

Shooting 1978

1/78

Tuesday 10 October
Partly cloudy, 65°
Cool to hot
1:30 - 6:00 = 4½ hrs.

#1 Beckett (Valley Road) Belton:
moved 5-5
0
moved 1-1
0

First day in the Berkshires, and I had to hunt without Ray and Brian. Brian's lymph glands are still greatly enlarged - just weeks of it - and his temp. is up and down. Leaving him with Ray at the cabin we've rented on ~~Beckett~~^{Center} Pond was one of the hardest things I've had to do.

John Spangler took me to a ground covert - old fields growing up to white pines, hawthorns, viburnums (like wild raisin) and many many wild apples - the latter reputed to practically produce quince out of the air but today none produced.

We flushed a single woodcock wild - no flush, no dog work. ~~the~~ Belton acted very fragrant at another spot where I thought I might have glimpsed a cock in air.

I almost burned up with heat as the day warmed and changed from jersey to shirt, losing my Roy Gonia whistle in the process. The heat fatigued me and I let John and Purden take a circle about and eventually secured them on their down wing and I hunted on into large timber. The autumn color is at a glorious peak but there was not good ground cover. I turned back and hunted the next hour down, seeing and hearing a grouse flush well ahead of Belton & me. We planned to eat delicious chicken, sitting on a typical New England stone fence under golden leaves and surrounded by aspen and white birch.

Rejoining John, we hunted back to the original end of ^{2/28}
the covert and back up the hill where, sitting to rest (both of us and
both dogs were getting pretty bushed), we heard a volley of faint
shots our direction from the nearby road and John saw a quail
sail across above us, untouched.

We hunted after it, unsuccessfully, then moving back
along the original level of the cover and John walked into a
grove and fired, missing with a fast shot. Again we failed to
relocate although both dogs hunted well. It is very dense cover
and leaves are still almost intact on larger trees and shrubs.

Later John again walked into a grove, on coming back overhead
my way but with too little view to fire, and a third flushed from
John in a low away shot that he tried for both barrels. Again no
relocation. That was it altho we hunted all the back back at a
new level. Good cover and at that six quails seen, five that
we missed. Why ^{is} it, that I am never when A. Russell Ripley always
was: with at least two, and sometimes three, partridges in
clear flesh against a blue sky? Other than my concern
for Brian, and nursing Kay, this was a good day, but am I
soft!

Getting accustomed to the "Bronx Edwardian" decor at the
Center Pond cabin. Less cold last night and quite comfortable. Hope
today brings some joy.

Wednesday 11 October

Moran Wildlife Area

Balton:

3/28

Cloudy, mild 65°

moved 2-2
0

2-5/3 hrs } 3 1/2 hrs.
1/2 hr

Magnificent color everywhere. Brain temp normal but lymph glands still extremely large. Kay again stayed with him but took him to Stockbridge with Bunny & Rita, giving him his medication on return. Temp. again normal 101.8.

John drove me to this public hunting area east of Pittsfield - a 1,400 acre tract that looks like our Blackwater terrain - tundra with spruce and shrubs. There are a vivid red, transparent, juicy berry about 3/8" dia. in clusters on a vine-like shrub that looks like a viburnum, and a head-high shrub with black shiny berries like chokeberry. And low on grapevines loaded with grapes. And the low-present apple trees hanging with fruit. If quail were found where there are apples, there would be thousands. We that we heard 2 farkers - a rather John did. An example of 2 men "moving" more quail than me.

Worse than the lack of quail & cock, is the tangled cover you get involved in trying to hunt out good cover. This is worse than Michigan swamps or any Canadian Valley spirea I've seen - spirea, blackberry briars, ^{alders} fallen and bent over small trees and shrubs and absolutely no deer paths, let alone cattle. I got into one of these at the far end and again at the last half hour turn on the way home. The only way to describe it is with profanity, which I did, loud and clear. If there were quail & cock here it would be

impossible to shoot. And there are none there.

What is this Evans kind of death that blights every trap & far places? I think we'd do better to hunt the small coverts John hunted last season but instead we are practically hunting cold in new places. Very frustrating. Belton tries so hard.

Thursday 12 October

Valley Road

Belton:

Warm & partly sunny 65° moved 11 (9 new) - 15 flushes

2-6/4 hrs.

Dave Mackey joined us today to hunt Tuesday's covert - he and John having been there this am "making 16 grouse etc. etc." Each shot a grouse and Mackey a 'cock.

In the afternoon we hunted out the ridge to new cover with new timbering begun - probably forewood - and moved a number of grouse out there with no dog work - odd but probably the best. John shot 2 more grouse and Mackey one and I had the same goddamned lack of chances seeing one bird flush 30 yds. away. I have no heart for this without Brian and Ray but can't help wonder why I don't stumble on a bird or hear one flush any way. One did, from John but directly over my head I was told for I never saw it. There is no pleasure gunning with others, yet this trip will consist of all that kind of hunting. They do have birds here but not in every covert. The maples are glorious and I see a lot of barberry (looks like our cultivated), and some shrubs I can't identify. The birds are all gray tailed or slightly varying in tone. all small yearlings. John has shot five this week, Mackey 18 in two weeks. I could live here a year and probably not find a shell. I wonder.

Friday 13 October

Study

Beltan:

5/78

Hot and arid at 65° at ⁰ ~~noon~~ 1-3
east.

2-4:15 / 2 1/4 hrs

This was high up a ravine of the Taconic Mountains

near the New York State line - a classic New England farm with enormous sugars at screaming high. The house was fairly old with a huge sugar in the yard, a barn across the road and apple pickers in the orchard above.

We hunted across from the house along a partially regrown hillside under a pine plantation with a nice little brook at the base of the steep slope. Pender ran into a hen woodcock - normal in such fresh deep woods - and Beltan bumped it for two more flushes - no dog work seemed possible. After three days with no shooting on the trip, it takes a certain amount of moral fortitude to refrain, but I find a curious lack of interest in such a kill with no point.

