shot - 1 hit
leaves come round) but One pheasant shot - no hit
Hunted 2 - 4 flocks
Bliss: 1 kill
1 ret.
George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

Tuesday 21 December Ray felt normal today and with sunny day and cold, we took a short hunt, delayed by phone calls at Centenary to report our dead bird. Went to the Leeward Place above Mullstrom. Good edges but limited cover here - most too open. One section should have held grouse but we didn't move a feather. After yesterday's 2 birds on Luthers Hill and today's zero, I begin to wonder about Jake Livingston's accuracy about so many birds. Used Bliss and she did well with nothing to work on.

On way home we stopped at Little Sandy and gave S. & D. a half to 3/4 hour turn up the south side and back over the top, to their delight, but no birds. [Shadows ran sticks into his right eye] Bliss
Zero Shadows & Dixie

Wednesday 22 December Sunny, mild, perfect day. To the Whitwell Settlement. Parked at upper end, used Bliss solo. Enough snow on ground in shade to determine no grouse except 2 fresh tracks below road at curve near car. Went down to short duration ledge in curve near lower sawmill site, using Shadows & Dixie. Finally found set of 4 fresh tracks below road moving to upper side where Dixie roared into a flushes 3. Went to below Mrs. Craig's and used Bliss again in lower cove. One set of fresh tracks. No single view of a bird all day. Bliss moved to wide and in spite of repeated up-commands to the extent that she began to bring and not come in at command. Bad situation. Disappointing & puzzling lack of birds. (On way up, picked up Permit Calvert who is a most interesting and dignified person. Fine). Shadows eye is doing well.
Went 3. 3 flushes
No shots
Bliss
Shadows
Dixie

ROARING GAP

Thursday 23 December

Another fine day, even more mild than yesterday. After a bit of anything, then yesterday. After a bit of

low blood sugar attacks after breakfast (rare these days) we changed plans to try Cranmill Swamp and went instead to Roaring Gap. Used Bliss, leaving others in car parked at foot of hill - good idea - . Bliss worked today like a dream, only moving out too wide for one short spell. But her coverage of the dense side cover was magnificent - real guts. But there were no birds. Not even perch tracks. Worked up the left side about summit side where Bliss made a lovely point above path & then left. I walked in & she moved and re-established. Waiting a moment, I moved in rather than give the bird time to wear out. Bliss like point against my orders, and then I saw a wounded ground on the ground. Rather than let her pick it up - which she showed no intentions of doing too readily, I picked it up and found no wings or legs broken that I could determine. I tried tossing it in the air to see if it would fly but it simply fell inert tho' able to move its legs and hold its head in normal position. The old decision - should I dispatch it or let it live? Both Kay & I decided on the latter, so I placed it in a Podocarpus clump and can only hope it makes it. I think it may be carrying a body shot but the spark of life was too bright for me to bring myself to extinguish. A nice long look. Shortly after that Bliss moved two from dense woods below the farm that is at the head of the hollow. Then Kay & I walked up to the flat ^{which} I've wanted to try again for years after a wonderful Chimney hunt about 1960.

That time I shot 2 grouse then, moved around, had Ruff and we found
a crippled bird on the way back (Who does the careless shooting here?).
Today nothing. And still nothing all the way back to the car than
excellent cover with Bliss working like a trooper. At the car, took
S. & D. for a short turn — more of a than gesture.
March 2-2 flocks Bliss: 1 prod.
No shots S. & D. 15 minutes.

Tram

Friday 24 December Christmas Eve hunts are usually successful.
This one was something less than that. We went to the Clint Rebeck
country, certain we'd find a lot of birds there after our previous trip from
the Sell end. Today we drove in to the Huffman woods at our usual
parking place, using Bliss solo first. The day was warm — high 50's
and sunny much of the time. In the cover to the right of the road and
below the tram road this side of the Smith place, Bliss got off to a
good start by making a production — nice high head and stance —
but the bird flushed before I could reach her (no fault of Bliss).
Following toward the power line we made #2 wild. So far fine. But
we found no further trace of either. Doubting about the rocks after a
bite of lunch, I tried to work Bliss into the area inside Smith's gate,
but she cast outside the good cover and I walked up #3 with no
shot. Our next and last contact was #4 just below the main
tram road beyond the intersection, another wild flush.

We covered the tram all the way to the rocks (saw many saplings &
gaps from the birds shot over Bliss's point last time — also a
big pile of droppings at the base of the rocks and a few other "forms").
But this we worked up to the middle road and above and all the way back
the middle road we didn't see anything. At the car we found

with S. & D. and used all three in the "mill cover" below the #89 gate. No birds. What has happened? /65

The most striking reference of the day - except Bliss' production - was the magnificent sky as we drove out Huffman's lane - with the thinnest slice of the new hunter's moon and a high planet above. We've never seen a more impressive sky - clouds, a touch of color, and even the Huffman house, in silhouette. Bliss called well. Bliss: 1 prod. most of the time. Mard 4 (all new) - 4 flocks. Shadows & Dixie. No shots.

