

Shooting 1977

Opening Day
Saturday 15 October

breezy, sunny 60°

2:50 - 4:30 / 1 hr 10 min } 2 3/4 hr.

5:10 - 6:45 / 1 hr 35 min }

F. J. Morris Thorne

~~Donald Rogers~~

moved 1 - 1

0

Cherry Run

moved 1 - 1 (hen)

2 shots - 0

Brian: 1 prod.

Belton: 1 prod / back

16

Back to old favorites for Opening Day. The stripping on the Donald Rogers hill has partially filled in Lake Noel, but has not marred the cover, which presently is too full and green on ground, tho the trees are glorious and at October peak. The thorns are intergrown in places, making penetration nearly impossible but as covered the lake slope and the top well with good dog work. This is Brian's ninth season, ^{8 yrs game} and Belton's second, ^{1 yr. 5 mos} and my 53rd, ^{70 yrs. 10 mos} which day deserves by calling it my birthday and gave me a bootjack for the car seat.

Hunting a covert such as Donald Rogers when I and I can recall taking 6 grouse ^{in season} is an experience that is full in spite of the almost lack of grouse; for as you miss them it, familiar places take on meaning and you live those shots again, so that it is still rich gunning and not empty. In such memories gunning will always be good.

We were approaching the slope about the road thru Chick Cove when I saw (and I can hear) the early grouse covert - a rising flock

George Bird Evans Papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center

cut over the road and went as tho to follow the road. We moved 2/77
to the site and Belton got scent (surprisingly, Brin seemed not to).
Working the road to the car and covering the lower edge cover, we
failed to refresh, and after a breather at the car, drove on out and
to the Cherry Run cove for a late try, with some ~~more~~ wasted time
getting the two rascals to get in the tailgate (a new gag).

16 Moving along the old woods road, I saw Brin on point in the
dense margin on the left after seeing Belton show to a backpoint.
It almost had to be a 'cock, the way it lay and the place it lay in.
I signalled Kay and moved them the edge of cover to the clearing
beyond and waited, hoping Kay would have a chance for pictures
(she got both movie & still). Finally, Kay said, "I'm going to
move in." Belton at this time moved in from behind and established
a production, standing on the edge of the clearing and pointing down
and at a spot in front of Brin. It was an outrageous steal,
the somewhat, but I was glad he got a production. When I
replied to Kay with, "all right" - a poor choice of words - Belton
construed it as a command to move in, and the 'cock flushed - a
large hen, lovely in the late sunlight against the brilliant color.
The fowl was fast and head-high, out and quartering away
in wide open and impossible to miss, and I blew it with
both barrels. I don't know, yet, how I managed. Kay
suggests that it was a case of John Phillips' theory that you



ONE YOU COULDN'T MISS.

can't concentrate on dog work and shoot well, but I say it is just an example that I, at least, am never certain I'll hit, even when I think I'm going to. Hunting being what it is, it wouldn't be possible to know each time.

¹⁶ I was turning to compliment Bella and to my surprise, as I reached to pat him, he flinched and dropped. For a while he stayed close but soon was hunting normally. Again, you can never be totally certain about a young dog. He had a lot of shooting over him late last winter at Newmarket, but something about the suddenness flustered him.

We tried to relocate the cove immediately after the shot and later when we had crested back after hunting old log roads up the ridge and out to the gravel road. I'm glad that his woodcock made it but I don't like to ruin the first shot of the season.

We were all tired and all need further conditioning / and motivation.

Tuesday 18 October
Cool, partly sunny 50°
4:00 - 6:15 - 2 1/4 hrs.

16

The Gates Too many people.

moved 13 - 15
6 shots - 3 hits

Brian: 9 prod.
3 ret
3 k

Bellon: 2 prod.
6 backpoints
3 k

3 IF (one with narrow
flight feathers)

(4)

at the Knights' cabin.
Drove from home to stay several days at Hemmer Lake. Trails of yesterday's reported
snow on top of Cabin Mt. Afternoon lovely. Found white car & red truck parked
at "an" area in Gates (later proved to be two deer hunters), but we couldn't leave
and as parked at powerline and hunted north along east margin, then plunged
in toward the river. Brian's bell went silent and I think Bellon backed and I
saw the woodcock lift far out - the first and only bird in this area.
Coming out on the road near the far-end bridge, we paused to eat, watching
3 fishermen (one had taken two suckers), and then hunted back the road to
our car, which Ray moved to near the ~~entrance~~ them timber on south side. There
both dogs moved out too wide in the open cover (Brian had an empty point
that Bellon backed as we started. Bellon is backing beautifully again this summer.)
Catching west, we lost Brian's bell too far out and touched the stock collar,
getting a distant gelp but no Brian. Following our deduction, we found him
solid on a point he'd been hiding a long time, unbroken by the shock. Bellon
again backed and Ray heard the cock twitter out before I got them.
A double shot to the west, alerted us to turn, and we came out on the
road at the large arpen where we found a small camper/truck parked.

In the alders just inside the aspen stand, Belton drew to a point - lower tail than usual for him - and held solidly while the rascal Brian refused to back. The cock flushed - left - crossing high - and I missed. Belton is still disturbed about this shot - then I am using 3-1-8 light loads, but he moved on when I squeaked and slammed into a second woodcock, stepping nicely at flush. I say that the cock I missed went down oddly but I'm sure it was just a short flush side - stepping to land, but as usual to check. I looked up to see Belton again on point.

This bird flushed much like the other but I mounted and dropped it in one action solidly.



BELTON PRODUCTIVE #2

Again Belton sat at the shot - an easy to have a steady - to - shot dog and Brian found and retrieved promptly, other than his usual spit-out on the way for several times. This was a new hen. I couldn't get Belton to search for it after I plucked it, and at last let him smell it. This is the kind of "problem" most of the warriors build up into a crisis, when all it needs is

ignoring. After the retrieval, a pointer - white & liver - with docked tail came to us - must have been a bad type shorthair, and moved on. The man whom I later saw was Pennington, turned up (his camper) and I say told him where his dog had gone. He little more than pointed and moved right in front of us. When we'd planned to go, almost at once from the photo. We could

(6)

into our usual areas, passing near where Shadows had made his
glorious final retreat, and in doing so I lost Brian's bell sound and
as I moved to him, a cock came within a foot or two of my head, dodged
me and turned into deep cover, flying on.

Belter had backed that one, too, but later became separated from us
and it required time to get them moving with us again. Just as the
far edge of the "cow lane," Brian pointed gloriously and Belter backed.
I was determined to pass the shot of the bird went over Belter, but when

it went up, it climbed high over Brian. I shot and failed to center it, but
it fluttered down not far in cover. Brian had sworn to mark it and I
sent him on (he's been holding nicely at wing & shot so far) and I
soon brought it to me. Ray got a movie & stills of this retreat.

We'd scarcely moved on when Brian pointed again, toward a
thick blowdown branch that required my crouching while both dogs held.
The cock went out there back cover and I waited - too long, I guess -
and missed it well out. Following, as though Belter stopped at flush,
for the bird came back over us and away.

at our point in the separate thorn trees when I remember points
by Boris & Brian, and I'm sure, I called "point" and

walked into the thick cover to see it was a white-faced Heron 7/77
lying down.

We had found two bow hunters in trees, and after eating a piece
of sandwich, went on to get a new point by Bear and hear another
bow hunter speak pleasantly from ^{an} ~~about~~ over my head in the open clearing.
The place crawls with them. Brian's bird lifted ahead of him, going out
low. Near the "grove" spruce, he pointed again and I heard Kay say
"That one's there," and saw Belton lock. This bird went up steeply
and I managed not to center it and fired again. In a moment
thinking it would go on, but saw it settle vertically. Brian went to it
and found it was, retrieving it dead. During afternoon's shooting and
dog work. We were at the car and stopped.

Eating a sandwich with coffee, we sat and heard a 3-shot
blast from a hunter who had gone into the thorn cover with a Partridge.
Later as we passed we saw him, a gray haired man with another gunner
and the Brit talking to ^{Pennington} ~~Bealton~~ who had passed us walking in the
road. There was another 3-shot volley at something, no doubt a 'cock he
didn't hit. The man and ^{Pennington} ~~Bealton~~ both had automatics and it
seems consistent in that they should have a Partridge and a rhoter. I
am convinced the repeater man is the land who can't stand to let a hawk to
a bird - the he often is.

It was a good day & fine to be back here but wish there weren't so
many people.

Wednesday 19 October

Fog and rain off & on, cold 40°

4:30 - 5:30 / 1 hr.

Gates

moved 1-1

4-4

moved ~~4-4~~

1 shot - 1 hit

1 M

Brian:  3 prod
1 k
1 ret

Belton: 2 backs
1 k

(8)

After an all day Canaan Day, we drove to see the new lodge at Canaan Valley Park — bleak and large — and came back to have a late afternoon try in the Gates. This is the nice part of being down here on such a day. The views of Calm Mt. fogged out and at times nearly all the Valley, and the unusually late color — the 'twilight' phase is especially good for this.

But in the Gates even in this weather we found cars at the powerline and at the thorns event, so we parked at the big aspen. Planning to hunt back of the aspens and around to the cow lane on the chance the cars belonged to low hunters, we slipped in and Brian pointed in the exact clump of cover where Belton pointed the brace last winter. Belton backed Brian, but I saw a low flush from the corner of my left eye and Brian moved on. Just at this time we heard a distant double report in the cow lane area, and we turned back after moving #2 from a pile of toilet paper. (Is that too awful?) "New school."

A drizzle of rain put us in the car for a few moments, but it let up and we hunted up the road toward the gate. I sensed that Brian's bell was quiet and plunged into the wet cover on the south side, to hear Belton's bell go out, helping me to locate Brian. Both dogs on a lonely point, Brian on the bird, Belton backing. I worked around some intervening cover to get a clear chance at the shot and walked up the grid, a nice rising right crosser that folded ~~definitely~~ definitively at the top of its arc — "abruptly ended by the shot." Both dogs held until my command for Brian, who moved

9/27
in and delivered an immature male, had let all four 'cock yesterday
and today have been yearlings. We circled back to the road in time to
see ~~Pendleton~~ ^{Pennington} park a few car lengths ahead of our car and move into the
area where we had started. It wasn't long until we heard him blow two
shells. I wonder if he ever hits.

We worked to the gate and hunted the cow path ^{south} along the fence
then soft mud and water until we had to give up and move into the cover,
where, after much pushing thru dense cover, came out on the clearing
near the thorn covert. Crossing to that, we walked it well with Belton
at one place drawing to a tentative point, only to reconsider and move on.

Ditzy. Near the southeast corner of this covert we both heard a heavy
grass flicker-sound but did not see the bird. Nice.

Back at the edge near the road, Brian pointed - Belton was not near -
and I walked to him, only to have the 'cock flash behind him - and me -
to his left.

We stopped at this time, although we could have hunted a half hour
longer but two woodcock hunters in a jeep named "The Judge"
had been blasting all over the best terrain, and, along with ~~Pendleton~~ ^{Pennington}
who had shot ^{shot the first} ~~one~~ ^{one} time, we felt we couldn't enjoy it. We saw ~~Pendleton~~ ^{Pennington}
walking toward us, turn and blow two more at a wild flock, and turn to
shoot it down. This place is worse than any time we have known, and I
wonder if we'll ever have an afternoon here alone. The birds are here, but so are
the clocks.

At least we had a lovely house and what more can you ask?

Thursday 20 October

Clyde Davis' High Orchard

Mostly sunny to cloudy 55°
windy
2 hrs. }
1/2 hr } 2 1/2 hrs.

moved 6-7
3 shots - 2 hits

Brian: 2 prod
1 back
2 k
2 net

Rehobeth

moved 3-4
1 shot - 0

Belton: 1 prod
2 backs
2 k

Brian: 2 prod
Belton: 2 backs

This day began cloudy in the Valley, as most of this trip has been, but we drove into sunny weather for a short period at Mt. Storm and down the far side in glorious color = red-orange maples. I followed an impulse and had a stop as we reached the old Citymiller house on the bend of the road and went down and spoke to Mrs. Citymiller, a small sort of Jim-around kind of person, very friendly. Lives with his sister.

Driving out to the Edelmann road, we found the road workers scraping it and so we backed and turned at Dale Davis' house and drove to Clyde Davis' to find, as usual, no one home but Blake Haulon, who was just thinking about you the other day.

Parking at an old house, we walked the road in a glory of beech foliage and maples, then saw Belton backing Brian just off on the left side of the road. It was a male woodcock - a low flush straightaway that dropped at the shot about twenty yards away. Brian held until ordered to retrieve which he did with the normal two or three spit-outs that have become tradition. Belton shows no actual uneasiness at the gun report but usually sits and waits for Brian to deliver the bird, a good way to instill steadiness. This was another yearling.

With this fine start on this grand day, we moved on happily and climbed the steep slope on the right over some ^{footing on logs} wild rocks, finally coming out on top where I had expected.

11/77
Finding nothing in the immediate area, I went out to find where Kay had taken the good photos of Brian on point that illustrated her poem in Grays. I think I found it, but the heavy foliage is disturbing and when I turned back, re-crossing a woven wire fence, I couldn't find anything that looked familiar, let alone the orchard flat. My compass wasn't re-crossing giving me North in an odd direction, and so I sat down and gathered my facts, picturing the direction of the Clyde Davis road on the top map.

Finally an old woods or farm road tree seemed to go approximately in the right direction and it led us to the edge of the pine plantings on the margin of the orchard flat. There we sat beneath the spreading thorn tree I had sketched with a point of Brian's and ate a bit of lunch.