I hunted in a shirt yesterday & today and even there was washing wet. We covered the area behind the house in a huge basin with some excellent cover loaded with hawthorns and an odd shrub with small oval leaves like apples and with black berries on it.

Mr. Study said it was a plant set out some time ago that had taken its place - "a diuretic, don't eat it."

I asked him to let me hear with my own ears the story of all the different "families" of oaks - "for eleven years they've been here." The "cemetery" family crosses the road from time to time.

I think he's seeing ghosts. It was huge woods all around the old graveyard.

We got up, having covered many places nearby and passed on the very steep ravine about half a mile up there.

So far, this part of the trip is about par for me or for places. The other men set, and shoot, the birds.

Tomorrow we take Brian to the Angell Clinic in Boston and hope for something encouraging.

Maine trip canceled & took Brian to Angell Hospital in Boston, home on Wednesday, Oct. 18.

Friday 20 October

Hoye Run

1/2 hr. Brian :

Belton :

Lovely perfect Indian summer
sunny 60°
3:40 - 5:45 / 2 hrs. 0
mud 2-2
0

Drove through gorgeous autumn color up Peabody Creek to Art Siders on Hoye Run, on the chance of finding woodcock. The foliage is fully 2 weeks late this year, hunting impossible in grouse coverts.

Leaves only slightly thinned there but cover loaded with hawthorn and large blueberries dried on the bushes. We had checked with nets and got okay to use him for short periods. Today he hunted 1 1/2 hours with no evidence of fatigue or any problems.

Our first contact was in the clump of hemlock/abundant at the base of the powerline hill on the stream - a short flushing sound, that proved a young grouse that had flushed into a tree. First, a woodcock flushed - a hen - and crossed into the bottom cover across the powerline, then the grouse flushed - a short glimpse that showed little more than a barred tail.

We followed west in good cover toward the camp, but failed to find either bird. Brian worked in a state of delight, a warm night, with his face and attitude showing how much it meant to him. He didn't stay on the path, but went into both sides hunting voraciously.

Belton covered it well but still had no contact.

We hunted back to the powerline and heard a second grouse that neither of us saw. Moments later a woodcock came over us - I'm of the impression Belton may have bumped it - that was a near shadow coming over us. As we hunted on downstream on the right bank, I saw a grouse flash from ahead - possibly a reflex of #2 - but we had no further contacts after the auspicious start.

Brian hunted so well all the time, and we enjoyed seeing him revel in it. We ate lunch with both dogs ~~rather~~ near us, then worked the hillside back on a higher level. lying

At the powerline, we decided Brian had had enough & Kay led him to the car - not without distress - and Belton & I covered the left hillside downstream to the abandoned house where Kay & Brian were waiting in the car. If we can give this much to Brian this season, I'll be so happy. And there is no slightest doubt that he is.

Wednesday 25 October

sunny, cloudy, 65°

3:30 - 4:45 } 2 1/2 hrs.
5:15 - 6:30 } IM

Edelmann
moved 2-3

Rehobeth
moved 8-11 flashes
2 shots - 1 hit

Brian: 1 prod
1 ~~back~~ back
1 net
1 kill
Belton: 4 prod.
2 backs
1 kill

The Glorious Twenty-Fifth. I observed this one more gracefully than the last, when I tore up my shoulder. In deference to Brian, who had his chemotherapy (first) yesterday, and is feeling fine today, I hunted the Edelmann covert with Belton, while Kay stayed with Brian at the old abandoned house, sitting in the car in autumn color and sunshine.

It is interesting to observe the differences in Belton when hunted without Brian, who acts as a guide and control as to range of hunting. Belton moves a yard wide when alone and does not cover the ground as effectively as when Brian is present laying his excellent pattern. As a

8/78
result, Belton was ahead in the "good upper corner" when I
walked into the first 'cack, a male that buzzed from my feet and
pitched across the road onto the Clyde Davis piece.

Further out the fence line, a woodcock came back over me
and Belton soon appeared, not chasing but rather coming to me
after a flush. He ~~was~~ may have had a point but I suspect an
unintentional flush. I moved him back to the dense thorns of
briers in the corner where the bird had landed and I soon saw him
on point, then a move in, then a point. His bell goes evidence that
the bird had lifted shortly.

I covered the lower areas about halfway out, then came up and
back to join Kay after a 1 1/2 hour session. No quail.

We crawled up the road which is so bad the car drops if
you drive normally, and it took us half an hour to get to the
Rehobeth thorns. However, it was exactly the right hour - 5:15 -
the right weather - cooling (I had hunted in a flannel shirt with no
jacket) - and the right day.

Brian makes us so happy with his normal actions and
energy in spite of the problem, and we intend to give him a
full season of limited hunting. He knows this court and after a
fast wild dash by both rascals, settled into hunting very
good sport here. He gave evidence of hot scent but not a solid
point in the first section of Hawthorn, and we saw Belton on
point deep in. With both dogs on point & backpoint, the bird flushed
over the far thorn tops with no shot. Later. Belton had another
product we could only estimate ^{and get}

The next contact was a brace that Belton ran over, not intentionally, a lovely chance I passed of course. Belton stopped at
flush and soon Brian came in and hit the scent and pointed. What
a nose - I don't count this as production.

9/8
We followed both birds toward the poplars and the fur thorns to
the north, where again Brian pointed beautifully but with no bird,
which I'm sure had lifted just ahead of him.

Swinging them into the edge thorns on the east, I found
Belton backing Brian who was solid in a small clump of thorns.



A DOUBLE POINT ON A BRACE.

Belton was, strangely, flagging and I recognized it as a backpoint.
Brian was unmoved, with his nose in his face, and I wanted for Kay to get
to the point for pictures. I walked around in front of Brian while Kay
knelt low to get out a shot. The cock held tight, then looked over Brian
and I tried for it as it creaked the far side of the thorns, very close,
drooping them the branches of trees and muzzing. Brian moved out, hoping
for a retriever, but Belton held, now pointing scent. Working in to
him, I flushed his bird, the head of the brace, and dropped it
solidly ^{point-} ~~but~~ quartering and close. I was using the 60/50 pair of
George Bird Evans Papers
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barrels for the first time in years, shooting Alcan 3/1-8 loads, 10/75
an old favorite in those barrels.