Monday 27 December Sunny and cold with a trace of snow left. A perfect day to go to Mt. Storm and there we went. I couldn't bring myself to leave S & D so I used all three against my better judgement. However, it turned out well for they worked beautifully together. We started out the log road from the "Township Dale's" parking lot and with all the dogs working all around had gone about 10 minutes when a quail flushed from the left side of the road and gave me a short right-quartering glimpse as it cut across the road over Dixie & Bliss. I made a fast swing and fired instinctively, dropping the bird beyond some brush and in the road. I saw it flutter but also saw D. was ahead of Bliss and go after the quail so I knew the situation was in hand. However when I saw Dixie, leaving the bird at a brush pile. This called



up, I found

command, hit the scent and reached under a log and pulled the quon
out, retrieving it nicely. It was a small hen that I judged a young
bird. Later examination developed membrane on the outer primaries,
identifying it as adult. I begin to wonder if some change occurs
in late season, producing this membrane on the young birds' primaries,
for I've had several small birds - hens - that had this indication of
an adult.

Oddly, the hemlock stand along the small run yielded nothing
today. From there we hunted along the run, following it up - mostly
boggy - then fair cover with brush heaps but no grass.
We finally came out at the upper end of the thorn thicket, not quite
familiar, I felt. However, the dogs soon moved two singles from
the edge of the thorn cover and we followed them, each separately
but did not refresh. But on the last stretch west, we came on
Dixie who went into an interest point in a brush heap near a
hemlock. She moved in, as she resorts upon doing, and then I stopped
her once, she moved on further and flushed a quon that offered no
shot. While I scolded her a second quon went out of the same place.
We followed and after a typical quon-flight length, Bliss pointed
in another tangle. I stopped Dixie at command to backpoint, and as
Shadows came in (why doesn't he honor a quon point the way he does
on quon or pheasant?) I stopped him, with a nice triple point. I moved
around while Kay got a move of the point. The bird fell and so did the

#91
dogs - an awkward situation for the quinner, who would be better
off if the dogs flushed the quinner. But since I can't permit that,
I had to walk around in front. at last the quinner took off, running
just inside the tangle and flushing out the far side from me; giving
me only a long look at it for a short moment. I should have held my
fire but I had to try and missed.

We creaked into an edge of field and found ourselves within
sight of Mt. Storm and Rt. 42, giving me the location of this area I
have wanted to find for a long time. When we creaked into a hickory grove
we flushed one of our quinner back toward the original site of flush. It
had been at the base of a dead maple in open woods. I saw a big stretch
of thorn and woodcock type cove beyond the hickory grove and I
visualize a good place to try next October. Also plan to come back this
year and come into this end from Mt. Storm, when we'd have time to
really work this end. (Usually, we reach it only in time to turn back.)

We reflushed this last bird near the original place Dixie had pointed -
and think this could have had a procreator but almost K sure.
We headed back - it was after 4:30 - directly thru the upper end,
reflashing another time, and came out at last on the log road
that projects from the parking spot. This was #6 just before we
crossed this. It was a fine day, a gorgeous red sky over the big
mountain on our drive back from Mt. Storm. We checked at the Esso gas
station and think we could leave the car there to park this.

On the way home, we stopped for a new coat with the
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Bird Evans at Aurora.

March 6 to 10 flushes.
2 shots - 1 hit.

Bliss: 1 prod.
1 kill

Doris: 1 prod
1 basket.
1 kill

Adults here: inter

Grass: covefoil, fern, wintergreen leaf
beds

Shadows: 1 basket
1 kill
1 net.

Had this grouse for my birthday dinner. While we ~~was~~ enjoyed it, we noted a lack of flavor we've found in a number of birds this year, and we attribute it to the lack of wild grapes this season. We have never found the grouse from Blackwaters area comparable to our grape-fed birds.

EVAN BISHOP

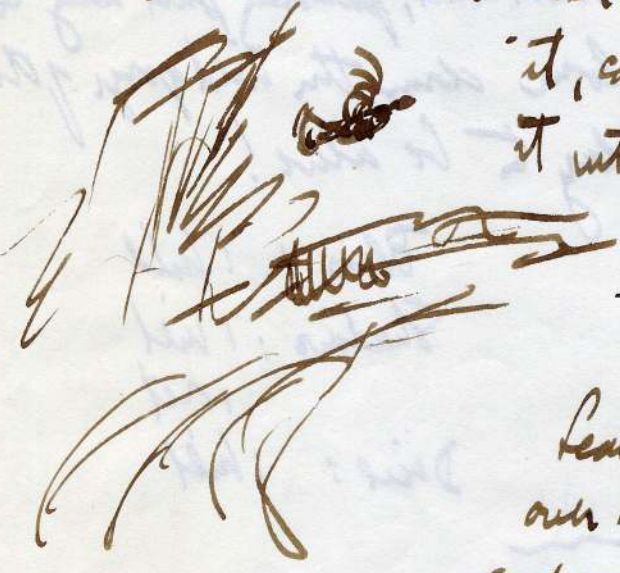
Tuesday 28 December

My 59th birthday. Ray and I decided to take this special hunt at a favorite old covert we haven't visited for years - the Evan Bishop place. We drove all the way to the land and used all the dogs because we didn't want to leave any behind. The first triangle was good looking - grapevines, but cut out since we'd seen it. No birds here.

Hunting to the left, we covered the edge of a good hillside, around to a patch of woods on top with greenberries. Enough snow to show large grouse tracks leading from this along a hedge of greenberry with berries to the extension of the ~~first~~ hillside cover. This was walking fairly well in and so were S. & D. But at the far edge in a partly open field, Bliss, I think, had a point and I saw two grouse go out with a third one flushing as they moved beyond - all going down the hill.