Plowing through the pines - (much larger and denser), I headed for the apple tree in the center of the birch patch that formerly held a 'cock.

Finally found it to be three apple trees and briars but no bird. But first both dogs kept moving out too wide and in trying to get them in, or walked into three wild woodcock flushes in the NE corner of dense thorn scrub. No others, but some empty points, until I swung the dogs to the south edge where I'd marked birds in a beech stand at a rail fence.

Brian began working scent promptly and finally pinned a 'cock with a backpoint by Belter. I walked it up but the shot was then loose to - a low level flush and I felt the bird twisted right as I fired and moved. I marked its flight but could not get the dogs to work where I wanted, and Kay walked into the bird.

Helping to try the Rehebe the thorns, as decided to move out. At the west brow of the flat, just inside the woods and about the time I'd expressed

(12)
a wish that I could get Belton into a bird without Brian near,
I saw Belton point.



Brian came in and I stopped
him on command, and
then walked in. The cock
flushed as Belton
moved a step or two but
I fired, considering it

a good solid point and the bird fell, centered. Brian retrieved, a yearling
hen, and then put on a display of authority, intimidating poor
Belton just on principle and I had to drag him off. But the point
gave Belton an obvious pleasure.

We hurried to the car via the old fields and drove to the Roholoth
thorns where it seemed oddly empty of cattle and beautifully empty of
people. We had one nonproductive double point just inside the
gate, but a production by Brian (Belton was elsewhere) not far
beyond. The cock flushed unseen from behind a log. No other contacts
even to the far thorns along the pipeline, and back until we
were into the main thorns once more and Brian began working scent
with a wild flush, then a solid point and back and I got pictures -
but no stills - up close of Brian. The flush came straight up from the
center of the thick hawthorn and I tried for the bird as it leveled then the
top but missed. That was it. Hunted back along the small run to the
road - different from usual - and Brian pulled his left leg getting them
the real fence but not permanent injury. Belton cleared it as Brian
normally does. This day was so good for Belton's point and Brian's
and because we had these lovely places to ourselves.

Friday 21 October

partly sunny, warm

2 hrs } 2 3/4
3/4 hr }

IF

Grassy Ridge

moved 1-1

0

moved 4-9

3 shots - 1 hit

Brian: 3 prod

1 k

1 net

Belton: 1 prod

3 prod

1 back

1 k

13/77

Ritzmiller Place

moved 2-4

0

Brian: 1 prod

Belton: 1 back

One of those glowing stories of ten grouse last year, "a few" this early pre-season, by young Doug Richardson at the West Storm Exxon station, sent us to Grassy Ridge today, "grassy" being mostly replanted strip mines. The "low pole" crest appeared a bad experience until we returned from a tree over stripped barrens and found Belton on point on the edge of timber immediately about our parked car. As we approached him, he moved in and a grouse flushed up and over the cover toward the hilltop. I suspect the grouse moved and caused the stop-in. This is the first grouse production of the season.

We followed and Brian soon pointed. I could see a 'cock within two feet of two more. Belton chose to blink them out (why?) and walked away. The flush gave me no chance. We walked to the top of the small crest - puzzle: where did the grouse go? Good low cover on top edge - blueberry shrubs and greenbrier but no bird. The the dogs tried hard. At the edge of the woods and on the brow of a strip high wall, which nearly took it, is a small graveyard with no plantings of any kind, just stones — and a white cross made of 2x4s, the cross about five feet tall and anchored to a bottom cross member that is spiked into a solid, low maple stump. Quite striking. See only one name on a

weather: Citymilly, tho I would expect some corners on the others. (14)
I meet them everywhere around there.

We worked the woods below the car on the steep road and discovered "the short piece of stripped lead" Doug had referred to — along a swampy bottom with alders and disturbed lead. I have no doubt that the "ten grouse" going up all around had been woodcock without his recognizing

I worked the dogs up the far ridge paralleling the highway and a small powerline thru good cover and met Kay, who wait for the car, at the top. We drove on out, exploring and seeing good thorn thickets in several places. At the forks, we turned left the way we had driven years ago and, after turning, came back and I took the dogs into a good patch of spruce and fern cover above the road. Kay stayed with the car to wait it.

Not far in, I almost put my foot on a cock that was buried deep in the brown fern, the flush going straight above toward a fence. I decided to the lane that leads to a house with a gate — barred — and passed Kay to hunt in the good spruce/haulack/fern cover on the lower side.

Not far in, Brian hit scent and worked it to a flash, stopping nicely at flash. The bird settled near the road and Brian worked that way and pointed. Then Brian Belton came in without noticing and put out the cock, which flushed across the road to more good cover. Over that, Belton, just to my right, drew to a point — a nice one — Brian not near, and altho Belton made a few steps in and the bird went up, I shot anyway, feeling sure that he'd had a solid good point. However, if this continues, I'll refrain from shooting. The woodcock, a hen, was centered and dropped from the upper branches ~~above~~ and Belton missed

to it eagerly - a new man for him. I believe he would have possibly picked it up but Brian came on hand and did the honors. 15/77

Kay joined us, and we doubled back to the south side again, hunting it lower down. Kay flushed a wild 'cock near the far end where a large thorn thicket begins. Circling back to stay in the evergreen / fern cover - a good place, evidently, during daylight, for we saw lots of whitewash. In a dense tangle of a hemlock, briars, and fern I saw a point about me, pitched over-away from me with a nice high tail on my end. Calling to Kay that Brian was pointing, I circled around the left side to an opening and moved in. The 'cock rose in a lovely left rising flash and I fired going thru its peak, only to see the bird dip under my barrels as I pulled, and was aware how much the muzzles pass ahead of them the bird on these shots. Just then, Kay called to me that it was Belton who had pointed.

I marked the flight as not far and we soon had another point by Belton. I picked what had to pass for an opening and saw the bird flash level and left-quarterning. It disappeared behind brush as I swung and, unable to stop myself, I fired where it should have been, but wasn't. On neither of these points did Belton move in. We followed across the road



BRIAR OR WHO?

once more to where I thought the 'cock would have landed and before long, Brian had it - a nice point. This time Belton backed nicely. I could see the 'cock flattened in front of Brian, headed toward the inside of the woods.

Recalling the "rule" that woodcock flush the direction they are looking, I waited, and then this bird flushed 180° back over Brian and back across the road. Having missed it twice, I felt it earned a rest.

We got in the car and drove to the Kitzmiller Place, finding a group of hunters ensconced, having heard the shooting & hunting. ^(Bismarck Road) But a nice young Mrs. Collins at the house (they're from Montgomery near Charleston and largely bow deer & turkey hunters) said it was quite all right to hunt.

Brian had a production within minutes about where we had two last year; Belton backed but the cock gave me no shot. I walked into it on the reflex — no dog near. We missed our mark twice — a flush that came from the alder ^{from} Belton's direction and I saw it land. Nothing I could do would put either dog in the right place — common with sighted landings — and I walked into it on the reflex.

We had one grand point by Belton into a thick clowdown, and I stopped Brian on a good backpoint. I handled Belton and Kay set movies, only to have it turn out to be a rabbit. But since Belton didn't see it jump out, there was no harm.

Moved the dogs to the road while I brought the car and picked us up on the highway. This area is built up with trash houses and trash people. And today there was no cock in the edge. We changed bats and drove home to find everything so good and wonderful.

Monday 24 October

mild, mostly sunny 65°

1 hr. 10 min. } 2½ hr.
1¼ hr.

AF
IM

13

Lacey Thomas

moved 1-1
0

Rehobeth

moved 8-9
2 shots - 2 hits

Brian: 3 prod
2 k
2 ret

Better: 3 prod
2 backs
2 k

Two good omens on the way down for our second week in the big mountains (at Mirror Lake - Knight): a vision of two white cats - matched - climbing a bare locust tree near Leno, and a cluster of black Angus cattle under a golden sugar maple in full flame (near Aurora).

We drove to the Lacey Thomas (was told by Mr. Kitzmiller last week that Nancy Lacey had died). It was almost brutally hot and dry as we ridged up the thorn hillside. Had forgotten that there are so many ironwood in here. Covered the edge of woods on far side of cable right of way and curled back around the cap of cover at the top; nothing. Returning to car, I saw a wild 'cock flush. all at once.

Drove to Rehobeth and had just stopped when a car pulled in behind us at the gate. I went to speak and found a nice mountain boy about to hunt "squirrels or turkeys". Named something like Falty. Told me I could find a lot of quail on the Peggah road where his father, Mr. Kitzmiller, lived in a gray house with two big pine trees. We both deferred to the other as to when to hunt, and he took the pipeline then the woods, leaving us the Rehobeth Thomas - lovely place.

I saw a 'cock that neither dog had found. Then Brian pointed and Better came in and backed - nice points but I was facing the lowering sun at after five. I saw a 'cock in for a picture but the 'cock flushed too soon - between Brian and me, a left crossing flush and I mounted and fired quickly and the bird fell. Brian held steady until

ordered on to retrieve and moved to the fallen bird. Just then, a second (18)
'cock flushed near Belton and fluttered back over him and landed.

I accepted the retrieval from Brian (Kang took a bow still) and
I noted that Brian's bird was an adult (I think) hen. This is the
first I've seen that is not a yearling, an indication of early flight
birds, according to Gandy. (I doubt it.)

Brian moved on but I asked Belton toward the second 'cock and he
got scent but vaguely, working it nicely with head up, moving laterally,
but without a point. The 'cock flushed ahead and cleared the thorns on
the way to the woods on the left margin.

We had no more contacts, the both dogs worked beautifully, until
we reached the far thorns beyond the pipeline. Belton pointed, but was
indecisive, holding but flagging at times. I was not content with it as a
solid point exactly and the 'cock went out without a shot, so I call it a
productive ^{by}.

The fiasco was Brian's grand show — a beautiful point that, held and
held while I walked all around, keyed up to top tension, only to have
a rabbit dart out and Brian still held for a while. I hate to scold at
such times for the intention is honest, so I try to shame him and move
away.

The next bird was Belton's in the thorns on the far flat near the
pipeline — another not too solid point, working up after the first point
and with the bird flushing — small and weakly, and I passed the shot,
but still count it a productive (generously).



BRIAR KNOWS THE
HEDGEROW BIRDS.

14/77
They felt a bit cool - throwing off
cold symptoms - and returned to
the car, while I covered the hedgerow
over. Briar knows this so well and
handles it beautifully; while
Belton plunged into the dense thicket,

Briar worked up along the hedge, clipping off first one point, then another.
I walked to him on the first, managing with difficulty to stop Belton on a
backpoint, which at last he did. The cock went out the far side and I
didn't shoot there the thick cover. Briar's second point came in moments,
and this time Belton simply would not back - a pity, for he was doing
so well. The point proved apparently empty until Briar worked on in,
making game and the cock, which had been well ahead, lifted, another
classic case of a "running" bird that hadn't moved. all you need is
imagination.

Briar now pointed again in a huge patch of blackberry brambles and I
saw the flash of a rabbit so ahead - the place is crawling with rabbits.
Belton hit about a few yards in front of me and I expected it to be the
rabbit scent, but something in his manner changed my impression.
He finally went silent and a cock flushed straightaway and gently
rising, falling at my shot, which I felt was a bit to the right of the
bird.



Briar searched hard for
the bird, making several
casts before he pointed
it in dense ferns and thorns.
The cock fluttered off the ground
4 feet or less and Briar caught

and dispatched it, then
delivered it almost, stepping
to lie down with the bird between
his paws and grinning. It took
a lot of wheedling to get the delivery
rattle - a grunting male.
that made a nice ending to a nice afternoon, and we walked to the road where
Ray was watching from the car but unable to see any of the action. This
is a grand event - and ours, thanks to.

¹³
The Famous 25th
Tuesday 25 October.
overcast, breezy mild 50°
1 1/4 hr. } 2 3/4 hr.
1 1/2 }

Grassy Ridge #1
moved 2 (1 new) - 3
0
moved 4 - 4
2 shots - 0

Brian: 1 prod
2 prod
1 back
Belton: 1 back
1 prod

Grassy Ridge #2
moved 2 new - 3
0
moved 6 - 11
1 shot - 0

Brian: 2 prod
1 back
Belton: 2 prod
1 back

The Famous Twenty-Fifth was slightly
infamous. For while we had really excellent action, I could not seem
to get into any shooting. We packed at the "lone pole," where we did on
Friday, and Brian pointed the groves exactly where it was before. Belton
backed and I walked in from the outside edge. The groves did admirably
running to flush out my way, wheeling and flushing over Brian and I
across the main road.

Instead of following at once, we hunted the good cover on the
lower side of the strip-mined road and almost immediately, Brian
went on point. The flush was a woodcock, low and flutter-down and
I sent Brian on. Both he and Belton moved to where I expected the

2/77
'cock and Belton pointed. But the flush was behind Belton and a
new bird, a climber that I expected to drop out of the treetops —
and missed. A bad start but I blaseely told myself that a man that
post-mortems his shots is a poor shot. Brian had backed Belton's

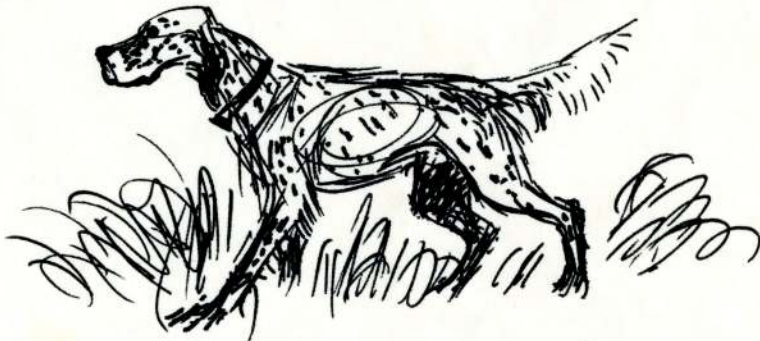
point on command; I'm pleased he is accepting this on occasion.