We marked the downed bird before Belton died, but he soon
proved dead, and tentated to pick it up ^{when} I asked him to fetch.
He was about to do it but was a shade slow, for Brian came in and
Belton deflected to seniority at once. Brian made a great show of
the retrieval - the ham - lying down, starting, stepping, until at
last he delivered it to me for 1 day's fun - in immature male.
This was a wonderful experience for all four of us, simply as it may
seem, for Brian is performing entirely normally

and is so happy.

at the upper edge, just at the larger woods, and near the grazing
cattle, which are - bless them - everywhere in law, both dogs wanted -
I could see Belton about 2 points and then saw a cock flush about,
the bird I had missed.

no was action, also as covered the patch on the right of the pipeline,
and had a good but empty point by Brian (I think he is so glad to be
has that he is overcautious) until we came down the pipeline to the
main area where we saw a long ~~to~~ ^{work} ~~left~~ ^{left} 3 times as Brian
approached; on our flush Brian was ~~at~~ ^{ready to point}. They are

monous.

11/28
We moved so many snatches, made the last cast out into the "hedgerow" cover when, again, we had 3 flocks from 2' each, the dogs not near on 2 occasions. Kay went for the car and I worked both dogs on to the south edge — all good cover but I'm never here when the birds use it. Brian made one point that both he and I was certain would produce. He was so determined he seemed to be intent upon creating a bird in a stand of brambles and locusts, mostly combination of sticks.



DETERMINED

I persuaded him to leave and we went to the car when Kay was stopped along the road. Brian lay in the road edge and grained while we changed out of boots and got ready to leave. It was a grand afternoon, an example of what one little woodcock can give to two grand fellows and two grateful people. How I love this place. And all to ourselves.

Friday 27 October

Corner Settlement

clear, sunny, cool 50°

moved 2-2
1 shot - 0

powerline: 2:45-4:00 } 2 1/4
5:30-6:35 }
opposite pigeon roost road }
5:00-5:20 } 1/4

2 1/2 hrs. moved 3-3
1 shot - 1 hit

Briar: 3/4 hr./20 min. } 1 1/2 hrs. 1 mod. 1 kill
1/2 hr } 1 net
Belton: 1 back 1 kill

IF

It was a stunning point, intense, low in front and with tail well up — in dense cover I could hardly get stem to flesh the 'cock. Briar and Belton had just started in the edge of woods not fifty yards from the car and I saw it, on the far side of a low rail fence. Pushing them to Briar, I couldn't see any way to get a shot and had decided to simply flush the bird. Circling around below him, I came in from in front and the 'cock, a hen, went out the far side with legs kneeling down. I waited till the 'cock was well out over the edge and fired thru branches and saw the bird fall. Briar made it over the rail fence and had a lot of a search in dense high weeds and retrieved with great pleasure.

We gloat over this — another just glorious moment for Briar and us. Belton had backed this point nicely but he was definitely in the background when the retrieve is made!



We covered part of this triangle of cover — dense with foliage — and moved below the small road where the dogs moved a brace of grouse (perhaps a point?) and I tried a high right-crossing shot — missed — and saw the flock from a tree. Followed with no success other than seeing 2 more 'cock wild. Disappointed to find all the fields covered by the Hawks and Geese families (no squatters). What a lovely day!

Saturday 28 October

muggy, cool, 58°

2:40 - 5:00 / 2 1/4 hr.

yearling cock: inter.
crop: empty

The Wilderness 9 (abbreviated)

moved 4 - 4

1 shot - 1 hit O.P.

No double-eye back feathers:
characteristic of juvenile males?

Brian: 1 prod.
1 kill O.P.
1 ret.

13/78

Belton: 1 kill

Ein Helden Setzen!

This was Brian's day, and

The Wilderness covert did not let us down. Parked at far end near impoundment and crossed the "shale barren" to the road along the base of the ridge top; then quaking hanging with more grapes than I've seen in years, silhouettes of every wind blast against a blue sky amid glorious autumn color that is just past peak - a delightful time to be in the woods. Brian is so full of energy and pleasure and hunted seeds to side with as beautiful a ground pattern as I've seen him do. Belton did well that moved at a wider range.

In spite of our coverage - and we made a thorough circle on two levels and back to the impoundment - we made not a feather (so much for perfect cover & food). Belton & Brian had shown fragrances as we circled below the dam without result. Key: Belton, & I was at the car when we heard Brian bark "trees" somewhere below in the dense thicket and we realized he'd not been with us, obviously pointing. One grouse flushed north, another into a tall bare maple, and a third flushed out of range to the south, parallel to the clearing.

Approaching when Brian had come up to the edge, we saw one grouse sitting tall and vested in the maple, and within seconds it turned and flushed left - away instead of crossing the open space in

part of me. I fired thru a screen of branches & leaves, holding where I felt the bird would be without seeing it, and neither Kay nor I could see it after the shot, which must have been at a good 35 yds. Brian, certain that I wouldnt miss, began scowring the area ahead of us, with Belton hard on him, as we fought our way thru a dense growth of small ~~the~~ saplings and intertwined greenbrier vines. Feeling sure I had missed, I nevertheless followed what would have been the birds' line of flight.