Following, we worked along the base - good cover. D & B were at the left of an old road & flushed a grouse from the bank, down the road - too far to shoot. A ~~second~~ ~~bird~~ flushed across the bank

to the right. We count both of these reflexes from the 3. We followed around the curve of the road and from a corner to the left a grouse flushed - right crossing and rising. I sawing them, fired and the bird fell but struggled away from Dixie who tried to catch it. I ran up - Key called that another grouse just flushed - and I saw that D. had let the bird get away. I called Shadows in and he tried to locate the bird which Dixie had cornered again. Then Shadows found



it, caught it, as only he will do, and delivered it with some difficulty - the wings covering his eyes, a nice big cork & my birthday grouse

We count this a new grouse, #4.

Leaving the others undisturbed, we hunted up over the top, crossing the field above the house, and, after eating lunch, we started into excellent cover and made two birds add. That was it, this we hunted down over to the road we used to hunt south of the house. It is a bit spread up in taller growth where we did find birds, but recently cut, and good cover, around the little cabin. We worked lower on the ridge, came to more good entrance cover but no birds. This was now moving far too wide the S. & D. did very well. I can't control this in this wood - she bore straight out ahead of the others, rather than quarter to the sides. It's quite a problem.

Finally, working up the ridge to the car, this made a lovely point into some briars and I stopped the others. Nothing materialized except a rabbit - what a let-down. At the top we had to work back to reach the car & I saw a grouse

What we'd forbid. They reached the car and the dogs were cackling about
 but not where they should have been - in the cover I wanted them to
 doublecheck after the flash in case there were "cousins" at home. There
 was - one away-left that flushed from me and I tried for
 and missed on a quick one - and at the shot #3 flushed - the
 last two down around the valley w'd come from. There was a
 magnificent sunset sitting under as we drove home, passing part way to catch
 it - a lovely sunset flaring forlorn down the wild gorge of the
 Cheat. What country - and what a day to be alive!

Heard 9-12 flocks
 2 shots - 1 hit
 Bliss: 1 kill
 Shadows: 1 kill
 Dixie: 1 kill
 1 net

young cack: inter.
 crop: greenish berries (full)

CRANESVILLE & TAYLOR

Thursday 30 December Another mild, overcast day. We drove the
 trip to Cranesville Swamp. This can be brief. Hunted the valley up from
 Brownies cabin. One bird flushed wild. Bliss worked wild. There are
 the vast number of grouse reported - Ed Fuller, Guy Falkenstein?
 I begin to think very often, if not very, grouse hunter is a liar. I
 can't be that far off in finding birds.

On the second portion we drove to Taylors, parked at the rear
 end - leaving a note on Ben's car on the windshield, and found this muddy
 wet area with perfect slashings - brush heap cover. Closed all 3 dogs and
 Bliss ran wild in spite of punishment. Heard one grouse wild. Later visited
 Mary Lou's home in third trailer - coffee & nut bread - and her nephew
 said there were lots of birds. Where are they? There, or universally?
 Heard 2-2 flocks no shots.

Friday 31 December: New Year's Eve hunt. Weather in high 50's, partly sunny. We went to the Hazelton cover we haven't visited in years. Parked at house when Ross Evans lived (dead now), people named Matthews. Good cover across owned by I think, (Demetri Jones. Kind of cut over slashings and sadder paperies - with some few grapes left - and some greenberries, with berries. Used Bliss, solo, and with no bell at first.

Almost at once, Bliss pointed in some paperies - it was all paperies - but a bird flushed behind me, ~~with~~ with no chance to shoot. We followed this flight back toward the road and missed two more grouse. Reflashed #1 and #2 and then got a stunning point on what was probably #1 again - all relatively short flights, probably indicative that these had not been gunned before. I walked up this bird, Bliss holding well and it flushed back toward and possibly below the road. We circled clear to the road and around the bend - all perfect cover - toward Hazelton - and around to the top when Bliss passed a grouse that flushed from the edge to my left and seemed to settle rather shortly in the thick cover ahead. The heat seemed to slow Bliss considerably and she moved sluggishly - but it was a relief after yesterday's wild scramble.

As we worked after the #4 grouse she went in and came on point in the tangle. I walked thru dense stuff to get around to her right in hope of a shot and got it - a short look after the bird ran out and was - not high and away - right dropping at my shot. It took Bliss



A PERFECT JOB.

some time to locate the bird - quite dead, but she did find it & retrieve it nicely, then she laid it down first of our afternoon. Really the heat. It's so good to get a perfect point.

We had a weather & a bit of lunch, then left the other birds and worked down over the far side to the cover along the run. All this was changed - to the good - with a wide band of washings this side of the stream - piles of tree-top brush heaps with grapevines & pecanier edgings. On the edge I had a Blue-tongued a good spot but the wind must have interfered, for she ran with two birds that flushed from the very grass under her feet - one at a time and bored for the rhododendron cover in the woods.

Here, I think, I made a mistake not to continue along the edge to near possible other grouse and later go to the woods. Instead, we followed the two birds directly; did not refresh in the dense tangle, grouse no lighter since I was less sure, but did see huge piles of droppings in two places. Our long walk upstream thru heavy rhododendron ground clear across the old path was fruitless and at last we came to another washings and the cross roads that I was looking for. In view of the Sister house (don't know who lives there now) Blue entered into the right side of the road and made a lovely point into a rhododendron clump. The bird flushed low with only a cry seeing it go to the bottom-

Later as we headed toward the main road and in a good tangled corner, Blue pointed and I went in the wrong side, with two grouse flushing over my head. We walked the road back to the car, drove to the ~~power~~ power line on the paved road to Clark Farms and I got S.A.D. a half-hour in barren country that I had remembered so good. They waited in the car with Blue.
 Blue: Perfect range today
 Blue: 5 fresh.