We circled without moving either 'cock and then swung back along
the road and hunted down the cover on that side where the grouse had most
likely gone. I say saw a wild flushing woodcock come back over her. Later,
we heard two separate grouse flushes, probably from trees — one was ours,
the other was a new one!

On our return (this is good cover in here) we went into the original
patch along the road and Brian had a lucky point but Belton turned away
and while he stopped eventually, he was facing away from us as tho he tried
not to see. The flush, when I put it up, was an easy rising away
shot that I somehow missed — must be something about timing.

I repeat — a post-mortem means a from shot, and I post-mortemed to
some extent. after no further relocation, we drove out to the
spruce/fern court #2 and parked at the corner.

Moving into the thick cover, I found Belton on a lovely
point above me, head well up and standing in deep fern (frozen).



(22) 27

Brian hovered nicely at my hand signal and command, but the
'cock when I flushed it, only fluttered a few yards and settled.
We followed and flushed that bird four more times with no points. Even
Brian bumped it ungloriously and I know it was not giving off scent.

We coiled from one side of the road to the other and back out the
original patch. Almost immediately after starting, Brian had come back in
without his collar and bell and we had to hunt with two exactly
pitched bells - a poor way.

Belton bumped and choked at least two 'cock I saw land
and then get pushed out - something about conditions. Later, both
dogs had positive points on two 'cock but Belton didn't hold his point
well, tho I do credit it as such.

Finally, we hunted the east side of the road - good cover but
no birds - none of the plenitude of whiteness we found on the west side.
Ida was going to the car and had left me and walked into two
pines under an oak tree in a grassy open woods. I joined her at her
signal and we had a reflex from a tree - not one of the 3 flushes
did I see a hear - about par for me. We hunted west in this



23/77
tip cover and found Brian on a grand point after his bell had been
silent some time. I had trouble getting Belter to back but managed, then
walked in closer and closer to Brian on the other side of a log. The cock, a large
hen, climbed steeply thru foliage on some saplings and I fired where I was
certain and lost sight of the bird. But there were no floating feathers, and
Brian did not find it, tho he searched diligently, and so I have to assume
the cock pitched at the tip of its climb just as I pulled - one of
these interactions



That was our day if I had
only had the sense to quit.
But at the road and in
sight of our car, I turned
back to hunt the lower
side over more - covering
it all the way to the west, then

down to a point of space I hadn't been in. On my way back up,
I caught my foot on a root and went down hard with no chance to
catch myself but managed to hold the Pandy up. I landed on my
left elbow and upper arm, twisting the shoulder painfully. For a while
I lay there and howled but finally got up and went to the car, with my left
arm hanging. I am writing this in the cabin, still uncertain how long I'll
be out of the shooting. I hope I am over-reacting and that I'll be able
to handle a gun before too many days. Glorious Twenty-Five

Saturday 29 October

Graveyard Glade

Brier
Bellin

(24)

mowed 2-2

NG

Beautiful, cool, sunny 60°

1 1/2 hrs.

4:30 - 6:00

First time out after fall on Tuesday. Shouldn't have better but still unable to lift the left arm on its own volition. Went without the gun and the everything else is the same, it is not in the truest sense "gunning."

Harry Schwitzer stopped by on his way home from Blackwater, ^{last evening} and stayed late. I find, even without the disability, that I must struggle to avoid bitterness as those other people finding grouse, when they and I hunt hard and well, if not for so long each time, and find almost none. There is no denying that age has had something to do with this altho I can't say exactly what. Not covering as much cover, perhaps hearing and vision, the latter as, they and I have good hearing (I say) and good vision (both of us). It is stupid to say that it is luck, but luck, fortune, the breaks, get thin as you grow older. Harry S. and his companion in 5 days - not all day on each - moved 26 grouse and shot 8. I haven't moved 8 in that country for years. So there is something personal involved. Harry had 8 shots at grouse in one day; I haven't had a shot since last December. It becomes a compulsion and a frustration at the same time, and I become sour on grouse shooting altogether. But I still can't forego it.

Today was perfect weather, perfect time of day in the Graveyard Glade, which we had found ^{last} last winter. The earliest

date on a marker in the small enclosure in 1765. There are families^{25/77}
local names, and one child's tombstone with the traditional stone lamb.
We found the small meadow on the far side of the woods surrounded with
tree stands for deer, as if they might be used depending upon the wind
direction — a low way to kill a deer. We saw a boy follow us and
start with one of the stands.

Excellent ground cover everywhere but no evidence of either.
We walked down the address on the east, and turning, walked back
along the foot of the hill, toward the west. Just inside the clump of
cover — a patch of large white pines and hardwoods, — Brian began
to go fragrant in a grassy draw — going to ground like a
beagle with his nose and tail down, trailing excitedly around and
around. He was wearing the hot collar but I was too slow to have
lay hit him and get his head up. On one circle, a grouse flushed
from within four or five yards of him, from where it had held
in deep grass — a good open chance for a shot. The wind was
carrying from the ground directly at Brian, who might have
caught scent if he'd kept his head up. It was the poorest piece of
work I've seen him do. I blame woodcock for putting a dog to ground,
and lack of contact with ground, for Brian not snapping into a proper
afterwash.

Bellon was about the fence in the thick cover about and saw
and chased the grouse — a nice cock bird. We tried to follow up the hill
of dense cover and lost contact with Bellon who was running wildly,
unlike his usual manner of working. ^{George Bird Evans Papers}
^{West Virginia and Regional History Center}

large grass flushed in front of me — no dog near — and came across to the right just above the trees what would have been a good chance thru branches. I saw the bird patch as the bird on the west edge of the woods and I think it went further by stretch of slaskings at the bottom of the hillside field.

We got Belton in and ~~put~~^{put} the duck collar on him, immediately getting results with no need to touch him. We followed into the tangle of fallen tree tops blocking the old log roads and had a time working them to the top of the hill and the car. This should be fine cover but hell to handle.

I got along well with the left shoulder but could never have managed even to carry a gun. This cover is excellent: should have had flight woodcock now at the peak of the 'cork flights, but there wasn't even a hint. As to the grouse — I think the second flock was a new bird — too short a flight for the first bird to have made, and we think that Belton must have put up #1 as top the hill judging from his excitement. Two grouse are not enough in there, and there could be others in the big alder flats. But there is not the incentive when it is so empty. The view of the two churches and the distant Pines is idyllic from where we had the car parked on this nice old back road.

Monday 31 October

Cool, sunny, breezy 60°?
2 3/4 hrs.

Birch Hill

moved 2-2

NG

Brian

Beltan

27/77

Birch Hill revisited, for the first since 1972 when we moved 4 years, but since '71 we were there 4 times and moved 16, shooting 2; in 1970 was there for the first and moved 8, shooting none. We used to hear of other hunters there, and found fired shells.

We parked at the graveyard as usual, tho the road is in good condition now to drive further out the ridge. As we hunted around toward the "Washington Plains" place, ^{Beltan} ~~Shadow~~ of Brian worked the deep ravine between the Birch Hill road and our side. ^{Beltan} ~~Shadow~~ hit a lucky point (I have just written "Shadows" for Beltan twice!) far down below us and I started down to fire the .38 if possible, but the bird lifted before I was near. Kay saw it and that it was a 'cock, rather strayed off beat in these high hills.



Just then, Brian who was some bit down the ravine screamed as tho the shock collar had discharged, and I saw an orange truck, like a Neomongahela Power truck, coming up the road above Brian. The screams and yelps continued as I rushed down the slope toward him, calling and he came toward me and I finally got to him and got the collar off. I've heard that CB radios occasionally trigger the shock.

Once this was settled, we hunted around the valley and back up to the ridge road and ~~out~~ the ridge. At one place Brian worked scent hotly but ground-trailed badly, nose to ground — the result, I suspect, of working woodland, tho he rarely gets to ground so badly as there. At one place in this episode I saw Brian wheel around as tho he heard a grouse flush but can't count it definitely.

at the far end where the main road crosses left, we found a new powerline right-of-way, newly cut dirt with no towers as yet. The ridges were gorgeous today, leaves off except for single tulip trees, and sun and shadows molded the mountains in the manner of Rockwell Kent's "Aut Equinox" painting - both the Pinnacles to the west and the ridges on our east. After eating lunch here on a pile of logs, we worked our way out the narrow upper road and came to a Toyota jeep parked - a white vehicle we had seen follow the orange truck up Birch Hill during our emergency with the shock collar. This was a Penna. license but could see no evidence that it was a bird hunter's car - no gun slings, no dog crate, possibly low hunter.

Just before we reached the Toyota, Brian had walked scout into a dense tangle of briars on the left side and I can hear a green flash well ahead of him or at least not put up by him, and I that I heard the "peep" of a young bird flushing. We hunted out to the "out henlock", then turned, after Brian & Belton scoured the area. At no time did we hear the other hunter. Returning, we saw a flash of a green pitching out and down the powerline right-of-way, apparently from a tree. The only two green we can count. But even these would not possibly have been shots. How do those other people like Gray get the chance to shoot?

On our return along the road, another Penn. Power truck came along - a nice chap from Greencastle, Penna. inspector on the new project. He told us the main road did not double to the Salt Lick Road as we had thought, but that it ended far out, and very rough, at a gas well.

We had had no point other than Belton's creek point, on the way out the road - Brian pointed into the left side of the road, very suddenly.

and mix and high; Belton came in and backed on command; I set ~~one~~ h.d.w. stills of Prairie point, regrettably empty but at must have been a grouse just previously.

Back at the car after a great walk in magnificent air, we felt the day well worth being out, even without a gun.

To prove the treachery of circumstantial evidence, that night at home I discovered two holes in Prairie life I hadn't noticed in the excitement, and I am almost certain he'd tangled with a groundhog that bit him, and there had been no shock. I had been a little puzzled by his repeated glances back toward the road and feel he was looking toward his assailant.

Tuesday 1 November
Into cloudy weather system
on all of them but out of clear.
could to start them
cool 53°

9

Edelmann & Clyde Davis

moved 5-5
no gun

Brian: 4 prod.

Rehobeth

moved 1-1
no gun

Belton: 1 prod.
2 back.



ON THEIR TOES & REACHING

3:00-3:30 / 1 1/2
3:40-5:15 / 1 1/4 } 2 1/2 hrs.
5:15-5:45 / 1/2

In spite of shoulder disability, we took the drive to Rehobeth and started at Rehobeth under the full of a weather from the east. Not a feather in the Rehobeth Thorns, so drove to the Edelmann/Davis area

and parked in the entrance (outside gate). Starting down the road, I put both dogs over the wire fence - lovely leaps - into that magic edge cover of briars. Within moments, Brian had a point, Belton moved in to back uncertainly, then froze on his own production - the greatest double point

of my shooting. Looking back as I circled them, I could see Brian a bit to the rear, Belton on the upper side and some feet ahead, both dogs stretching for the scent and Belton on his toes and leaning into the point with his head and neck high. It was lovely. I walked back toward them after they had got a move of the point and flushed a hen woodcock, firing my .38 as it topped out thru cloud cover on a tree. Both dogs held steady as rocks until I ordered them on. a perfect performance.

We crossed to the "upper corner" on the Edelman side, again both dogs taking the rails like hunters. Belton has achieved Travis' quest in leaping. Within moments Brian was working scent on the tattle hantown flat on the upper level and then wheeled in a V-shape and pointed. I was unable to whistle Belton on for the backpoint, so after Kay took both .35 shells low and moved of the point, I flushed a male 'cock. Brian is glorious.

We circled onto the lower cover then doubled back with one wild flash from above, no further points.

Crossing the road, we hunted the around edge of Clyde Davis', then up and around the hillside to the "grove / something hole" with one wild flash from where Belton had been above us, refusing the whistle, and I say things he may have wanted the bird a lot. Doubling back higher on the hill, we hunted the good cover to the road with an excellent point of shot. First, I saw Belton

driving & went ahead of us but never quite pointing, then
our Brian solid on point far ahead and above. We hurried to
him and Belton came to it but had to be ordered to back, which he
finally did, and I worked and handled him into a stylish stand.
The weekend passed up toward the road and began but we failed to
relocate.

Going to the car, we drove in falling light and threatening clouds to
the Rehoboth Thorns and had just started when Clyde & Lou Davis
bucked up and we went back to greet them. By the time we started over
was, it had begun to drizzle and it increased as we hurried into the
thorns - got enough weather for 'cock. But the thorns were empty.
Too early for the flights to end - so I must be simply a spook between.
We had a light raincoat which turned the drizzle well enough but
falling light and the rain sent us back.

On the last stretch, Brian couldn't resist the flat to the
south when we found birds at this house and as we reached the gate we
saw him far away at the hedge now on point. I hurried to him and
Belton passed by him, then blundered the point and came to me. I
took him back and this time he backed at command, both dogs
holding as I tramped the thorn thicket on part of them. Brian had
held without a movement as Belton moved in front of him, then both
held. I couldn't put up the bird, which I am certain had lifted without
Brian knowing it, and I count it #6 and a production back.
A disappointment in numbers but that first double point is worth
the 100 mile round trip. Two grand bird dogs.