About thirty yards into the thick cover, Kay called that Brian was working scent excitedly, and Belton joined him. I got to ~~him~~ ^{them} with difficulty, climbing over piles of boulders with deep crevices and in an area of ~~such rocks~~ ^{between rocks} about 5 yards square saw both dogs trying to nos into ~~the~~ openings. Belton soon left uncertain of Brian's reaction, but Brian would not give up, pushing his nose deep underground. I got to him and Kay ~~also~~ found a grouse feather, and we knew the bird was down there but probably hopelessly deep. I laid my gun aside, unloaded, and getting on my side, tried to reach into the endless openings, all of which seemed to go too far down for me to reach. Both Kay & I pushed long probes into the rocks with no results, while Brian moved from one angle to another, sniffing and pushing his face in to his nose. I was unable to move any of the rocks, managing to pull a small sapling over with no effect. While I was standing futilely trying to come to a solution I knew was not forthcoming, Brian made a deep effort, digging frantically, and going in with his muzzle — and came out the grouse!



FROM DOWN UNDER.

I managed to take it from him long enough to dispatch it, then gave it back, and he stood holding it with an ecstatic grin while Kay and I hooted like a pair of idiots and Kay took yards of film - glorious moment.

It was a cork - yearning - and when at last I removed it from Brian's mouth, I saw Belton when he'd been sitting watching all the while from a distance. He knows Brian won't tolerate any approach under the circumstances. Brian circled and went to Belton whom I'd casual in, gave him a silent telling look, and moved away.

Belton is a grand young dog, but what we had witnessed was the old master grouse dog at work. It was a blazing sun and as much that a day. Brian is so happy and so well and as so grateful for him, for this event, and for this moment. Ein Helden sitzer. Along the quon barrels 70/50 with 3 1/2 - 7 1/2.

A grouse and a brace of woodcock hang on the hem-log walls of the porch in the sherry-smell of leaves, and life is as I would have it.

Monday 30 October
Clear, sunny 57°

Bayard

Brian : 3 prod.

far "corner" : 2:30 - 3:20 / 50 min
Friend swamp : 3:30 - 4:15 / 2/3 hr.

moved 5-7
0

Belton : 1 prod.
1 back.

Gravyard : 5:10 - 6:20 / 1 1/4 hr.
total 2 2/4 hrs.

Bayard Gravyard

moved 3-4
2 shots - 0

We hunted the "far corner" first - finding goldfinch so dense 10/78
and high that posting is difficult - but sawing four 'cocks for six
flocks. We are certain that Brian had a point lost in the tangle -
two 'cocks. Another great point proved empty but must have
certainly been a bird just lifted. His stance was high and glorious, as
it is when the scent is pointed at a distance. I got pictures of it.

Returning to the station wagon, we drove to the swamp below
Clarence Friends, where Kay stayed with Brian in the car while I worked
at Bolton in the large bottomland. This is a disappointing area -
producing only one 'cock for 2 flocks with no work from Bolton,
tho he stopped at command. Rejoined Kay & Brian and we hurried
to the Bryant graveyard for the last bit of daylight - excellent
cover - evergreen and scattered hawthorns but no birds until we
dropped to the lower level where Brian made a glorious point on
the far side of a tight wire fence. The 'cock flushed high over
the trees and I tried for it well out but missed, or feel certain I
did, for both days searched with no results. A second point produced
another bird late on - no chance to shoot.

On top, Kay went for the car while Brian & Bolton and I
covered the margin of good woods with thorn cover & hemlocks.
I saw Bolton make a sudden swing into a but - over point under a
mossy hemlock, giving me almost no chance for a shot. I tried
approaching from the left rear, but the bird didn't want, showing as a
steep away - left rising flush, disappearing almost as I pulled.
Again I wasn't certain but must have missed, for neither dog found
and there was no father. This is a great disappointment. It is simple that the
'cocks are not yet coming thru.

Wednesday
1 November
clear sunny, 60°

3 { 2½ hrs
½ hr

Weldons
rived 1 (new) - 2

Cherry Creek
rived 3 - 5
0

17/78
Brear: 1 prod.

Bellon: 1 backpack



We pushed on the upper Weldons truck road, just past to the
end and hunted down the mountain on the bulldozed road, then
spectacular rocks - huge ledges with a broad basin between, with
excellent slash cover all the way, laced with rhododendron. No birds
until we had reached Cherry Creek at the bottom. Bellon evidently
bumped a grouse that went due south without rising high and we
followed. This was after we had stopped to eat lunch. My stress
that it is more nearly just to say the bird flushed well ahead of
Bellon, which I consider extreme kindness, considering our long
rather rough manner of going today. We followed, walking the
bulldozed road and I walked into another grouse that flushed left
quartering and rising from the edge, only yards ahead of me.
I was surging and mounting in good timing but my stock butt
caught on my sleeve or rather arm, too far out to shoot and
nothing I could do would set it mounted properly in time. I
did have the restraint not to fire from the half-mounted position,

but it was a lovely opportunity lost. We followed this new bird, as
the most definite contact, moving up thru rough slashings.

Not far above (it could have been a short ground flight, or it could have
been the #1 grouse) I saw
Brian turn his head back
over his left shoulder
and freeze, holding the
position beautifully.

Beltan came from the
right ahead of him
and backed, while I tried to get across into an opening to see the
start. The grouse didn't allow it. I couldn't hear the flush or see it,
but judged it clearly from Brian's action - a few steps into
the thicket and looking with his head up as the bird left. It was
a gorgeous point - and one of Brian's stunning bits of work on grouse.

We had no further contacts all the way up there what developed
into reasonably swampy footing with all roads ^{ways} feeling out with the
beginning not the destination.

Finally, as we neared the truck road on top, the dogs missed a
grouse (they won't miss them weren't two) that came back of us and
landed just off the main log road as had found. What ensued is one
of those unfortunate loss of rapport between man and dogs, with
man as reprehensibly as the dogs, who were cooperating in their
disregard of directions & worthy signals. Finally the grouse flushed
from where we'd marked it, put up by all the noise. Brian

smashed into a point - after the fact. We returned to the car to gather our facilities and rest. Then, we decided to go to the Cherry Creek corner at the bottom of the ridge to try for a woodcock - Bella and I, while Kay & Brian stayed in the car.