Memor 9-13 flashes
 One shot - 1 hit (one pt.)
 1 kill one pt.
 1 net
 Young cock: most inter cock I can remember
 crop: grapevines berries few grapes
 sharp coral hairs

9 MOUNTAIN DALE ^{used in AG (Polio)} First hunt of the New Year. We missed #97
Tuesday 4 January 1966 a good day yesterday - Bliss's second
birthday due to my hangover with a virus bug. Today was cool and
cloudless and perfect - except that the birds, Bliss and I did not get
together. Hunted the head of Beaver country (Ed. Rhoads), parking
at the bridge and using Bliss's site, starting up the left side where ^{Bliss} had
made a lovely point at sunset on one of his last hunts. Today we
found ourselves in solid pole & laurel cover running all the way to the
little draw from the left. We followed into the better & Bliss missed #1
into a high perch in a tree - a very small bird that flushed across
Bliss when I kicked the tree. We walked up to the road to "Turner 4."

Bliss wended and moved into the right side of the road along the top
and may have spotted. I glanced at my footing as the bird crossed left
ahead - it's good I have legs to see and hear many birds I miss.
We followed and in our return east missed #3 by sound.

Back at the road Bliss did her first point of the day that I could
credit - a honey in the middle of the road, pointing right - I probably
should have moved up faster but I wanted legs to get the more and by
the time she did the birds - #4 & #5 - flushed wild.

Following the sound of the brass up along the road - there were
lots of empty shells and ground droppings in the road at places -
us - and I especially fault Bliss - walked past #6 & #7 on
the left side, both flushing into deep cover, not crossing. I was
proud at Bliss's careful handling, missing much good cover by not
quartering the sides, then rolling in the pools of easy water in the road.
We followed left after the last two and got a deflection - again by
poor dog work. Bliss got the scent but instead of pointing, missed in and
kept her tail flagging. I gave her a ^{reward} ~~reward~~ for this

Back on the road, Bliss moved across and bumped #8 which
went out low against the sun - no shot for me. Further along,
Bliss again but went but did not point and #9 flushed
away left low, and I tried and missed, firing the left barrel out
of sheer desperation as the bird climbed and sailed away. As I did
#10 went out beside the side of flush. I could have beaten Bliss.

It was after 4 pm. but we went a short piece further, then knew we
had to turn back, tho' I think we could have moved birds all along the
road. As we turned we heard #11 flush just beyond.

On the return trip we cut into the cover toward a large beaver dam
where ~~#8~~ had flushed. Just in front of me, Bliss moved into
a clump of laurel and brush and flush pointed and the grass went out,
struggling to get thru the tangle. I wanted for a clear view but never
got it, what with the lowering sun in my eyes and a cluster of four
saplings the birds stayed behind.

That was it, the bird made a lucky staunch point I am sure
would produce. Must have been at a site of a wild flush. We called just
back the road, not wanting to plunge down to the stream so late. As
we moved beyond the intersection with a road going east, I was testing
the depth of some cuts, to determine the chance of driving the car in
this far. My called that there were birds flushing - 3 of them - and
I looked up in time to see the fourth one - all from a corner of
quadrant tangle and all having flushed along the overgrown stone fence
toward a square of woods beyond the ~~field~~ pasture on the east.

We followed and in the

but a nice point, tilted over like a class on a quail. Unfortunately the quail didn't wait for me to reach her but flushed away from us. We didn't miss the other three, nor do I know where they went unless further into the woods - a long flight from their take-off.

We hurried down a field toward the lower woods and Beaver Creek hollow and saw this titrally slam around into a point that she held while I walked all around her, but no bird. Another side I would flush, I guess.

at the car, I hurriedly let S. & D. out and took all these dogs up the far side of Beaver. This made an immediate production along the creek, but it was too dark for me & we - only near the point. Lay down the car up the hill and packed us up at the top.

These things did not work perfectly, on second look, it was the most active day we've had this season, counting birds moved. We must go back soon, tho I would prefer ~~the~~ an overcast day because of vision, tho the birds may not be in the same places in different weather.

on the way down the mountain, we paused to drink in a magnificent sunset and sudden view - a sunset flaring darkly. What a land!

Heard 16 - 20 flushes
Two shots - no hit.

Bliss: 4 prod.

S. & D. 15 min.

Wednesday 5 January Return to the Sander place above Pine Grove school - first snow opening day. Weather overcast and moderately cool. We flushed two quail above the car when we started out and followed back the hill, getting a reflex by sound on us. We were using Bliss solo and she worked nicely. The snow climbed to the left side of the old farm road and followed the prominent ridge and

all the way around to the Sugar Camp Run valley, where we crossed to the far side fields and home sites to try to find the "fifteen" birds. Down Crowned Ed about. It was perfect old farm cover with good edge woods & greenberries spotted over the hillside fields but aside from a cluster of four a fair tail feathers from a cock quon and a few white spotted orange "underparts" feathers - all fresh and not raised or moved on and much like the ones I shot out of a Canaan Valley bird that went on - there were no birds. And none in the grapevine and mixed hardwood - hunkle woods beyond. Nor in the tributary hunkle - rhododendron hollow; nor in the hillside on the left of Sugarcamp Run where a year ago we flushed so many quon.