Clyde Davis tells us they are a brood of geese this late summer
across the road from his spic trailer where they were.

Tuesday 8 November

Horner Miller

32

Cloudy, mild, drizzle at end

moved 1-1

Brian: 1 prod.

2:30 - 5:15 / 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.

NG

Better: 1 back

How long it's been since writing that name of event, and I must have been 9 years since we hunted here. Two weeks since my fall and the shoulder is slightly improved but I can't mount the gun (tried last mtn)

Parked at Huffman corner and hunted up the "Over" road then excellent cover, but at the tramroad and to the right toward Hick Run, the cover is much too open & large. Both dogs worked in an odd, unsettled way. Brian staying on the path too much, Better not sure of himself - atypical.

Nothing but a squirrel all the way to Hick Run - glorious clear water on a white quartz sand - and as turned to work down the edge of the Siston place. In an opening with a tree-stand and a small article of a track the clearing ideal with blackberry brambles, as both dogs work the edge. Behind the culch we found what would be classed as ideal starting cover region to down thick but and hunted it out with no results. Saw but for deer, pears and ear corn. Doubled around to a beautiful stone wall laid up with tremendous work and care years ago. Took photo of them & Brian & Better by the wall.

Walking down the farm road toward the "back road" it occurred to me as should be taking a contour line directly thru woods toward the car instead of going down only to climb back up the road. Heading into the woods we came to a good edge of what I always thought of as quon ever: slashed clearings with brush piles & tangles of grapevines. Then I looked back to see what I thought was Better looking for me, and calling to him, I clasped my hands to give him any location he called that there was a point, and just then a quon flashed back to the edge and up the ridge.

Brian, it seems had been as a glorious point and Belter had been backing — until I blew it. At least, I say the point, a grand one, Ray says.

after that, with darkness falling as ploughed their words and in woods, and across the run of short darkness I landed and up what I hoped was the ridge to the Huffman corner. Actually, it was, but before we came out on the field where we were parked, we had to fight our way through the densest border of thicket I can remember. Truly, as I write this, both Ray and I are shivering by cramps — wondering what we have done, not surprising.

The interesting conclusion about today, other than the lack of birds and change of cover in a grand area — that shoulder of that big rough mountain — the comparison and difference between what would be considered almost classroom specifications for perfect prairie cover: the thick regrowth of striping birch & cherry growth — and the old-time forest I'm always held of grass cover: grass tangles of grapevines, brushpiles, fallen trees in cutovers edges. and it was in the latter that we found — a Prairie found — the one grouse.

Got back well dogged but feeling a sense of achievement in that the "Prairie" did let us down out of that wilderness a nice visit with (Ralph and Mark Miller)

Wednesday 9 November
warm, partly cloudy 68°
2 hrs.

Bayard Road
march 6-6
0

Brian: 1 point

Bella:

(34)

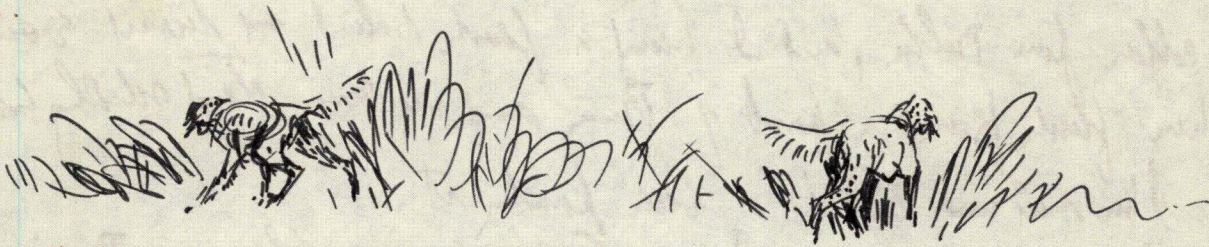
Lady Luck, the bitch goddess, can smile while she slips a knife into you. My shoulder, injured two weeks ago yesterday, has improved in some ways but the one motion I am denied is the move to raise my left hand on the forecnd of my gun. However, I carried the Pandy in spite of this today.

9 Reports of a few quises - fragile dreams - on the Bayard Road took us there. Weather was lovely, if warm, as had the terrain to ourselves, and drove out the left fork toward the powerline and parked at a good log area, hopeful, as you always are. Low! the birds you expect to see flash as you start in every new covert.

We circled on the north side of the road, a poor choice, just turned into stony land soon. Doubling to the south side, and the main log with spruce clumps, I saw Brian making game and nearly pointing but never quite going really solid - too low, too much ground-trailing. At one place in a thick growth of bare shrubs I couldn't identify he did point, holding while I moved all about with no flash. Key took a color still and I was set to try with my one hand and inadequate left arm to shoot at the bird that didn't rise. Brian moved on (Bella had given a few cases of a backpack) and I headed out into the low, knick (could believe they were some form of shrub degraded) as Brian trailed dogpawfully. Key walked into a cack some bit ahead of where Brian had pointed, and before long I walked into #2 with no dog work - a low left-quivering bird I would not have fired at, not being pointed, but I tried a false mount and got a nearly Tanager in my left shoulder, ~~again~~ ^{again} ~~low~~ ^{low} ~~that I could shoot~~

35/77
Ray's last was a small male, and a larger hen that flushed without a whistle but with enough wing-rumour to simulate a quail. We hunted into the bog some distance before turning back and had a wild flush from the direction of the dogs.

Near the road, I saw both Brian & Bolton on point about twenty yards apart, each pointing away from the other, almost certainly at separate birds.



But before I could reach them, the birds, if any, must have lifted - as the dogs decided they were mistaken. Shortly, I saw Brian begin trailing again in a shady corner of alders and some quite steep before a cock slipped out low. I that it dropped back in the same edge but they felt it passed across the road. There are very fresh whitewash splashes - with black - in the damp leaves.

There are two times that judgment is passed on running woodcock, and seeing Brian trail so flagrantly would give credence to the theory. But as carefully as I scan the ground ahead of him while this happens, I couldn't miss seeing movement of running 'cocks. These birds are just out ahead and, for some reason or such a day, are difficult to point decisively. Both dogs made efforts to get points but failed miserably, mostly in Brian's case by going to ground instead of waving head-up.

This bog is a fair cover to try but the shooting would be devilish in that thick shrub. This is cover where I'd expect some of the quans that everyone but I seems to find this year.

We got to the car & drove to the mist corner where we missed 2 'cocks in ^{late 2 quans} ~~late 2 quans~~.
20 minutes on an explorative trip this ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~worth~~ ^{worth} it. (Ray did)
Oct 10th

walk into our cove today as she crossed to join me when I was trying the
thorns that held the birds earlier. - the "early birds" that never seem to know
the way as we hope they will.

Beltin was moving out a bit wider - not drastically but too far to reach
if he had a point - and we got both dogs in which we change to shock collar from
Primi & Beltin. I had removed it from Primi and told him to stay until I got the
plain bell collar from Beltin, and I heard a flash behind me turned to see
a large hen flash from in front of Primi and see him stand wholly looking
after it. I'm sure now that he'd been pointing it.

That's the kind of birds I have (genuinely nervous seeing Primi great
point or guess by a skin change) - and what, anyway else I have about
a point seems to have shot at least one point, a mixed stream, I have not fired
a single shell at game. We circled this nice basin and came back up the
edge where we made 2 game on Oct 10th - today not even a woodcock.

There are both good events in this today, but I often think we don't
get enough exposure to birds, are out too short a time. With
woodcock, that's difficult because they are only good for about the last 1 1/2 hours
in any event. But whatever, I do, I'm not doing it right for game in these days.

Game luck grows thin as the year past, and no small part is the diminishing
numbers of game. And today, which should have been a good period in the woodcock
flight seemed simply a low point in the flow of birds. And what we found,
huddled badly.



EXACTLY RIGHT.

Friday 11 November

Bishop Place

Cold, snow showers earlier,
later, partly cloudy 35°

more 3-5 glumes
0

Brian: 1 prod
Belton

3:00 - 5:15 / $2\frac{1}{4}$ hrs.

Drove partway up the hill - good road now - turned at top and came back, parking in wide spot just above the replanted strip mines. No birds out the upper level strip - all good cover - but found the ~~strips~~ lower valley and Dicks rich in perfect grapevine / regrowth stage, with excellent roads to hunt where test holes had been made for coal.

I say heard #1 quail flush ahead of Brian and he later indicated the spot below the road. ~~Shotton~~ ^{Bellon} responded to my signal to hunt above the road well ahead and #2 flushed (Kay saw 7 cross) from along him. We followed into the head of the valley - all good cover - and one of them quails reflected from Bellon who saw it go up the hill. (Thomas gives a young dog real problems.)

George Bird Evans Papers

Kay marked the flight up the Early hillside and we followed to the top, where I pronounced, in my most knowledgeable way, that the bird was either out in the old grown-up field or back along the top margin of woods. It was not in the former, so I swung the dogs back to hunt the woods. I don't know for when I heard it clumped the ground flush from a fallen tree with dead leaves and pitch into the valley. It had let us walk within 20 feet of it, where we passed to change collars on the dogs.

We moved nothing further here but discovered the entire head of the valley & the flat on top has been, & is being, cut, making prime cover. It remains to be seen if it will be stripped.

We passed the house on the old homestead — new house & nicely done stone building that used to be a springhouse & such; Kay talked 5 minutes, and in a brief wind, we hunted around the top of the thorn flats that used to be a forest. It is being grazed but is fine cover, with nearly impenetrable cane adjacent — perfect.

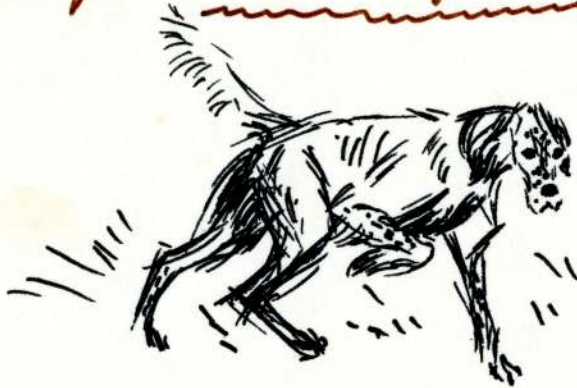
Circling to find the lower edge of top back to head back, we entered a

39/77

thick tangle of grapevines (peculiar variety) thicker than any I
had been there. Along the stone wall border and south of the road that leads
down the back way to Clarence Bishop's, Brian made a fast turn and froze —
and I knew it was real. I lost no time pushing to him the thick stuff but
it did no good. I saw the rush of motion along the ground to the left
and that was all, along with the roar of take-off. Hey, behind, we had
a fair view of the ground ~~that~~ ^{which} had looked up and back over to the opposite
opposite direction and away. I'm carrying my gun these days but the
shoulder prohibits any rapid mount and it is doubtful if I could have shot,
even in King's position. But it is never possible to know exactly the best approach.

We walked the edge with no action, to the main road and to the car.
It is good to have even that much action, and especially good to find a
favorite old carot reconstituted by tumbling into excellent potential.

Mentioning Clarence Bishop to Ruth DeBerry elicited the comment,
"The worst old drunk in the country," — that about a man who gave me
royal sport for more than 20 years! (Left lookjacks by roadside. Went
back on Wed, 16th & found it!)



SUDDEN TURN.

Tuesday 15 November
mild to cool, 55°
partly cloudy,
clear views

Blackwater
Reservoir Hill
o

Breast:
Belted:

50 min. } 2 1/4 hrs
1 hr - 20 min }
Pump Station
mowed 1-1
o

Blackwater is a land of the past, with evidence of roads that are no longer there, spruce trees that are only residual specimens that never grow beyond a given size. It is what consists of what people have not yet done to it, not even the mountains are left intact. Only the Blackwater River retains the vitality that once was everywhere — the river and the weather.

In the last week of October, I suggested that two courts to Gary Schwaiger and Roger Brown. Gary and a companion went into the Reservoir court mowed 4 grass, shot 1; went into Pumping Station and mowed 4 and shot one. Roger & Kim Heller mowed 5 grass the next day on Reservoir Hill. Both pairs of gunners mowed 10 or more 'cork' on the Pump House side — neither having hunted the area before.

Today, with years of memories of both courts back of me, I failed to mow & feather on Reservoir Hill, mowed one grass on the Pump House side — not a single woodcock. The woodcock can be explained but



I can't fathom why I seem unable to find even the few
quizzes that others manage to shoot - and shoot. The mellowness 4/77
of years seems to add nothing to the breaks in shooting and I sometimes
wonder if I am the only quinner who suffers the pangs of gross
hunting.

It was a lovely day to be out in spite of the emptiness of the
shot. Brian was working the scent of the air press in a small valley
between a ^{low} cliff we had just come over and the nice tributary I call
"Number Two". He was pottering on it too long, trying to unravel it
by ground-trailing - all wrong - but with the dearth of game I couldn't
blame him. Belton who was moving beautifully today, if a little wide, came
across in front and inadvertently bumped the bird (I had no view of
the action) from low rhododendron and I marked the green going down the
hollow into rough cover too difficult to go into at this late hour.

That was it, then we covered a lot of area before we reached the
car at the Pump House. As we approached we saw a man there, evidently
just leaving and we decided he'd come to the ruins of the dog pound.

When we drove in to begin hunting, I noticed the row of four or
five boxes and wire runways all in a bad state and I remarked to Ray
that this was the Davis dog pound. I remember hearing about it. Ray said,
"It looks like a hunting dog," and for the first time, I saw a black dog
about half the size of a Labrador retriever come out of one of the filthy
broken-down boxes and move out the gaping end of the runway
where the gate had once been.