Actually, Bella & I moved a grouse then without, it 3 flushes - no dog work, except on the last flush when Bella hit a point moments after the bird left. I had a look at the grouse on the 2nd flush - high and right - crossing, and I think a fair left barrel try if I'd been alert to it but I wasn't. I felt I made an ass of myself (and I know Kay that I did) losing my temper over the rough footing and the dogs.

Thursday 2 November

again cloudless, warmer to cool, breezy at times 50°

1st event 1 hr with Bella } 3 hrs
2nd " 2 hrs with both }

Crazy Dog Covert

moved 2-4
0

2 hrs. Brian: 3 prod
1 k
1 net

Bella: 4 prod
1 k

Rehobeth

moved 12-16
3 shots - 1 hit

1 M

Kay & Brian waited in the station wagon while I took Bella up the road opposite the Schell Road behind what used to be those crazy dog kennels, no longer there. In the thick cover, past thorns, on the upper side, Bella put out a grouse that I mistook for a woodcock, settling a few yards in front of me, then recognized it as a grouse. Bella almost immediately ran down and put it up - no shot.

I followed with no reflex, out to nearby Temple Cove

not long - and I turned back at the half-hour point ²⁰
and hunted the lower side, down to Abrams Creek where years ago
when Piers was a first-year pup they I shot the grouse she
later ate in the car - everything but one primary. This has grown
so dense it is brutal to take a good gun in it, altho it
should hold 'cock at times.

Back on the road and in sight of our car, I saw a grouse
out down from Trelton - he's bumped most of them this season -
and out the road to where it settled on the left edge. As usual, when
you've reached a bird it's impossible to get him in, so I
walked to the place and the grouse lifted before I was within
30 yards of it.

Resuming King & Piers, we drove to Robert's Thomas for the
last 2 hours - last time of day. Piers was keen and both dogs
eager as we started out. We had 3 flocks - all of them coming back
over us toward the car, & rather than turn back we let them wait
for later. One we feel, by educated guess, was from a point by
Trelton, his bell having been silent before the bird appeared.

Next further action until in the SW Thomas, when Piers made a
miss mobile point, pinpointing a 'cock from some yards away. I
walked it up and dropped it - a high steep rise almost against
the sun. The bird fell with an audible plunk in dry leaves and it
took a little while for Piers to locate it in the fairly stiff breeze
that also accounted for several banded birds today. Piers returned -
purring happily - a yearling male.

Next action was after a wide circle thru the pipeline cover and
back to the area where the original 3 had landed (one of these ^{had been} ~~was~~ over
a short-lived point by Piers) ^{George Bird Evans Papers} ^{West Virginia and Regional History Center}
for a reflex, the 'cock, a hen, coming directly at me, missing by inches.

Unable to relocate, as moving around into the large flat 21/78
"late-afternoon" coveit and Kay heard & saw a coveit flush a few yards from the
edge of the woods. What she was urging me to whistle Brian in from the far
hedgerow, Belton drew to a point headed toward me with a few yards
of wide-open field between us. Trying to amuse Kay and tell her that
Belton had a point, I put up the 'coveit and missed it in an incredibly easy
going away shot. Why? Moments later a third flushed, and when Brian
came in and started into the woods edge, a fourth went out. Scout appeared to
be fragile for the dogs.

Some afterwards, we saw Belton wheel and freeze into a clump of
thorns (the one when I shot a woodcock over Brian last year with Belton looking at
twenty yards - my first shot after my shoulder injury). Hurrying to Belton, I
put up the bird from my side of the thorns and took it as a long
going-away shot, and saw a large cluster of what looked like white feathers
blown on the bird and lost sight of it. Sensing a miss and got rather
feeling I had hit, I let both dogs search the area with no result -
disappointing. I was shooting the 60/50 barrels, missing the shot with the
clean 7-1-8; the former shot with Woodcock shot 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{8}$ -9.

Brian ran into another bird - a new one, and later found and
had a brief mobile point on a 'coveit out in wide open field cover - so shot.
They went for the car and I took the ~~shot~~ dogs in a huge coveit around the
south and easterly ~~part~~^{part} of the flat - good coveit - 2 wild flushes.

Two's' coveit for coveit flushes, near points, 3 shots (from shooting)
and one bird, appears to suggest the flight has started. The new
Second Woodcock Wren in the south ~~made it~~ seems likely: 9 grand
coveit.

Saturday 4 November
Warm, mostly sunny,
changing to hazy 65°
2 1/2 hrs.

Upper Beaver - Fred Rhodehaver
saw 6-9 flickers
1 shot - 0

22
Alan with Belton
and Charles Matten

One of those bad times when I've left Kay & Brian at home -
tho, thanks to Brian is doing wonderfully on chemotherapy and
responding. Charles Matten reported seeing grouse while surveying and
we arranged to meet at the Rhodehaver School at 2:15, then drove to
the clearing just before the road from Cuyahoga to Mountaineer dips to the
bridge over Beaver Creek. Stopped first to meet Fred Rhodehaver, Hayman
R's son (was this the one Hayman called the son-of-a-bitch?). He was
over enough today, letting us hunt.

Used Belton alone, and while he is very large and an excellent
young dog, he shows up poorly without Brian to pace him, tending to
stop frequently to locate me - not bad in ways, but he should
do it without breaking his pace.

We had been working north in a woods larger than deer
range but with a nice lot of old "tree-laps" - hunting only fifteen
minutes when I saw Belton run into a pile of logs without a sound,
and suddenly it was one of those incredible Hagerbaumer prints, with
3 grouse in the air at once, left-crossing just a bit out of range -
then a fourth, also left-crossing a bit closer. I mounted and
fired swinging them but, tho I expected a hit, the bird went on.
Then a fifth grouse left a tree on Belton and flew straight out
far beyond gun range. I wasn't looking but heard a
sixth flush but believe it was the first into the sapling, after

the bird left

23/78



HAGERBAUMER, YET!