It had begun to sprinkle rain about 3:00. We crossed the valley well up and started hunting the south side back downstream. ~~to the top~~ We carried the good grapevine tangles - evidence of quon many places - but no birds when we moved fir or more on opening day this year.

at the end of the covert where Bliss had pointed a brace on that opening day, we pulled ourselves up the steep grade to make one more try on the flat on top, then head of the run.

I was ahead of Kay and Bliss was a bit to my left in some big rocks just under the brack of the hill. Well out, in some whisp sign growth I saw two quon flush wild and converge, landing, not too far on top near two dead snags. Then two more quon, followed by number five flushed and fanned out on either side of the first pair - all from the same area and, as far as I can tell, merely from my approach which had not been loud.

I got Kay up to me as soon as possible without calling, and Bliss meanwhile had stopped on point when the birds had taken off. Marking the line of flight, we pushed them ~~to the other~~ ~~down~~ ~~track~~ and

agronomical station.

I had put the gun in my pocket of my shooting vest and was following a path toward Kay whom I could see converging on the far end when Bliss slowed on the path in front of me and drew into a larch point. Kay was out and knelt down facing us from the far end and began taking notes.



WITH KAY OUT AHEAD.

I expected the bird to flush from an opening on the left of the path, giving me a shot well aside from Kay and I walked in prepared for this. Bliss held

firmly but when the grass exploded it was from the thicket on my right. I had very little view - mostly sand and motion - but fired and missed - an away rising flush. The report of the gun bounced back from the old barn straight ahead with surprising impact. Kay saw the grass go past the right end of the barn in line with a big maple beyond the old garden patch.

We followed but there was no place for the bird & lark and we took the line of flight straight across a plantation of small spruces. On the far side - a long, long flight - and in good ground cover, Bliss saw a bird - a raptor it flushed from ahead of her, that could have been our grouse, or so we count it.

Blair had set in fairly steadily and we moved directly back toward the woods road and to the car. Shudens & Dine got out today - no town for them. We had been hunting a bit over 4 hours. Our best bet in this overcast weather would have been to go directly to the flat on top and hunt it thoroughly. Saw the peculiar edges for sunny days.

Mixed 8 (3 new) - 11 flocks. Bliss: 2 prod. 1 kill, 1 ret.
2 shots - 1 hit

young coals? which
crop: variety of leaves & twigs with buds.

I did not let her retreat since I want to keep her steady on point, unless it is a ~~hit~~ on her point. but we credit her with a ret. on this shot.

MOUNTAIN DALE
Friday 7 January ^{in AG} (Bliss) Return to Number 4 (Head of Run), driving to the forks of the roads beyond Mountain Dale. Used Bliss solo, without call the first part, as we've done lately. Feel it keeps her more in touch. The day was cold - 40° - and overcast with forecast of snow late in day. We hunted out the road with Bliss quartering left & right in perfect style. But today the ground was somewhere else. We wonder if it takes a sunny day to bring them to the roadside?

We had passed the lower dam area and Bliss was working to the right when a grouse flushed from the left edge, having let 1 day of me pass. As it flushed east we both heard #2 go out well in from the edge - two birds that can ~~be~~ at some we missed Tuesday.

We hunted to beyond the intersection of the old road that goes thru to the Seander place (or used to). Ray built a fire while I made a wild circle and, after we got the fire going, we warmed our cold hands and enjoyed lunch - used dry "broken" George Bird Evans Papers in lack of paper and it makes a fine starter. West Virginia and Regional History Center

bad wood, but we finally got a good fire roaring. # 105

after lunch we moved rapidly on out the road with full assurance
action till we came to some rhododendron and a few hemlocks among
the scrub pines and worked in toward the swamp I remembered on the
right. There was a brisk wind from the west and Bliss hit recent and
pointed. Kay saw a grouse flush quartering left and we followed
but found no further trace. However, we did take a walk out into
the Beaver swamp - an enormous expanse of typical boreal type
sphagnum swamps - only thing missing here that would have made it
like Allegheny Mountains were spruce and cranberries. And they
could have been some cranberries somewhere.

We crested east toward the road, passing up good looking cover on
the right ridge for lack of time and with impending snow clouds. We
had passed an old snare set and were starting toward the road when Bliss
threw her head up in that lovely way she has and swung up on
the left bank and pointed. I stopped in beside her and after a
pause Bliss moved a few steps and stopped but not quite solid. Again
she moved a step or so, still flapping, and a grouse flushed some
yards ahead and a moment later a second one. I waited, got a
look at it as it rose, away-rising, and fired and saw it fall.
The grouse tumbled very convincingly - which usually means a wing-broken
bird. It was. Bliss moved in to retrieve but left the bird and I had to
hurry in. The grouse was running and the Bliss again took after it, she
again left it and I caught & despatched it. Oddly, there was not a
single tail feather left on the bird. I searched the area over & over but

curved right and my ~~right~~ ^{left} barrel went off from the recoil of the first as my trigger finger with the clumsy glove caught against the second trigger.

First, we count Bliss as having a production on the far side before the lead tree, then on this one. I don't count my second shot as a shot.

All the way back to the car Bliss explored the side - mostly the left or west side with her high head - a beautiful style - but there was no birds present this evening.

At the car we released S. & D., Kay staying with Bliss, and I hurried into the gathering dark out the other fork of the road to try to find the groups of four we'd heard around this field last time. I had ^{nearly} reached the first corner when a grouse flushed from the field side of the rail fence along the road - flushing back toward Kay & the car.

I started along the woods' edge when I heard Kay opening the car. I shut and I hurried back to find nothing wrong but it was too late to make the circle round the field. I did go to the queerly corner but there was no grouse there tonight. The moon was coming down faster now and we drove on home - a good day with superb dog work.