It was an old dog, gray on the muzzle with eyes that
showed its years and it moved toward me with that head-lowered,
slow tail wag of uncertainty. I spoke to it but I moved away, never
sure what condition such a dog might be in - contagion, rabies -

(42)

wanting to avoid contact between it and my two in the station wagon. The dog, with keen perception, sensed this and stopped wagging its tail and returned to the box, and I felt awful.

There were racks of beef ribs in varying stages of aging, from fresh to old, lying all about the area in front of the kennels, obviously food someone had brought to the dog. Why it was there, unaccounted for, wasn't clear. I left, keeping my dogs from seeing the bones in the inmate, with that feeling of confusion I always feel when confronted with a sad thing about a dog.

By the time we got back to the station wagon, the man we had glimpsed had disappeared together with his car which he must have had. There were fresh bones - far too many for the small dog to eat - in the pile near the kennel. After I got ~~myself~~ Tom & Belin in the car and put my gun away and we were ready to leave, I went one last time to see the dog. It was lying in the dark hole of the box, its ^{grizzled} head on its paws regarding me with those opaque eyes. It made no move to rise or wag its tail or come out. It had assessed me the first time and accepted my unfriendliness, the way it accepted life, or lack of life; for this was nothing but an unhappy wait for death, with one man who cared enough to come there every day or so and bring bones. We drove away, and I felt sick.

Did not hunt the following day, tho had given that to hunting the Birds, Place and go to pick up footlock I'd left there last Friday. But I looked out our kitchen window and saw a cock grouse standing in our wildflower bed, and after watching that gorgeous bird I couldn't wait to try to shoot one.

Friday 18 November
cloudy, cool. 39°
2 hrs.

Armstrong Bottom

Brian
Belton

43/77

Good thorny cover in old clearing on both sides of road, but only thing moved was a Great Horned Owl that flushed well ahead of the dogs, perched in an oak tree along the road then took off as I approached. I was partly intent on trying a shot at it, but I wonder. One dead predator doesn't solve the problem and is an ugly experience. On way back to Charley Brytes' mailbox where we parked and tried to hunt the good dense cover across the road - followed a noisy hawk, very noisy, with no sign of a bird - we saw a hawk float across the road and land in an open field. Too many predators, too many hunters, no grass. Heard nightingale in shooting around us - deer season most weeks. One more good cover that looks empty.

16
Saturday 19 November
~~cloudy~~ / sunny / 39°
Cool
2 hrs.

Clyde Davis / Edelman

moved 1-1

Rehobeth Thomas

moved 3-3
2 shots - 2 hits

Brian: 2 prod
2 k
2 set

Belton: 1 back
2 k

9
Last day before deer season. Beautiful, drove to Edelman and parked at gate, putting dogs on fence as Clyde Davis where we always find a 'cock'. Today none. Nor were there any in the Magic Corner on the Edelman side, the Brian could hardly believe it. Partway down the hillside and about the second ravine, a grouse flushed from Belton whose bell had gone silent, then moved as the bird came up the hill well out. May saint - I never seen ~~it~~ and marked it with the woods

Well. We followed but, unless a faint sound I heard was a flush, did not locate it. Creeping into the thorns below we came back to the corner on top and up the road to the car and drove to the Rehoboth Thorns.

On our way in, we had seen a red truck parked at the gate and on the way out found it parked at the edge of Clyde Davis' woods on the first flat coming up. ^(Hear some shooting in here) Feeling we had the thorns to ourselves, we treated them as usual but with a let-down feel with no action at all, altho we covered our usual coverage. Both dogs worked well, and using Brian without a bell, feeling it had sparked some grass earlier this year, and he seems to stay in contact much better, as tho he can hear our progress thru cover. He is moving with a fast trot instead of his usual lope, altho he resorts to that occasionally, and it makes a fine pace to hunt behind.

We had one point at the north edge of the thorns on the far side of the farm road — a rabbit that I can't blame Brian for trying, with no little contacts this morn. About this time we began leaning shots back in the ^{South-west} ~~east~~ thorns — loud reports I took to be near deer rifle sightings; but when I came around the woods into the ^{near} ~~near~~ flat and saw a woodcock come in and settle just after a particularly nasty crack I decided it was a heavy load in a 20-gauge fired my way. I had been blowing my whistle to identify our position and with the dog bell on Belton there was no excuse for the man not to know where we were — which I cleared up by calling to him to watch his shooting. Belton moved

This shot and hit today, after nearly four weeks of doubts and frustration, was such an exhilaration and resurrection of my spirits. Kay was then and equally happy and after Brian's nice retrieval of an adult male, she took a 35 mm photo of me and the bird. And I wonder how it would have appeared to a spectator to have seen a grown woman and man ^{the center of a cheering} ~~in~~ celebration of shooting a woodcock.

After this, Kay went on and brought the car along the road while I followed Belter & Brian in the excellent driving (thru cover inside the hedgerow). I realized Brian had not shown for some time and with no bell on him I began searching. After quite a period, Kay called Point! from the car and I found Brian stretched, well up at both ends, at the east end of the hedgerow — lovely name — and just inside the fence from the road. I can't guess how long he had been holding but he moved tentatively and pooped again as I walked in from the opposite side in front. But then he held, and I stopped Belter & made him back, there was no bird and I'm sure it had slipped during the long wait for me — something I'm ^{certain} ~~was~~ happens often. I was about to climb the gate to the road when I turned and

and Brian on point again on the edge of thickets and blackberry bushes. 47/27

I approached with no effort to get Belter in as it from his ranging out ahead, and as I hunted, Brian moved a few steps, then turned almost around and creeping low, went solid again (the point I sketched). I stared at the open ground in front of him, the light fading, and saw the woodcock squatted on the bare black mud, cattle-patched, and within a few inches of a large cow pad. I moved almost to it — and I don't like to see them that clearly looking unalarmed and calm — and at last I took my eyes off it and it flushed, again a straightaway head-high dart that folded the bird and I saw it fall in the center of a dense blackberry stand. This dart gave me some reaction, raising the gun a pointing it with the left arm, but it was well worth pain.

Brian had held at the first shot some 15 minutes earlier; he broke at this one but I stopped him with Hold!, then ordered him on. He had a time locating the fallen cock, which I couldn't see. He circled the bushes, pushed into them several times, head down, only to come out without the bird. Even Belter came in and tried to find it, but not until I forgot my way thru the dense mass of dead stems did Brian find it, dragging a foot or more off the ground. He picked it off the brush and I backed out into the clear and watched him try to fight his way thru with the bird. But he had to back-track and come around to bring it to me in a nice delivery, a yearling hen, half-lit.

This was a redeeming experience - the two shots that came off so successfully if a little stiffly - the grand points. And even the two woodcock are not what has been frustrating me all season, with grouse more scarce than the last two years in spite of stories of almost everyone shooting some grouse, having it happen right with Brian and Belton and Ken and the Dandey and me, only proves that ^{personal} values are what makes happenings regardless of standards others go by.

The shooting had gone on, not only in the area where we'd heard it, but across the road behind the graveyard, yet there was no car in sight. We found it on our way out - parked in the lane to the cable-house in the pines - a light green pick-up truck that we'd seen at John Parker's house on Route 50 on our way down. I had to see others locate woodcock in hay - brush hunters on the pond without dogs. But tonight, nothing could tarnish our pleasure.

W.VA. DEER SEASON

Wednesday 23 November
cold, cloudy, 45°
1 3/4 hr.

The Mullens
moved 1-1

Brian: 1 point.
Belton: 1 back

Deer season in West Virginia, rain Monday & Tuesday keeping us from trying Maryland, and so without a license out-of-state we went to Neil McCullen's and parked and hunted back thru woods (lots of laurel) to five-year-old slashings on the back end and brow of Brown Creek ridge. Not promising, the both dogs worked beautifully in the wonderful damp condition. On far side of an old loading clearing I saw Brian on point and Belton backing him. Brian, not shot, released and pointed but the grouse

while I lifted ~~which~~ was moving toward Brian but fifty yards away, pitching for a ledge of rocks on the far side. That was it, then we covered the slaskings in that area. Had a long walk back in gathering dusk along the pipeline to the Muller's, where they had us stay for supper. Good day again. I carried my gun again but with no chance to shoot.

Thanksgiving Day
Thursday 24 November
damp, cloudy 40°

Hensckels'
mired 6-7 flocks
no gun

Brian: 3 prod.
Belton: 1 prod.

2 hrs $\frac{1}{4}$

A great day to hunt. Went to Pennsylvania again in face of rain forecast. Perfect scenting. Left the gun at home and I carried the 35 mm. camera, the movie. Parked at usual place and was no more startled than they remarked at Brian's remembering the bird he pointed some years ago in the little clearing just inside the road edge. I looked, forcing them tall dead goldenrod, to find Brian on a handsome point and Belton in front and above and backing. I pushed to get close to Brian who let down a shade at my approach, so I moved around on his left and got a double point with Brian in foreground, Belton out in front. Both held and I moved up to try for Belton's stunning point, facing Brian, with left forepaw raised, tail at Orthans angle, but when I got within seven feet of him, he turned ^{his head} away and pointed solidly in the area above him. With no view of his head, I tried to get him to turn but he wouldn't war, and I'm pretty sure he was now on a protractor, no longer backing, all this lasted some time with no bird moving. Finally Belton turned his head clear around to show over his right shoulder, body still profile with paw raised, tail well up and I got a good photo.

Brian, convinced it was over, moved in past us and that took Belton. (50)
Moments later the grouse flushed from where Belton had been looking, a
short flight along the base of the hillside, where in five or ten minutes, Brian
pursued it, holding nicely while Belton, the rotter, refused to
honor and the grouse flushed.

We had this event to ourselves on, of all days, Thanksgiving,
and it was wonderful, with the dogs doing stunning work and, without
a gun, my feeling positively relaxed. I think it is a good thing to
do occasionally, especially if you get into a rut of tension over
shooting. And especially with birds as scarce as this season.

We hunted out the flat to the powerline, then along the edge
and across to the woods behind Scott Henschels shed and corral.
Moving along the path below the powerline and under the ledge of rhododendron,
we heard - as I thought I did - a short burst of sound, no room but of
birds on brush, and Belton made a dash after whatever it was. I am not
counting it a flush but it may have been.

Our certain #2 flushing grouse was on the original side of the
powerline in good thick brush when I hoped to push them to the leading
clearing. Brian was working smart but not stopping on a final point, but
did point 1 day rail and she saw the grouse go out. Belton, meanwhile, was
not responding to command to hold and insisted upon not backing. We
changed his collar for the electronic collar but did not have occasion to
use it as things turned out. We have been working Brian with us well
lately and he has handled beautifully and, I think, has had a better
chance to point what are spooking birds.

51/77

I came out in the morning clearing almost as I expected - always a pleasant surprise - and as covered the cover beyond with Brian, as always, giving the point of cover his usual attention, convinced that birds should be there because they have been in the past.

It was getting late and at about 4:40, we started along the base of the hill trying to find a back path to go up over. Belton was working smart and bumped #3, quail being still too much for a youngster to be sure of. We moved thru the area and a wild flash went up from about the same section, a flash that showed for a moment against the dim day and might have been a shot if I'd had a gun and been very quick.

We found our way to the top, came to the fountain path and had started down over when Belton saw part #5, not aware of it but wheeling rapidly at the flash. Not far below, Brian drew to a point and had #6 nicely, but it went out with not much more than a round. Belton came in on that one without looking as he should have. He needs some regular correction with the collar, but his style is so glorious I hate to do it. But I think I must. A great day, like old times - 6 quail in 7 flushes (possibly 2 for 8) in just

under 2 1/4 hours.
A fine Thanksgiving!



Monday 12 December

Barrate Plains

Prin
Bellan

cold, snow on ground
windy 32°

40 min }
1 hr } Frank Wright
1 1/2 hr } 0

Nothing in either event, the day worked beautifully. Snow on ground made walking the disturbed ground on Barrate plain miserable and we left after a short turn. It was ^{just} about this date last season that we got our one bird for the year in this bottomland. Snow deeper than we had realized and then we hunted a good creek on the Wright place, it became merely trudging along knowing it would not produce.

We climbed a rough high-wall residue to avoid a long creek back but once into it, it was a little clumsy with the rocks loose and nothing to grasp. It wasn't much over 15 or 20 feet high, piled rock, and Ray climbed and held my gun while I got the rest of the way up - gun unloaded - and took it from her, then reached my nylon leash to her and helped her up the last few feet. Not worth the risk. But what I don't like to others this age thing, I'll say not many people 71 years old would handle it the way we did! Now, let's have a little good luck to reward us.

Thursday 15 December

Humborn / Mathews

53/77

cloudy, cool, 40° and less
windy but damp
and good conditions 2½ hrs.

mowed 5-6
1 shot - 0

Brian: 3 prod

Bellon: 1 prod
1 back

This will likely be one of the better days in an appallingly poor
quint season. Snow gone, except in ^{drift} ~~drift~~ locations, and we went to this
favorite covert where, if possible, it is always colder than anywhere else
and the winds cuts, uninhibited across the ten or more miles of space
from Chestnut Ridge. Nursing a residual head cold, I hurried across
the open field from where we parked at the corner woods, with the two
dogs already in cover.