Charles had seen only two and came over to follow the four that had gone across in front of me. We found my entire nest pattern in a fist-inch area blasted out of a red-oak tree trunk — something of an alibi to lean on. As we approached the brink of a rock drop-off toward Beaver, Belton turned and drew into a lovely point in front of me and I was sure he had one of them, but it proved empty — ~~probably~~ probably when the bird had left at our approach.

We finally swung to follow #5 and again Belton indicated but went and we think it had flushed well. In a large circle below the rocks, after we'd found to eat, Charles walked into 3 of the grass in a clear area, the birds pitching beyond reach into dense rhododendron along Beaver — good sanctuary.

In our last circle of the day, we came thru recent slashings — a huge area about 2 years old on the north of the main road — and a

now apparently flushed from Belton and me - for Charles 24
said I sailed down and part him - a nice. This was #6. This
area looks like the Henderson Marshing, when we found it years ago
and should develop handsomely.

It was a fine 2 1/2 hours, one of the rare times when someone has
told me of birds that were really there. Belton is not handling
game yet - trying, but not yet able to smooth out. He'll do it,
I know, but couldn't help with Brian, and Kay, had been there.

lovely sunset flaming in the west as I came down off the
mountain into a misty Kanawha valley.

Monday 6 November

Hazy, warm, Indian Summer 65°

Eggs Kelly

Brian
Belton

2 hrs.

We hoped to find quail here, - reports were good -
in area with grapes hanging in every direction you look. also
hickories, greenhorns, beeches, and loads of young dogwood. Perfect
variation of cover, but not as feather. why? ^{Brian} ~~Belton~~ worked
beautifully and with plenty of energy. But he is not eating.

Wednesday 8 November

Long Knob (Hudson)

Belton: 1 prod
(alone)

Early perfect 46° damp

made 3-4
1 shot - 0

sunshine & crisp

2 1/2 hrs.

Brian at home with Kay (shot Omeira yesterday)

and I took Belton to this grand event. Met Mr. Pacl Long, a
very nice man, who was gracious in giving me permission to hunt. Said
he sees grouse on hillside - not in clearing - but on slopes. "George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

Beltan worked nicely along today, responding to my new
 Roy Davis whistle and moving at a fast pace but in good range most
 of the time. We had no contact until I climbed the steep bank,
 starting the dense blackberry briars on top and coming out on the
 powerline. Standing just on edge of the south stand of red pines, quite
 tall, I heard a green explode from one of the pines over my head,
 seeing only the sifting of red granular leaves after its departure.

Waiting a short, I heard a second green take off from the thick
 tops not far from me, this bird zooming out over the powerline
 right-of-way and banking back into cover. I fired, holding under it,
 as it did, but missed.



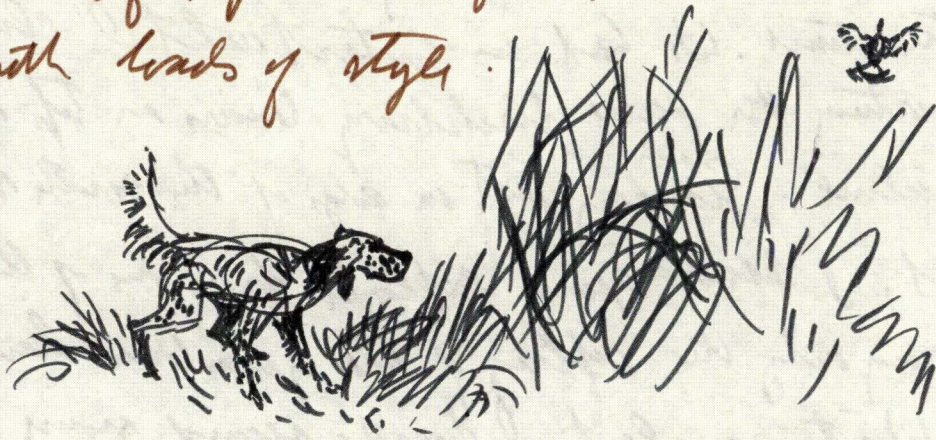
Following east along the powerline,

I saw Beltan make game and heard
 another flash from the ground I think,
 and count it #3, for it seemed too close to
 the original action.

We covered the top area well, and finally circled to the top of the
 woods when I alerted the first birds to last game. Eating lunch with
 Beltan lying attentively at my feet, I made a east and came back
 into the larger woods. Beltan was working wide but responding when I
 signalled. As I was dropping into a dip, headed toward the
 pines once more, I saw him about 60 yards away, on point,
 doubled toward an immense tangle of logs and grapevines. He
 held loyalty as I hurried toward him but the game lifted - a

26
78
fair glimpses of it rising and going the other direction — miles away
for any shot. But it was a fine point — his first production on
ground this year and with loads of style.

We had no more action
that I could see, for birds,
but Belton worked really
trying to produce one.



736
He slid to a stop, from full speed
at the edge of spruces on top and pointed, then moved in and frantically
tore the place apart as what could have been another bird.

This was a lovely day to be in the woods — cool, damp,
streaks of sun filtering thru. But the footing was difficult with
my boots popping strands of reeds anchored on both ends like
snags, rocks rolling under my heels, concealed with leaves, and turning
my foot onto its side. Our woods are built on boulders.

As I came down off the face of the knob after lunch,
the deep red sun went down behind the treeline across the valley,
and I could see the enormous distant sweep of Chestnut Ridge
but my eyes were too fatigued to focus.

Walking thru what should have been woodslike cover in
the bottom — no 'cork' — we reached the car at 5:15.

A great afternoon, but no more day of Ben

Friday 10 November

Wynns Gap Furnace

Belton;

Clear, mild, 57°

2 hrs }
35 min } 2 1/2 hrs

moved 1-1

Jim Collins

moved 1-1

moved 1-1

Another Indian Summer day - how many others have been, must
terribly unhappy but others, like today, so blessedly relieving, for
Brian is back on level and more and eating, after the effects of
his chemotherapy. He is far too run down to exert in the woods, so
Kary stayed home with him, while I took Belton via Hopewell to
Lake of the Woods to try the area near the old furnace.