Murd 7 (4 imm) - 8 flushes. Bliss: 4 prod.
2 shots - 1 hit (car prod.) 1 kill (over ht)
1 ret.
Crops: variety of leaves S. & D.: 15 imm.

* When cleaned, the above grouse revealed a full set of quills about 3/4" long in the tail base, as well as a streak of similar quills up the back in a strip about 3" long. This suggests a loss of

tail and back feathers to a predator some time ago, with the new quills replacing these lost feathers. No wonder why I could not find the missing tail feathers!

Should mention I've had concern over the number of cripples lately, using the open set of barrels, tho with $3\frac{1}{4}$ - $1\frac{1}{8}$ - $7\frac{1}{2}$. However, upon examination when dressed, most of these birds that have appeared lightly shot have had from four to more pellets, some thru the viscera. And still able to run or fly on. The same pellets slightly differently placed would have been outright kills. I think the pattern is adequate. The difference lies in forward; instead of hits further to the rear.

Monday 10 January

Once a season, I think, every gunner owes himself a special day, and this one should be written in - let's say, gold ink. We returned to the cover about Hazelton. The day was cold and windy - almost to begin. We were just starting in the knob covert across from Paul Matthews when we encountered Mike Plevich coming back the road in his station wagon. We endured the cold and Plevich's account of every bird he's shot this year until we could make the break. Why do I run into this sort of thing instead of the appealing types - or are any other grouse hunters appealing to a grouse hunter?

We covered the knob rather well - very windy - using Bliss solo but no contacts. Dropping over the far side to the margin along the slashings and the lower field we still heard none.

Back on top we started into the next end - a separate cover - and I saw Bliss begin to make scent. But before she could pin it she was flushed and they saw it go over the brow of the hill. This is also good slashings cover and we saw tracks of a large grouse in the hit

Tuesday 11 January A very cold day - up to 28°. Ray bowed out and stayed home with S. & D. Bliss & I picked up Art and drove to the Smith ridge on the left of the Haydentun Road above Bruneton, parking this side of the Newman lane. Bliss was too wide - every time I take her with Art - the sled worked perfectly the last 3 days.

This was not the right kind of cover for this time of year tho it was good experience type & some evidence of grouse this year. The first contact was a good solid production by Bliss - two birds that flushed down to Art and out the ridge. We followed and flushed one from the road edge where Bliss should have picked it up but she was on a big cast below us. Art missed a shot and we followed.

Bliss located what was probably the same bird and made a lovely point - oddly, flagging at first till I ordered "Stay" when she froze solid. I don't understand this development. I walked past her from the left



CERTAIN ENOUGH NOW.

and a bit beyond, and heard the grouse flush from the tangle ahead and below. It was a left-quarter, rising shot and I was really surprised when the bird tumbled. Bliss moved in at the fall and I saw her with the bird. From her action I knew it was winged. But instead of leaving, she picked it up and retrieved it to me nicely, sitting to deliver in Puff's style. I quickly dispatched the grouse - a young cock with a shattered wing - the third kill over her points in two days, real dog work.

I joined Art and we continued on out the ridge, coming to

cast into the court when we moved two last time. (We'd found a flat tire upon leaving home & had lost a lot of time, so was now at nearly 4 o'clock).

In the edge of the cover we were going to try was an old log road with good brush and tangles beyond. Bliss was at the top of the hill and came barreling down the road at my whistle. Forty yards from me she skidded to a stop and wheeled back fifteen feet and pointed into the left - flagging a moment until I called "stay" to stop Dixie & Shadows in backpoints when Bliss froze solid.



WORTH THE TROUBLE.

I walked past Shadows & Dixie holding their backpoints perfectly, & Bliss and waited for the quail to go out. Bliss heard it start just a moment before I did, and broke at flush - my next lesson to teach her - and the bird managed to stay behind cover and land over the rim of the thicket. Later got another triple point that looked perfect but was empty. Then, after all the lessons and examples Bliss had set her, Miss Dixie sat next on the far edge of the cover and began "weaseling" around, nose to ground. Knowing her, I that I was alerted - but not to expect

the grouse to hold and let her almost walk a circle around it. Bliss
came in and - I think without stopping or getting scent - flushed it. No
shot. We hurried back to reach the original area on the way to the
car. Did not see two birds - saw only one - from an edge of the settlement
corner on the left of the road we took going in. Following, we got a flush
when Shadows walked into one. After that, we got a good looking
point by Bliss that they had to walk into - only to jump a rabbit!

It was after five and we headed for the car, hoping to refresh
the bird Shadows bumped that went over the hill. In the quadrangle
below the car (where we were 3 last time), Shadows walked into
a ditch corner. Bliss followed and gave a point, holding nicely.
But not Shadows. In he went and out the grouse came, perching for a
moment on a root of a snag, then pitched over the hill - No shot.
Anyway, it was a good ending for Bliss.

Ward 3 (no new) - 6 flares
No shots.

Bliss: 2 prod.
Shadows: 1 back.
Dixie: 1 back and
a "wassel".

Friday 14 January Return to Jones. Got to visit that wonderful person
at the road where he was about to haul his dog meat, etc.
home with a sulky and his mare.