Crossing a neck of blackberry briars - this was a presumption of
what we'd find almost anywhere - I got ahead of Kay, still fighting her
way thru, and saw Brian holding a lovely point far ahead on the
brink of the ledge. Bellon, the rascal, didn't know but moved in and
momentarily held his own production as I fought around to get
in from the lower side. Both dogs reared and took a few steps as
the quail went out fairly good ahead without my seeing or hearing it, but
Kay, who had caught up, saw it pitch and angle down the slope. It
was an auspicious beginning. Brian had the meat in the stiff wind
blowing into his face and handled it nicely.

We started around the hill, still on the brink, and almost
immediately Brian pointed again, once more from the top. This time I
stopped Bellon on command and he backed. Once more I saw no bird
but both dogs feathered and moved a few yards as I flushed, -
around the ridge, judging from their actions. These spent

breaks of a few steps used to aid in determining direction of (54)
flush or Ruff's points and I rather like it. For now, with grouse at
all-time lows, the action of the dog is the only way to estimate the
fact that a grouse was present.

As we moved lower to save ourselves from the bitter wind-chill, we
discovered that this area is growing into a denser blackberry cane
jungle - oddly several years later than is normal. The Humboldt
slashings were cut, according to my notes - in '66-'67. At first it
was grazed lightly, but recently there has been no cattle there. Now the
blackberry cane is denser than ever and nearly impenetrable, ten
years after cutting instead of the usual 3 or 4 years.

We fought our way to a dead end trying to follow #2 - grouse
and turned back, forced to the lower road where we were working
to the south end and hunted up the path - a very narrow road -
that parallels the rhododendron thicket. Partway up, I saw
Brian working scent and then freeze in the dense thicket on the left,
headed toward me. I moved toward him and heard the flush, saw the
grouse flush - left-quadrant rising and got off a shot, hampered by
my left shoulder, still awkward, feeling as I shot that I pulled
too far ahead. I lay said the grouse, which I lost sight of at the
shot seemed to pitch down well out, but as failed to locate any
evidence that I was that, this was hunted well up on.

Crossing the rhododendron run. to the other side of the run we
saw #4 judging by Brian's action - a quick looking up as the grouse
and Miller also indicated scent.
George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

found feathers from a grouse kill, evidently predator just about as 55/77

We were thwarted by the briars from making them the area.
a good point by Brian heard nothing, and as walked down to the
bottom road, hardly perceptible at this far end, and moved up
along the Matthews/Humberson line.

at the place we had cut down them originally, they stopped to
say so, and a grouse flushed not far from the road. It would have been
a shot, I think if I was in a more mobile state as concerns the shoulder.
We followed the top unable to relocate but did reflect what I think
was one of the first birds - very wild, going out immediately after day
or night. That was it. But a pleasure to move that many grouse -
what ones would have seemed from action.

Am working Brian without a bell and am now using the
light bell Gary S. gave us on Belton or the duck collar. Very effective for
Brian

Friday 16 December

Hoye Run
march 2-2

perfect, clear, sunny 53°
damp & ideal conditions 2 1/4 hrs.

Brian: 1 point.

Belton:

Finally tried this covert; parked at Sowler's Camp, no signs of
him. Both dogs worked beautifully. Using no bell on Brian, light bell on
electronic collar on Belton. Hunted to point limit, crossed stream and
ventured down to fields at lower end. No birds. I had left my hunting
boots in garage while loading - stupid - and wore my Wellington
plastic boots, very comfortable.

the bare-stemmed blueberry bushes was heather - lavender (36)
(the stems) - beautiful.

On the way back the valley we followed the dirt road and saw Brian holding a point 150 yards ahead at the base of the hill and in a curve of the road. I don't mind his moving out in open country like this with no birds nearby. As we moved toward him, I saw him occasionally then stop and retreat and before we reached him, saw him break for a short dash as the at flesh and knew he had a bird. When we reached the place, Belton drew for a momentary point in the same place - an old foundation site.

We hunted the road up the steep hillside and cut back then fair woods on top - an empty but hot point by Brian - and after covering the edge of sand slushing on top, Kay saw a grouse flush from the dogs and seem to land in the slushings behind us.

We tried but failed to make it.

that was it. Later on the paved road, as we neared as to Art Sider's location, a young man - Steve West - told us his brother-in-law had moved a group of 5 grouse on the last day of our season, probably the same group as secured in pre-season went here.

Brian: 1 point.

Belton:

Saturday 17 December Upper Dooty

Sunny & clear but 50° drifting
changing to cloudy and
cold at end, with wind (2 3/4 mi.)
moved 2-2
0

Our first revisit since 1970. A new house (Cortley's) where the little Sybolt house stood. Road ended there with plank bridge over branch too shaky to drive over. Belton hunted around end of ridge along Shovelint to "the lower road". Set first, then second

almost too open - very walking - but soon came to blow-downs
or break-downs from the '74 mow, blocking the road entirely from
spot to spot, but making excellent tangles of cover with paperwines.
However, not a bird. Forced at last to climb about "road" to get them,
we worked up the hillside to the "middle road" where was better
walking but soon opened into too - open greenbrier stretch. I
remember this as from cover but also remember certain grouse flushed
then - a number.

We suddenly passed under the far powerline without know it -
Things seemed familiar but also different - and came to the "gap" road -
merely a small ravine drain now. Down to the forks of the stream and
up the far stream valley past the "big woods" spot. No birds,
altho the Rhododendron looked fine for cover. Brian had somehow managed
to find a cow path - got knows how - and rolled in it head-to-tail -
and Kay passed to rub him down with leaves, then took a moment of the
rotter - awful.

We cut up over the shoulder on a trace of log road and down
into "rattlemake hollow" where Kay gave Brian further treatment with
moss and ferns in the small stream, which achieved more results.

By this time, without motivation now (you can feel yourself
enter hope only so long) as were tiring, and we pushed up the old
road toward the head of the run. Finally at the "hedge row" along the
upper field, we sat to eat a bite. The sky had clouded over and a
cold wind had come up, so we didn't tarry along the

(38)

edge of trees, I saw Brown but scent and point from along toward the lower edge. Before I could reach him, he moved in, obviously at a flush, the bird evidently having gone down over the field.

Not far ahead, I saw Belton but scent and work into the hedgerow but not stop, that I could tell, as a point. He took back as though at a flush but he took off on a dark down over the field. I have to count these as two flushes tho they were not seen or heard. I've found this situation several times this season: quail evident only by the action of the dogs — not conclusive for a shot!

On the last leg of the hunt, we flushed two turkeys from the hogback ridge above the Syfolt place. I heard both flushes, saw one turkey take off from a treetop and sail out high over the valley; the second turkey flushed and piped without showing itself.

At the car, talked to a boy, Mark Taylor, grandson of Jack Taylor whose name I've seen on notices. Said his father told him to warn anyone not to hunt anything on their land. O.K. but let's see where your land lies! And I doubt if we have room to return, worse luck. Much of this is too open now for game — except the blowdown cover on fir roots and the hemlock hardwood along the Syfolt place. Found a few scattered grapes where turkeys flushed.

Friday 23 December Wilford Gibson

Brian: 1 prod 59/77

sunny, cool, windy 45° moose 3-3
0

Bellon:

$\frac{1}{2}$ " snow on
ground. $2\frac{1}{4}$ hrs.

After a long siege with nasal cold symptoms, we got a nice day and tried the area where Steve Selnick said he saw 12 quinn in deer season. There is something about deer hunting that turns up quinn — or the impression of them — but they never materialize when we go.

Parked the station wagon at the old stable at far end of the road past Wilford's, a lovely setting among large trees and rhododendron along Mason Run with its crumbled bridge.

Moving upstream on Wilford's land we came to lucky hanters, but today they held no quinn. The wind would have put the birds into the rhododendron it would seem but we saw no tracks in the thin ground cover of snow.

Beyond the old trace of road that crosses from the south side of Mason Run, we hunted up the large wooded slope into excellent quinn cover toward the top, came out on pine plantings that I used to think were on the ~~Chesley~~ Chester Thomas place, and into another good corner of quinn below a trailer on the Glen Beaghtley road and just above a powerline.

Cutting back into ~~the~~ a wind toward the pine stand, we came to small spruces scattered in briars — good low cover for birds — and I saw Brian hit scent and begin working fresh quinn tracks. There appeared to be tracks of these birds — difficult to determine which direction they had moved, for they circled about, and we walked up to the top, then back down to the old road that eventually goes down to Mason.

In a stand of low head-high spruce, Brian walked more tracks and frogs, but they heard the quinn ~~back and forth~~ — never showing — blue

us. Unable to mark more than the one bird, we hunted out the traverser segment of the road to the foundation trace of the old hillside farm, now planted to mostly large pines too tall and dense to be good hunting but evidently used by grouse increasingly in our area.

Turning back after a dead-end at an impoundment next to tall timber — having eaten a lot of lunch standing in the small spruce trees for protection from wind, where we found a rabbit skin and head in various places among in the spruce, we hunted down the old road and heard two grouse flush from what seemed the tops of the dense pines.

That was it. We crossed Mann Run on a stone-pile culvert a crossing and down to the car then from across timber, walking gingerly across the remaining timbers. Disappointing, but a good feeling to get out again.

Christmas Eve 24 December
cloudy, cool ~~45~~ 49°

Humberson

Belted: 1 kill
Brian: 1 prod.
1 kill o.p.
1 net
Brian: 3 prod.
Belted: 1 back

$\frac{1}{2}$ hr }
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ hr } 2 hrs.
adult hen: inter
well filled with
crop: red-bellied, sharp wing

moved 1 (not new) - 1
1 shot - 1 to (o. point)
Court #1: moved 2-4

Snow all gone, weather warmer, but when we parked at the woods corner at Humberson place it was, as always, windy and about 5° colder than at home. What a pleasure to find your favorite court all your own on Saturday, Christmas Eve.

This was the day that had to eventually come to us. But getting your Christmas dinner only slightly over 24 hours before you eat it is cutting things pretty close. We sent the dog on one to the car and followed across the field on top, curiously lumpy looking.



ONE IN THE OPEN.
OUR CHRISTMAS GROUSE.

Both dogs sought the brinks (no birds, as last time) and were down over by the time we got to them. Moving toward Brian, who was working the area where the final flush last time had gone out far ahead of me, he pointed in the exact depression - a wet seep, looking beautifully as I approached. Belton on the left side backed for a moment, then decided not to lower and moved off. Rather than risk a flush by calling to him, I let him go. Brian moved in a few steps and once more went solid, and I knew it was a bird.

Kay had been coming in from behind and I hoped Owsenit blocking her view for a moment. Stepping to Brian's side, I waited, trying not to tighten up the bad shoulder in anticipation. The grouse had been tight in the open basin but it materialized and flushed away - low, coming up slightly to clear the other bank, where I fired going up them and saw it fold and fall out of a circle of feathers that spread and thinned out in the breeze. Brian looks at shot - I couldn't blame him - but I called dead line as much to tell Kay as Brian. Phew! Feeling when I was out



had begun to think it never would.

Icy exclaimed when she heard my call, and came to get pictures of the retriever — a long-drawn-out process enjoyed by all.

Bolton came in and was roundly assaulted by Brian with no real injury. The grouse was an adult hen — membranes on both #9 primaries, both #9 & #10 rounded. Kay got a series of still shots of Brian & retriever.

What happens I say & I and the dogs have known as this dashed bullbird in ten years.

Unwilling to try for another bird in here today, we left and drove to Court #1, talking to Arthur Teets who was cordial as always. This area had not been disturbed this year. Parked at the "church" and hunted up slope above the road with a wild flock from above — I say reporting a large grouse that went over the tree tops toward the east end of court.

Following, I saw Brian on a grand point where I say had estimated the bird had gone — high at both ends but in one hellish tangle of briars and vines. As I fought to get below and around, Bolton came in and backed, started to break but Kay stopped him with hold. The grouse, a big one, as Kay had described, didn't let me get anywhere near and

flew out the far end of the covert to God-knows-where.

We circled around to the north edge - Brian covering the area well below on the east. The cover on top is too dense to even fight them, and I let the dogs go in while we stayed on the edge. Brian now had another grand point in the thick tangle just inside and I could only try the futile thing - to push toward him. The grouse went out the far side of the tangle and I had a glimpse as it topped and headed west, where I guessed it as in the greenbrier belt along the far corner or somewhere on the slope bordering the paved road.

We covered the greenbriers thoroughly - the dogs inside, we on the pether and the edges. Our attempt to work the heavy cover back the ridge ~~failed~~ failed, and we circled again, this time going down toward the highway. I saw Brian working scent in a tangle just above the road, then go solid. Before I reached him, I saw him flinch and knew the grouse had gone, probably down over the open field.

Ray walked along the road as I worked the dogs up the slope, and as I considered the possibility of a wild flush and shot, I realized that I no longer want to kill a grouse in that manner.

Here, on Christmas Eve, four days before I turn 71, this revelation came to me as something that has been growing, partly because of the drastic scarcity of grouse, but as much because of my growing reluctance to kill them, except as the magnificent ritual of a shot

over a grand point. I have found 'cock shooting' so enriched (64)
in this way, and it is almost with a sense of relief that I
face this rather than cling to a pattern that always seemed
all right. With lots of grouse, such as I never had, it always
seemed something I would like to do. Curiously, I realize I
can ^{now} accept a kill much more comfortably if I pass the flashes
that aren't pointed, few as such shots over points will be.

I may someday consider this simpleness, but I think
not. And it will enhance the dog's behavior that much more.
And so on Christmas Eve, 1977, with the glory of a clean kill
over a point under my belt, I have turned a corner, or perhaps
more properly, have reached a new level of gunning grouse.