It looks less than promising until I worked up the
old lumber road that leads up the valley behind the furnace. It is
timbered over several years old with many downed treetops and trunks
lying in deep grass - bad footing. Belton covered the area well but
found nothing.

At the head of the road (the it did go on) I climbed the left
wall of the valley into a stratum of grapevines loaded with fruit,
coming onto the double poplar line that marks the Mason Dixon line.
Peared to eat surrounded by ideal vine cover on a slope that had to
have birds but didn't. Fished out over the wild shoulders of the
Gap, as usual more complex than a single valley.

Returning to the lower level I walked to along the paved Gap road,
heavily posted with an obscene number of notices everywhere. I
was actually expressing my contempt for the little bastard who
phoned me last week with his tale of all the grouse in his. They

half-spoken opinion was partly expressed as there was no time 28
in here, when the air grows I would blow out low from behind a
stamp six feet to my left. It was one of the few times I had
lowered my gun to my side, but the flash was right - quanting
them a screen of trees and only a yard off the ground and no amount
of effort would have brought off a shot.

At the car after a two-hour turn, I drove back to the
"Jim Collins" road that cuts over the ridge from the de Valley School.
Stopping to inquire as to the condition of the road, I talked to
a squeaky little fellow with a piece-closed beard, only to see
a nice heavily marked young setter, mottled black with tan and some
white. It turned out he was the Pearson of the 60 production in
2 hours on woodcock. He began to lay 80 points in a half day
on me when I stopped him with the unwarranted pronouncement
that I didn't believe it. He got bothered about that and I
left him with the statement that it was just too much. I'd
been hoping subconsciously for the opportunity to do that.

On the steep curve at the crest of Laurel Run (where he'd saved
a lot of screws & taken two off her today) I pushed and took a
ten minute turn out a log road from excellent quail cover & ~~shooting~~
cover - no action.

At the next valley I came to a ridge of Jim Collins's
and hunted for 25 minutes in ideal quail cover, missing one
open out of a tree (tall) about ~~and on~~ and on double back to follow,
George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

climbed under barbed wire into an open pasture and nearly stopped ^{29/78}
on a roadside in the open grass. By this time it was dark.

Stopped at Jim Gehris who said some boys had moved some
quinn in that hollow which is a branch of Laurel Run. A place to try.

Saturday 11 November

clear, sunny, 60°
2 1/2 hrs.

Sagehen Valley

snow 1-1
0

Belta:

A disappointing day - too many of them recently -
morning only are quinn that went out far out of range. Not Preston's fault.
He gave me trouble, however, not keeping in touch, and simply moving out
of sight and hearing. Failed for the electronic collar.

Ran into son-in-law of Paul Sinton, another man and two
grandsons - speaking the feel of a court to myself. Quads and thick
even - hard hunting - but no birds, altho Mutter said there were a
"lot of quinn on her." I can't agree.

Shocked to learn that Paul Sinton died in September.

Belta worked very well at the end, and I'm sure what he needs
is birds. So do it. Keep all home again with Brian, who, thanks to, is
much better and eating now. Heard other shooting. Too damned many people.

Monday 13 November
cool, damp, cloudy
2 hrs. 57°
AF

Gates
mowed 4-5
2 shots - 1 hit

1 1/2 hrs. Brian: 1 prod

Belton: 2 prod.
2 backs
1 kill
1 net

Started for Mt. Storm coverts after feeding

Brian up, following his period of refusing food last week. Have finally got him slightly coaxed over his losses and feeling himself.

Approaching Backlons Mt. we saw cars coming out of the east with headlights on and braced ourselves for fog. We hit it as we topped Backlons on Rt 50, but continued thru intermittent open spots, but finally entered a dense fog on Allegheny Mt. and at Mt. Storm, talked to truckers who reported fog at Elk Garden.

Turning back, we changed plans & headed for the Canaan. Davis was in the clear with some sunshine and when we topped Canaan Mt. we saw that the Valley was open, altho Cabin Mt. was lost in fog at the top.

We found the Gates delightfully empty of hunters and had it to ourselves, the first time in a year or so. I day let me out with Belton at the gates, and drove on to the east & then over toward with Brian.

Belton worked very well for this car - a good moderate runner at a dashing pace, checking well with me & responding to the whistle. We found no birds worth our attention north of the road and on the "cow path," when I tried to swing Belton

away from the left of that cover to save it for Brian. 31/28
But he soon hit a point inside the best margin - a high point
that he reestablished as I approached, then held. When I saw him
flying but held, I ordered him on, which froze him. I did this
twice but he was out now and I cooled and came in from his
point. The 'cock lay tight but finally flushed in an "away"
shot that I took going out and shooting thru branches, dropping
the bird. Bolton made a step, then held beautifully at my "hold,"
until I sent him on.



DEFINITE

Locating the fallen bird, he pointed, inches from it, but did not
pick it up for some time, and then couldn't make the move to deliver it.
Finally, I walked to him and he did pick up the 'cock and carry it,
following me back to where I'd fired. This is the result, I'm sure, of
his deferring to Brian. I call it a retriever, tho it was conditional.

The bird was a large adult hen - beautiful.

I rejoined Kay & Brian at the car and at 4:00 pm we
four started out on the storm coast when Kay had flushed a woodcock,
a bird we failed to locate.

Doubling back into the north area, we bumped out to the first
"inlet" and in the basin there, with Brian walking like his usual
wonderful self, and eating it up, Baltasar's bell went silent. Kay
called that she saw him but I, like an ass, stood and watched a
large woodcock flush over the alder tops — obviously from a point —
without raising my gun.