We used Bliss solo and made the first contact in the
corner on the far side of the bridge and the right of the road - ~~the~~ grouse - one
over a production but Bliss moved in to further establish the point and the
bird went out. Next grouse was in a quadrangle corner on the edge of the fields
above Jones' gate. This one Bliss ran into - bad. We were unable to
relocate it but hunting up the ridge got a production that flushed before I
could reach Bliss. So Kay & I discussed the plan of flight, Bliss made a

new point a bit above and another quail flushed up on the ridge. We followed and I walked into a new bird, I think, that almost got me a shot but managed to stay behind enough cover to prevent a try. That was ~~47~~ ⁴⁷ altho we hunted into magnificent cover up to a ledge of rocks - some grapes, lots of greenish berries - we didn't find either bird. On our return, creak down and across the ridge below us flushed #8 wild. That was it, all the way back to the car, where I picked up S. & D. which they went up to Mrs. Summers. I walked the very thick edge cover along the road and, crossing to the upper side, got a production by Bliss, backed by S. & D. The bird went out about us with no view, the D. seemed to hear a see it and ran up. Weather cold with a frost and some snow on the ground. Birds was not moving. Didn't see a track.

heard 9 (4 new) - 10 flushes. Bliss: 4 prod.
S. & D. 25 min.
no shots.



Saturday 15 January
Hazelton Forks "Weather"

How can you miss five straight quails, single right barrel shots in an afternoon? Easy. Sister Bliss, solo, made an intensely stylish point on the edge of a field on top the knob, pointing into the peculiar edge of cover. I'd get a good mail of it but, oddly, it sprang empty. We'd flushed a quail shortly before and we soon missed it well from the edge beyond Bliss' point.

Hunting around the edge of the field, we cut back thru the excellent greenish & crab thicket cover on the south side, making two. Following, we got our first production. The quail flushed some distance beyond the point & I missed a try thru some intervening saplings - a right-cross, that pitched over the knob & sloshings in the bottom.

After lunch we hunted out the flat tops for the second bird & moved it down over near the last one. In the bottom Bliss moved to wide & flushed one of these.

This area is nearly a design for a perfect grouse court; a knob with a flat field & a quailbrin - crab thicket dividing the top - field surrounded by quailbrin edges & courts. One slope on west and another on south made up of brush piles and slashings. Corner on southwest slope of dense quailbrin tangles tree-tall. East coast of second growth. Rhododendron run along southeast corner. Quailbrin cover on north. Full of grass.

Working around side & base of knob from west toward south, we made a wild flush. Then in quailbrin tangled corner - tall ones in trees - below where we'd eaten lunch we got another flush. But Bliss went on point and held until #3 went out. Later #4 flushed. Following, we got a good production on the #4 bird, flushing Bliss on point - having held for I don't know how long. Ray walked in, taking movies and flushing the bird, but it went out the far way and soared tree-top high all the way up over the knob.

Hunting further around the slashings before following the high bird, I got a flush from the hill side - a night-crow that veered away and dropped down. I fired & missed and marked the bird well up the old path toward the apple tree remembered from last trip.

We circled back over the top to try for the high bird which I had located in my imagination as near the side of my first miss. On the way, we got any number of rabbit points - the place was stiff with them - and Bliss was confused by them, wanting to be careful. Within yards of where I expected the grouse, Bliss wheeled suddenly right and froze immovable on a close quail-type point. They ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~truly~~ ^{truly} to the right that

looked fertile and some scant brushy brushles in front of

#119



WHICH PILE?

I tried to keep my eyes relaxed for either pile, but this is nearly impossible. Walking in slowly I finally exploded the grasses from a few yards ahead of Bliss from the left pile and fired too fast without getting a focus on the bird. Actually, I felt myself simply point and pull along the bird with little relation to its flight - an awing - right rising dot, too close to shoot at. I might have had a chance if I'd waited for it to show beyond the three saplings in the center but I was too wound up. The grouse pitched down over the slope as the other two had done earlier.

On the way back through the quailier - crab-thicket on the south of the field Bliss worked ahead and was out of sight (perhaps a point) when I heard a bird go out. I had just remarked that there were none there. Then a second flushed - right quartering in the open, a bit far for the right barrel but I fired and saw feathers float down but the bird didn't fall. There were two more flushes from the same area, and as we started to follow, a fifth grouse went out. What a covert.

We worked the east woods and slashings in case my feathered bird was down. Bliss moved on that I think was my second miss from the hillside that I'd marked up here.

boundary fence, we missed Bliss. I crawled, knowing she was a point but, without the bell, unable to locate her. It was getting quite dim and I was tired and my vision not a bit. Suddenly I heard a flick - this had been pointing at all the times. I waited and got a short glimpse of the grouse high and right crossing - as I'd dropped many times - but tonight I either wasn't up & at a decent hour the split second - by it went on. Fair straight misses. That's the way it's done.



We made an more sortie but made no more so returned to the forks of the roads and the car, where Ray let S.D. out and I gave the three another 15 minutes in the tangle woods.

I did poorly but Bliss did well except for too many rabbit points and one or two wild

misses. That what a coat. Ten new birds today. Oh we are coming back!

Bliss: 5 prod.

Moved 12 (10 new) - 21 flashes
5 shots - no hits

S.D. 15 minutes

Tuesday 18 January:

Fancy Bridge

I day kept shadows of Dixie here today (Shadows' feet are tender from frost left pad and left foot infections). It took Bliss ^{in mid. Jan} ~~in mid. Jan~~ to mid-twenty degree temp. to visit the Fancy Bridge ever for the first this season - and if my wood doesn't change it will be the last visit for a long time.