At the camp, we decided to drive to the head of the Carters Road
and explore the shrubland area from the road. To our delight we found
hundreds of acres of regrowth cover in perfect stage below and along the
striping road. One big cock quail ran across the road as we entered,
another flushed wild at the far end where we turned near the impoundment
we call this tentatively, the Wilderness, and it may be a discovery to
treasure.

Thursday 29 December Wilderness

Brian

65/77

Snow on ground but
less litter, cloudy 25° Conaway Glade

Belton

2 1/4 hrs.

We had to try the new area, the Wilderness, as found last week.
But we found nothing on a fairly good circle of 1/2 hour then excellent cover
along the log roads (and strip test road). Neither did we find any
tracks there, or along the strip road out to the impoundment, other than
our set of car tracks in and out and passed a pickup truck on the
way out that appeared to have workers in it, not hunters. This area is
processing in stages of cover and extent, and we will come back to try
it without snow, or in softer snow. Foraging is bad on rutted
log roads. But the two birds we saw last week up here along the road
are a good sign.

We moved to the head of the Conaway Glade for the ~~test~~ larger
period. Saw car tracks going into new access to strip got on the old
Conaway fields and heard shots that were probably at rabbits. There is almost
no place you can go anywhere without evidence of hunters.
We flushed a rumpheer I heard - "cack-up" - and later saw
running tracks ahead of the dogs. Also our set of ground tracks. But this cover
is hideous to get them - olders, brains, frozen stream that breaks
under you, and it would be nearly impossible to get a shot. Heard a
flood of shots on the Glade Farm road that had to be at Chays.
Belton did have one point that I that would have a bird, but none
materialized. Probably the pleasant runner. Both dogs hunted well
and, as Kay said, "Being out in the weather makes the lungs".

Friday 30 December

Meade Dennis
0

Brian: 1 prod.

warmer, partly sunny 35°

2 hrs.

Frank Wright

Beltin

meat 1 - 2

1 shot - 0

Finally tried the Meade Dennis slashings that Carlos Rogers reported as having lots of game. (Carlos is to be discounted.) This cover is so thick you can scarcely bore into it to get started, and, once inside, nearly impossible to find briars in all the "paths". We found nothing but rabbit tracks and squirrel tracks, and we forced almost to get 26 by following the only possible "path". Came out behind house opposite Carlos Vis' old place, and worked back into the larger woods on the north edge — better morning here. The cover is just bedding cover in both the slashings and the large quaking aspen woods but no birds.

Came out in the woods on F. Wright place where Blues, I think, had pointed a brace, one of which I shot in those good days. Today, nothing, but on the thicker patch above, I lay left me to get the car and I hauled out the piece. Near the edge above the field back of Wright house, Brian began making game on tracks, cooing and finally stopping on point in dense briars and greenbrier corner. I couldn't get around and stood as the game flushed out the far side. I had a short view of it then over, looking, and then a fast shot and missed.



OUT OF THE SNOW

I followed what I considered the flight and circled well back into the large woods bordering this corner, and down we toward the bottom, but not until I had given up and was crossing the fence to cross the field to meet Ray at the Wright house, did I find it - Brian was elsewhere, hunting, and Bolton passed me and nearly stepped on the grass in the fence-line at the edge of the cover. The grass climbed and leveled in the open toward the head of Hog Run. I'm certain it was the bird, judging from the fresh tracks into the fence-line - it had cut out over the field after my shot and pitched to the ~~the~~ bottom.

Following, I got separated from Ray at the ~~the~~ car, and when we got together it was late. My high-pitched Grouse whistle had not carried to her, tho I could see her and hear her longer whistle clearly. We had a bite of food, then moved the car down from the Wright house to the flat corner covert - with my Dandy lying on the hood! ^{shadily} ~~shadily~~ of Nash B. No harm done. Nothing in the flat covert but lots of foot prints. That year otherwise foot prints in the earlier part of the covert. Too many people.

Saturday 31 December Humberson / Mathews
Sunny, warmer 40° made 8 6 new - 11
3 hrs. 0

Brain: 1 prod.

Beltan

New Year's Eve hunt. Snow going in lower elevations but still covering most surfaces up here, tho the lack of wind was pleasant. Parked at Essentronts and crossed top fields & thicket - longer distance than is remembered - toward Mathews backcountry. On the way met a nice looking man - Charles Friend with his boy hunting rabbits with a black-and-tan-leagles, who reported seeing a grouse move out well ahead of us & the dogs from the row of pines (probably from a pine tree). He had hunted the back Essentront corner, moving 2 grouse & seeing tracks. If all hunters were as appealing as this one, it would be nothing but pleasant.

We moved into the far slope of Mathews - good cover for such a day but not seen a track. Returned to top of ridge and hunted where the dense briars allowed, finally moving a big grouse from a "lap" on the far end of the ridge, a bird that neither dog found, altho I would have expected them to. It flashed from me and I don't think the dogs knew it went out.

Following the flight toward the north slope on the side of the
trailer, the dogs found and moved a grouse that, while in line of 19/77
flight, seemed too close to have been #1. Either a lock could have been
on a point but it was too thick to see them.

Unable to make it, we found a resemblance of a log road mostly
clipped with blackberry briars that seem to be everywhere this year,
and hunted along the ridge toward the east. I saw a grouse sail down
from above, followed by Bella who may have moved it, and I watched
the bird sail far down into the cover at the bottom, marking it by a
group of bare white trees that proved to be across the little run at the
bottom and near the upper crossing.

Following this, I saw both Bella & Brian on the far side and they
& I pushed them the dense blow-down at the crossing. Brian had moved
up the old log road and disappeared behind a rhododendron, then shortly
after, I heard a flash, followed by another and another until they & I
had counted at least five, two or three of which went up and perched in
trees watching the dogs. They had been in another large rhododendron,
almost where the #3 grouse had gone from the other side — another example
of a bird taking you to others (strange).

The dogs were pretty shaken up by all the action and we got them to
us and quieted, while I ate a bit of lunch. Brian had come from the
rhododendron after the multiple flash and Kay felt he was pointing
the group. After eating, we moved up the road to hunt the Humberson side
of the fence when I felt at least 2 or 3 had gone. At the bars, I saw
Brian make gun, almost freeze, and heard a small out of the birds flash —
George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

from closer than I would have expected. Later, I saw a flock (70) from the area - overhead & high - and I saw Belton camp a third gun, obviously young and one of the group.

It was getting late and after we failed to make either of the two I'd that went north up the old road, I was faced with the decision of whether to go down into the rhododendron thicket in the draw below, or to cut back across Humberston in the hope of making one of the birds as found on ~~the~~ our first visit.

Meanwhile, I was getting tight about the lack of dog work complicated by Travis & Belton's ignoring my whistle signals, due to their excitement but reacting to me in my state of mind. I think that limiting all shots to points may add stress to such a situation, although there had been no opportunities for shots of any kind had I cared to try.

Finally, chose the Humberston cover - no birds here today - and to the rhododendron, crossing near the upper road and the car. A good dog's action - best to date this year - and encouraging. Estimate conservatively that six of them were birds we had not heard before.

Wednesday 4 January

Sunny, snow on ground

35°

1 1/2 hr.

Little Sandy North

moved 1 - 1

0

Brian

Belton

21/77

Parked at bridge and hunted upstream, seeing tracks of two grouse (separate). Brian was gone for a long period in spite of whistling, (suggested a possible point). We climbed the ridge on a bulldozed road that was several years old but new to me since last hunt in here. Both dogs were fragrant partway up the hill and as Brian worked scent, Belton moved on about and apparently put up a grouse (can't say by distinct point, either) that Kay saw come down over her. I ~~must~~ ^{had no} ~~and~~ ^{even} saw of it. Followed the road to top of hill and corner of top field (Sheffers) and out spallbank of stumpfield (good cover but ~~no~~ tracks) to big powerline. This is good cover still but no birds.

I had been experiencing head symptoms from climbing - could be aftermath of sinus congestion of past month - but feeling I should have it checked, returned to car and drove to Bruceton Clinic, where Dr. H. found my pressure quite within normal bounds: 158/90 at first; 140/80 ten minutes later. Can't argue with that.

Thursday 5 January

cloudy

35°

snow on ground

1 1/2

1/2

} 2 hrs.

Donald Weyers

moved 2 (1 new) - 2

0

Lower Hog Run

moved 1 - 2

Brian: 2 prod

Belton:

With too much snow still with us to try some of the better events we want to hunt, we went back to a good one we could reach easily - Donald Moyer's Thorns, to find the "sip or swim" that Carlos Moyer dreamed about.

Ray let me and Brian out to hunt the first stretch of road while she drove Belton after us to the usual parking place. Good cover but no birds. Joining, we hunted the face of slope above Lake Noel and gave up because of wind (almost none at home), climbing the hill to the top flat where I found fresh grouse tracks moving east thru the thorns. Snow is deep here, covering any ground plants and there are no laws on the thorns, so why the birds here?

The dogs struck the trail ahead of us and, from their actions, bumped the grouse wild and toward the north. Following, we came on tracks at the far thicket at the head of the draw - good cover and flushing here but I estimate it as another grouse: tracks were walking leisurely and there were a couple of fresh droppings (brown and soft).

Brian pointed in a tangle but it proved empty - not even tracks. Moments later, he was on point again, intense and solid, headed into tangled cover at the top of the draw. I hurried toward the far side of him but I saw him flinch and stare toward the west and knew the grouse had gone.

Both of these birds were counted as definite birds from educated guesses, reliable enough when you know your dogs well enough to be guided by their reflexes, coupled with the evidence of tracks. The second set of tracks had to be a second grouse - #1 had not had time to sample that casually at first, passing to emit droppings.

in the period we spent moving toward it. We did, however, fail to locate #1 in a big circle at the end of the hill along the new strip operations before we followed the flight of #2 as I estimated it. 73/77

I must have been wrong on that one, for we covered the faces along Lake Noël all the way to the road, and I think I may have pecked for the bottom thence down over the lake, a long flight but what else? At the car we decided it was too soon to stop with no place to hunt here (the bottom flat is impassable from the blow-downs of 174), so we drove to the lower Hog Run corner, a good last hope chance. Garland, in his slow way, has transformed the hill above with the large coal-washing operation, but other than mine-acid drainage, has done nothing to hurt the actual low cover.

Brian acted as if he found the place familiar, and he and Belton hunted hard. At the opening to the lower field at the far end, Brian was working smart with no result until a grouse flushed from a tree and went south. We took the lower edge in the field until we reached the end, then pushed into the thicket and came to the deep draw in the woods where I shot a grouse one season. Then I saw Brian on a nice point on the far bank - a good high style. I was aware first of Kay's call Grouse! and the sound of the flush but no sight of the bird until it



levelled out over the thicket ahead and to the right of Brian.

Ray had seen it climb vertically from the bottom of the ravine to the left of both Brian and me - a big red grouse.

We struggled for a while longer in this tangle of thorns and crabapple trees, interwoven like a basket, until we had to backtrack and come out to the road and the car.

On the way, Belton swung into a rise point into cover on the right edge of the path but nothing materialized. It was a pity that at ~~least~~ ^{least} one of these chances should not be a grouse. Belton deserves it, and so do we. I would like to see some of the "lots of grouse" I hear about from empty-headed types. If they were here, Brian & Belton would find them. It began to snow when we reached the car, and we returned via Route 48. Good to be out, but such sparse sport.

Saturday 2 January
cold, soft snow 35°
3 1/4 hrs

Humberson / Mathews
near 3 (no new) - 3
0

Prin: 1 post.
Belton: 1 back

Last day as hunted (season ran to Feb 28)

This looked like a moderately mild day at home, quiet, near 40°. But parking at the woods corner, as we were hit in the face by a stiff cold wind the moment we stepped out of the station wagon. Count on this place to be cold. Changing into warmer gear, we worked down the old road before cutting into the Humberson covert. Saw fresh grouse tracks on the road and into the triangle woods but we headed on.

In the good cover where I shot the X^{est} grouse, Brian found fresh grouse tracks and began working them thru the brush and down the slope. Snow hunting is unsatisfactory for dog work in this respect. I can't break him of trailing tracks and since he often finds grouse in this manner, I'm almost decided to accept it as a workable technique. There proved empty, and I got the dogs moving toward the upper brack cover where I found other fresh tracks headed up. Again they led to nothing and we took the broad of the hill to the far end and hunted down along the rhododendron run toward the boundary road and the area where last time - one week ago - Brian found the group of four.

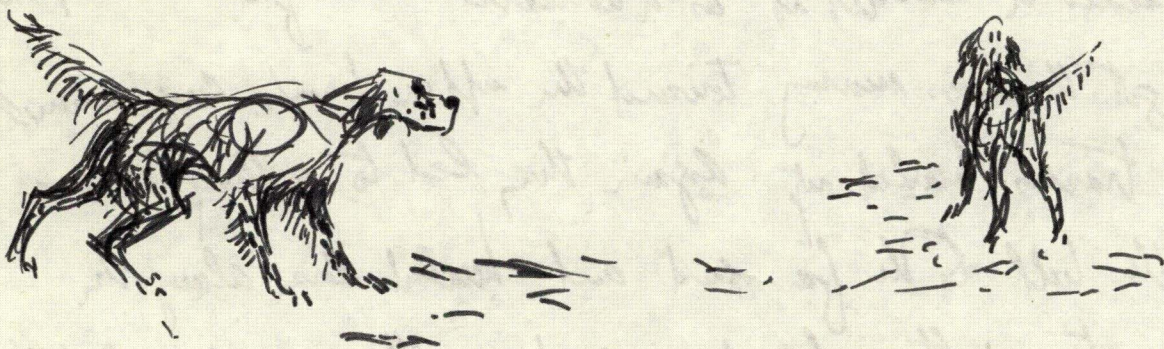
There were odd sets of tracks today - not grouped - but older than the ones at the top. Working down into the rhododendron on Bart M. we flushed one grouse (Belton undoubtedly found it) from the rhododendron and

76
77
into a tree - a young bird and one of the group last week -
when it perched and finally flushed to the far side of the run into the
dense slashings and briars there.

We followed and tried unsuccessfully to find it, then circled
back to the Rhododendron run (terribly thick thorns) and crossed at
the fence line. Moving up the boundary road to the dog road that
branches left, we took it down into the cover and followed it in a circle
around toward the left. Neither dog had gone on my left, and a
quail flushed from my presence and headed up toward ^{the} Humberson place.

Following, we came to young Belton getting birds, then saw him
point stylishly but no bird was there. He is so hot.

Moments later, I saw him point again on my left, and
following the line of his stare, I saw Brian at a glorious point
where he had been holding ahead of us.



I tried to work this one correctly, moving toward the left side
to get around, but these quail aren't holding that long, and the bird
flushed up the ridge like the last one.

We tried to locate both in the Humberson slashings but failed - They

must have cut into the heavy rhododendron - good thinking.

at the top of the boundary road, we walked down into the Bert M. cave and across the head of the ravine, along the old path where our "lost-day". I had a wonderful experience that at the time nearly destroyed me. Nowadays, these memories in these places are one of the rich aspects of going out; the shooting is reduced to almost nothing.

We swung back and covered the greenbrier knob on top - and I must remember that such work is usually tedious considering the effort. Finally, after top field we walked east, remembering the ground that fenced the length of it in the open, crossing me in perfect range and refusing to acknowledge my both barrels. There were grouse here then. Then the woods to the edge we came to the woods road we had followed with Bliss, Deser, & Shadens for a triple point against the setting sun and a shot and hit as a wonderful day is not equal.

Out the Humberson piece to the road with an East-wind and wind chill that froze your bones. at least, it was something as a Sat. in good weather to have such a count to ourselves. We heard distant shots that were probably rabbit hunters, but we had solitude.

Summary

I have, of late, omitted my summary in some notes because of simple lack of birds and action. But recently, while going back over my gun diary for the entire West Virginia shoot - 1939 to date - I found that those summaries were valuable for their impression from a distant viewpoint.

16 This year certainly had nothing to commend it above all the other poor grouse seasons - the worst to date. My outline showing the relation between length of season to level of grouse is graphic - out curves going up, the bird curves going down to an all-time low of 1.3 grouse per covert in our local great coverts, still with some cover of excellent quality. The stock reply from the W.Va. DNR that the problem is entirely grouse-out cover is curiously reflective upon their attitude - watch it grow out and do nothing. Cover and increased gun pressure both from increased numbers of gunners and longer seasons is obviously reason enough for the disappearance of the birds. Having so few grouse in 30 coverts with exactly 3 shots says enough for the quality of shooting in W. Va.

Fortunately, woodsack gun action to make a poor substitute for grouse shooting and I do have 'luck shooting our good dog work - and I have that. But my fall on October 25 (the peak of the 'lock season) did about wipe out my shot for the year. We got out with the dogs for some good days, and some good pictures, but this I managed to fire the only 3 shells I fired at grouse after that accident, the

shoulder did make gun mounting difficult, not to mention '77/79
gun-carrying. That I hit one of those trees, and two other shots at
woodcock says something for built-in instinct.

Our ~~the~~ magnificent brace of bellows (are more comparable
to the Polin/Doug brace!) gave us great pleasure. Brian at near mine
hunted like a youngster and is a dream. The only difference I can see
over the years is that he now falls into a trot - excellent for close work -
was then formally but still loses somewhat much of the time. There are
days when I think his points are not as high, but then a great one will
come along to put me straight. Thanks to, he is so well and healthy.

Young Belton is a gem. Without nearly enough birds, especially
geese, to do him justice, he hunts brilliantly, and I sometimes
wonder if sparse contacts with birds doesn't somehow make them all
the keener and better hunters. Belton's range is wider this year, logical
with the need to reach for game, but his control is phenomenal, responding
to the whistle like an angel. I do work Belton & Brian with the shock collar,
and use it occasionally if they get too far out of range, but that is not
often. One interesting thing came out this year: to my shock, I
saw that with my first shot fired at 'cock Belton seemed uneasy and
came to me, or sat where he was. Paying no attention to him, I watched
and saw that he immediately went on hunting as grandly as before. He
has not shown this on the previous, or any other last season, and is not timid
in any sense. It produced an effect that I cannot argue with. He is

naturally

as steady to shoot, and almost always to wing, as if I had (80)
drilled him on that. So it may be something to be glad for. He is
certainly not gun-timed. And his steadiness is undoubtedly partly
due to watching Brian's example.

Both are great dogs, both range and cover ground beautifully and
independently of each other. Belton is swift and smooth, loping gracefully,
leaping fences like his sire, and has that glorious quality of seeming to
despatch a road — he hunts the miles, casting across from one ridge to the
other. He rarely needs it, but he takes hard squalls like a forested dog.

He has not had any rheum's except previous last year, for the reason
that Brian won't tolerate it, was assaulting poor Belton if he comes
near a bird. And along with all the other goodness, Belton points with
wheels of style — high at head and tail. Sang many a last!

all we need are grouse, and somehow, somewhere we're sorry to
find none. These are times when, at 71, I have to face the chance that
I don't find grouse, as some imply they do, because I'm growing too old to
wear out. I don't, and can't, hunt for long periods, but when I hunt, I'm
then moving them the cover as I always did, behind two of the best seven dogs.
I'll not complain, if only there will be grouse.

This year, I resolved, after shooting my one grouse, to shoot only one
point as I do on other grouse. I once felt I would do that if ever I could
find enough grouse; ironically, I can find that I need to

limit my shots on grouse to birds on points because grouse are ^{77/81}
so few, and it no longer seems right to shoot one in another way.

Oddly, other men appear to be getting some shooting. The 3 shots I
took were all over prints. It remains to be seen if I can hold myself to
this limitation with chances already so drastically thin. But I find
it does something to ease a sense of guilt about killing a grouse at
all. Ray's movies and 35 mm photos are more and more important to
our report. Here's hoping for something good next season.

The weekend flight seemed not organized this year and I suspect it
didn't too often happen. But there was enough ice for good shot,
if only I hadn't pulled that stupid fall, putting me out of action
for about 4 weeks.

—: no gun

1977 WEEKLY LOG

DAYS	HOURS	GROUND-FLUSHES	SHOTS-HITS	BRIAR PROD. BACK. KILLS. RET	BELTON PROD. BACK. KILLS. RET	WOOD ROCK BIRDS-FLUSHES	SHOTS-HITS
5	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	3 - 3	0	21 1 7 7	1/7.15.7 -	33-44	16-7
7	2 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	30 - 6	0	1	6.4.2 -	19-25	5-2
2	1 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 - 2		7.2.2.2	1/13.1.19.9	52-69	21.9
9	8 18	8 - 11		1/28.3.9.9			then 10/29
3	2 5	2 - 2	0 no gun	4	1.2	6-6	no gun
12	10 23	10.13	0	1/32.3.9.9	1/14.121 9	58.75	21.9
3	3 - 7	4 - 6	0	2	0.1.	58-75	21.9
15	13 30	14 - 19	0	3/32.3.9.9	1/14.2/21.9		then 11/5
3	3 6 $\frac{1}{4}$	2 - 2	0	2 2.2	1.2	3-3	then 11/12
18	16 - 36 $\frac{1}{4}$	16 - 21	0	3/34.3.11.11	1/14.2/22.11	61-78	2-2
							23-11
							then 11/19

— TO DEER SEASON —

2	2 - 4	7 - 8	0	4	1 - 1
20	18 - 40 $\frac{1}{4}$	23 - 29	0	7	2 - 3
5	4 - 8 $\frac{3}{4}$	9 - 10	1 - 0	5	1 - 1
25	22 - 49	32 - 39	1 - 0	12	3 - 4
3	2 - 4 $\frac{1}{4}$	6 - 8	1 - ①	5 - ① - 1	- 1 - 1 -
28	24 - 53 $\frac{1}{4}$	38 - 47	2 - ①	17 - ① - ① - 1	3 - 5 - 1
42	3 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	7 - 13	1 - 0	2	
30	27 - 60 $\frac{1}{2}$	45 - 60	3 - ①	19.0.①.1	3.5.1
2	3 - 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	3 - 8	0	3	0.1
32	30 - 67 $\frac{1}{4}$ (2.24) per day	48 - 68	3 - ①	21.0.①.1	3.6.1.0
	(correction) 47 - 66 (.95 per hr)				

George Bird Evans Papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center

DATA 1977

GEORGE 30 DAYS - 67 $\frac{1}{4}$ hrs (2.24 hr day) 32 COVERTS 1.47 BIRD/COVERT
KAY "

47 GROUSE / 66 FLUSHES (.98 hr hr.)

(23/29 to DEC. 24/37 AFTER)

3 SHOTS / 1 HIT (O.P.) = 33%

30 W.VA. 40/58 1.33 B/C

19 LOCAL 33/48 1.74 B/C

11 BIG MT. 7/10 .64 B/C

2 PA. 7/8 3.5 D/C

61 'COCK / 78 FLUSHES

23 SHOTS / 11 HITS 48%

BRIAR 8 YRS. 9 MO. (9TH SEASON)

30 DAYS

GROUSE 21 PROD.
1 KILL O.P.
1 RET.

'COCK 34 PROD. 3 BACK
11 KILLS O.P.
11 RET.

LIFETIME '69-'77

483 DAYS

GROUSE 474 PROD.
88 KILLS (38 O.P.)
68 RET.

BELTON 1 YR. 5 MO. (2ND SEASON)

30 DAYS

GROUSE 3 PROD. 6 BACKS
1 KILL

'COCK 14 PROD. 22 BACKS
11 KILLS

LIFETIME '76-'77

58 DAYS

GROUSE 4 PROD. 11 BACKS
2 KILLS

'COCK 15 PROD. 17 KILLS

1977

1 after deer season

BIG MOUNTAINS

big mts. 11 coveys

7 mwd / 10 flocks.

.64 b/c

GATES 018 · 13 · 15 · 3 / 019 · 1 · 1 · 0 · 4 · 4 · 1RESERVOIR HILL N15 · 0PUMP STATION N15 · 1 · 1 · 0CLYDE DAVIS HIGH ORCHARD 020 · 6 · 7 · 2REHOBETH 020 · 3 · 4 · 0 / 024 · 8 · 9 · 2 / N1 · 1 · 1 · NG / N19 · 3 · 3 · 2GRASSY RIDGE 021 · 1 · 1 · 0 · 6 · 13 · 1 / 025 · 4 (3) · 6 · 0 · 10 · 15 · 0KITZ MILLER 021 · 2 · 4 · 0LACEY THORNS 024 · 1 · 1 · 0EDELMAN N1 · 2 · 2 · NG / N19 · 1 · 1 · 0 · 0CLYDE DAVIS N1 · 3 · 3 · NG / N19 · 0BAYARD ROAD N9 · 6 · 6 · 0~~BARRATT / D12 · 0~~~~F. WRIGHT / D12 · 0~~~~HUMBERSON / MATHEWS / DEC 15 · 5 · 6 · 0 / DEC 24 · 1 · 1 · 1~~~~HOYE RUN / D16 · 12 · 2 · 0~~ OVER~~UPPER DORITY / D17 · 2 · 2 · 0~~~~MILFORD GIBSON / D23 · 3 · 3 · 0~~~~COVERT #1 / D24 · 2 · 4 · 0~~PENNSYLVANIAMcMULLEN N23 · 1 · 1 · 0HENCKEL N24 · 6 · 7 · NG

2 coveys

7 mwd / 8 flocks.

3.5 b/c

COVERTS 1977

NG: no gun

LOCAL

{ FT. MORRIS THORNS
DONALD MOYERS 015 · 1 · 1 · 0 / 15 · 2① · 2 · 0 2

CHERRY RUN 015 · 1 · 1 · 0 W.C.

GRAVEYARD GLADE 029 · 2 · 2 · NG 2

BIRCH HILL 031 · 2 · 2 · NG 2

HOMER MILLER N8 · 1 · 1 · NG 1

BISHOP PLACE N11 · 3 · 5 · 0 3

ARMSTRONG BOTTOM N18 · 0

WILDERNESS

port deer stream

BARRATI / D12 · 0

F. WRIGHT / D12 · 0 / D30 · 1 · 2 · 0 1

→ HUMBERSON / MATHEWS / D15 · 5 · 6 · 0 / D24 · 1 · 1 · 1 / D31 · 8⑥ · 11 · 0 / 17 · 3 · 3 · 0 11 10

HOYE RUN / D16 · 2 · 2 · 0 2

UPPER DORITY / D17 · 2 · 2 · 0 2

MILFORD GIBSON / D23 · 3 · 3 · 0 3

→ COVERT #1 / D24 · 2 · 4 · 0 2

WILDERNESS / D29 · 0

CONAWAY GLADE / D29 · 0

MACK DENNIS / D30 · 0

LITTLE SANDY / N14 · 1 · 1 · 0 1

LOWER HOG RUN / 15 · 1 · 2 · 0 1

overall W.Va. 30 coverts
40 moved - 58 flushes 1.33 b/c

for stream W.Va + Pa. = 32 coverts
47 moved - 66 flushes
1.47 b/c