This cover has not been spoiled - as I feared - by the spoil pile from the strip mine above, tho' it cuts off access to the flat on top. But with a coating of slippery "slops" now on this pile of rocks and fallen branches, with no patches of snow, this is a wonder.

Bliss worked brutally hard on the way up the path, going "down an" #121 repeatedly and at one time barking a tree bird too far down for me to see but I caught it #1.

As we got started below the trap mine, Bliss made a lucky point just above me, making by a second established point, but then worked up the hill as tho' the bird were not there - and bumped it too far for a shot. I can't understand this, with her proven nose at bird sense.


I reprimanded her and made her stand at "Stay" before going on. Moved no more until Bliss walked into #3 well around the hillside. Again, why? Later, got a fine solid point that proved empty.

#4 turned up in a fine flat of brush piles near the power line. Saw tracks of Bliss but scent and began working it furiously but must have pushed too hard, as the bird simply wouldn't die. It went over the spoil pile.

Began the return along the base of the trap mine - over rough footing. Encountered two sets of tracks that Bliss may have bumped. Back at the "corner tangle" where I'd moved a tree last season, Bliss again

walked into #5. Finally I by-passed the big slide by walking the top of the spoil pile and back fell - like Yellowstone Park - and then about 4:45

when I was cold, (temp near 22) and tired, and tense, I stepped over the brink of tangle to find Bliss working too far out again, having passed a good cover in the corner above me. I called her in

by whistle and started her toward the area when a cock quon flushed giving me a wonderful  left-quartering high shot that I couldn't get at because of stiff clumsy reflex and

a thumb that felt two inches wide. Finally got the gun up and the safety off and fired but missed, seeing the thing down hundreds

float back from the bird which took the stratosphere out of the
country. Followed, tried and clumsy - these huge bear-paw
insulated boots are deadly on this footing - but had no further
contact. This made a nice series of points down on the steep side
of tangled brush but probably, from the way the bird had acted,
one had slipped out quietly. A not too good day - tho the views
were magnificent with an glimpse of a red ~~tail~~ call of a raven.

Number 6 (left a lot more than that last year and
there were all single) - 6 flocks
One shot - no hit
Bliss: 1 prod.



Thursday 20 January Not so cold but snow an inch or two in depth.
James Return to James where we left S. & D. in the new Fairland
station wagon and took Bliss solo. She, oddly, continued
to walk into birds the way she did Tuesday. This too good for that, is
it the snow & adverse conditions? She bumped two birds on the slope below
Summers - no reflex. Next contact was in woods to right of James' road
across the bridge. We hunted out the right fork cross path - a good
run - but Bliss wasn't there when we needed her. I passed a brush
heap that didn't move at my proximity and a few moments later
four grouse went out - two low and short, one high. They found Bliss
a point not far away but on a rabbit. This points up the worst
aspect of that fault & she is more and more included. When she
moved in to the side of flock the 4th bird, a straggler ran out and
Bliss chased. At that a flushed low ~~across the field beyond~~. We headed toward

the line of flight of two of the birds and then did make a lovely point. I walked in them tangles and put up two - one a glimpse going out high I wish I'd tried for but would probably have missed, the other a low flash past long and across the open field to the lower woods. So often I lose vantage position by having to walk up the pointed birds. I'm sure a dog that could be relied on to flash only on command would be effective but so far, I've never tried to develop one.

Bliss bumped one of these birds in the bottom. Later we covered the field to try for the low bird but failed. Don't walk into what was probably #2 bird of this group but I didn't get a focus on it till too late. Is my hearing growing less accurate that I place so many of them too late?

We hunted up to the road and out to the left fork across again. Bliss bumped a bird, or so it seemed. If the pointed one didn't hold. Kay feels I'm too critical but if there aren't errors, I don't know dog work. That was the day. No birds moved above jaws tho we saw tracks. Got back too late and treated us S. & D. Too bad. A nice day for a walk. But the birds, and dog, has to be more cooperative & produce sport. Bliss: 1 prod.

Mixed 2 (1 new) - 11 flashes.

No shots



Friday 21 January
Haystack Forbes Coast
Matthews

Dixie's 8th birthday - a clear sunny day
mild with 2 inches of snow still on ground.

Used all 3 dogs and hunted along the fence line
to the east margin of the top field where three grouse flushed singly from
the tangle of low ripshins and with no contact from the dogs - simply
wild flushes from ground. Followed back onto Tark/Humberston burn and
Dixie found and moved one of these. We had no further contact with
the other two or with this flushed bird.

Worked to the greenbriars where we moved for last time. No
birds today. Finally worked around the knob to the greenbrier tangle
above Matthews field where the dogs made the same four birds we
had found there before. Followed the flushes back the hill and had no
luck locating them until I was walking up the hill on one of the
paths. The dogs unfortunately were nowhere near and the grouse
came up almost under my chin. I held on it as it leveled away
and referred it to fall. It didn't, and I tried the left barrel on a glimpse
of the bird still straggling, low to the hill but above my eye level. No hit.
A double miss like this is a better thing when the bird gave me such
an open shot on the rise. Too little focus and wait, I guess. We
circled and finally Blin walked into it on the flat about. No point.

After this we had a long period, and a tiring one since it was
getting late, with no sign of birds. We hunted around the knob to the
south side; back to the top; and down the west slope
to the bottom & back up; and finally along the north greenbrier edge
of the field where Dixie did another empty point standing in the
field exactly where she made such a (miss (and empty) point the
last time on last Saturday!!

As a last try we went across to the greenbrier tangle and