We decided to follow the flush, which I marked by a marker
in the distance and at the proper place, came upon Brian on a
lovely hot point, doubled around. I found this alder cover today
particularly difficult — I don't know why more than any other time —
but for every branch I forgot of, protecting my Purdey state,
there was one to take its place, blocking each more. I tried to
depress on Brian's point — and was tipped and stiffened a bit —

and at last got around to his right side. I stalked
Beltar on backpoint at command, and as all stood, four of
us, with the bird tight. In the end, I had to step in, losing
what advantage I had, and the bird - the same big hen - burst
vertically out of the alders, not three yards from my head, and I
wanted to take it a shade further out and fired three transoms;
missing as, I missed, the bird banked right. (It may not have.)

It was a disappointment, losing the chance on Brian's lovely
point, but that's what happened.



We crossed the road to the
north side and Kay saw a 'cock
flushed ahead of Beltar, who chased.

Brian came in and made a beautiful hot point moments after the
flush, and Beltar lashed at command. No more action, then we hunted
back to the north side and to the road and to the large aspens,
where Kay drew and flushed us up. It was becoming very warm and

we packed up, under a giant Mead Hunter's Horn, full and ³⁴
golden and etched with the tops of the long aspens when I, and
Ray and generations of Old Hauleck settlers have had glorious days.
The flight is not in — (yet to come?) then we saw two dusting
cork in the nests — but it was good to be here again and to
have it undisturbed. Not even a shot. And Brian did so well
with ~~no~~ ^{no} trace of tiring.

Wednesday 15 November

Cherry Creek

Brian: 1 prod.

rainy, cool 48°

missed 2 (cut new) - 2

Belton

1½ hr.

Good work by both dogs but no shots. First grouse

flushed from brush pile after I passed — no view until well out. Both dogs
had been elsewhere. Belton flash pointed when brought back. Later as we
walked toward the road, Ray saw Brian
flash point, then look up as a bird
must have lifted. I saw the motion
far ahead as the bird cut across the
trail.

We got sand & wet, changed
at car. Did Brian a lot of good
to be out. Conditions lucky for
hunting but clothing wouldn't turn dry.

Thursday 16 November

Frank Wright Place

1 hr. Prairie

rainy off & on, cool, 49°

moved 1-1

Belted: 1 prod.

2 1/4 hrs.

1 shot - 0

This cover is perfect, re-sown at right stage, hanging full of grapes, hawthorns, bulldozed snatches, — and no ground. Prairie worked well but there was nothing for him to work on. I lay down the car to top of rise about the old whistled house and we sat and ate a bit of sandwich with coffee until the current drought abated; then I took Belton into the cover on the east side of road where I lay down to felicitates.

There was nothing in this area — all good — down to the swamp which, to my surprise has been totally lucked.

Summing Belton around the hill, I came up the south margin of the cover when I heard his bell go silent. This time it was really business. He was pointing a woodcock, I was certain, and I hurried around below him and came in from the front. He held steadily until I got there, then flopped until I ordered him on, at which he froze. I did this twice, and I knew he had the bird. I was too torn from lack of shooting & action but I felt sure I'd make the shot for the situation seemed ideal. Slipping on uneven ground I walked in and the bird finally flushed — a large hen that climbed straightaway. I felt my left shoulder rebound shaggorily but I was right on the bird high and against the sky and fired. ~~And it went on. It was not until later~~

that I ~~can't~~ remember that I had a left barrel I could have used. I can only explain the miss by the chance that I pulled as the 'cock reached the peak, pitching over a split moment before the ~~discharge~~ discharge. I wanted that bird.

We failed to relocate - odd - but finally circled to the road and Key. Too little shooting destroys me after a time. But Bellon's point was a beauty.



HE DESERVED BETTER.

Saturday 18 November
clear, sunny, cool 54°
2 1/4 hrs.

White Oak (Hammock)

missed 1-1
0
missed 11-13
2 shots - 1 hit

Bellon: 3 prod
1 kill
1 ret

IF

Joined Raymond Zinn with Bellon alone, hoping to find some of the "twenty-five" quail flushed from blueberries in August in this small cove. Of course we didn't. Key stayed at home with Brian, who had received his #4 Oncovin/#2 Cytotax therapy yesterday (with no had results other than off feed).

The piece of cove belongs to a Mrs. Lewis - absentee - and lies just south of the Weathers farm, Raymond's neighbor. It's ideal old clearing replete with hawthorns, heavy with fruit alder, opening reefs and a

stream (White Oak) in the bottom with some hemlock (*rhododendron* 39/28)

We stepped into the first corner (dead goldwood & fern) and thorns with a grassy "sink" that had loads of fresh white wash on the margin, but no birds. Belton moved on over the brink and I found him on point near a large Hawthorn. He was solid until I got near and then began flagging and edging in - a pattern that continued all afternoon. I ordered him on and he finally held, but once again began flagging. At this time a large hen woodcock flushed, crossing low left-to-right behind the dense mass of red haws on the thorn, and feeling the need to have a shot, I squared Belton's flagging tail and dropped the bird - rather to my surprise for it was a fast shot then over. Belton held steady - very nicely - until I ordered him to retrieve, and then moved to the side of the fall



JUNIOR OFFICER PRESENT.

Belton searched among a thick mass of dead ferns and goldwood when I was certain the cock had fallen, but couldn't find. Raymond felt sure it had sailed on out in the clearing, which was impossible. It was too thick to find the bird visually, and by this time Belton had become enamored with woodcock burrs and abandoned search to return some from his underparts but I was in no mood to doddle and took them out urgently and with speed. Over my shoulder Belton

to the search, while Raymond went out in the clearing to find the bird; I saw Belton suddenly freeze with his nose down in the ferns exactly where the 'cock should have fallen. Digging into the cavity of stems I found the bird, a large hen and still alive, unfortunately. Dispatching it, I had Belton retrieve, after some difficulty, carrying ~~the~~ the bird behind me as I walked back to my general position of the shot. Belton was pleased enough with himself.

We hunted the area well with no results until we started up a small neck of woods where we ate lunch. As we finished, after having sat there for fifteen minutes, Belton got up excitedly and moved behind us and bumped a woodcock that apparently had been

there all the time. There is another possibility: it might have been an old bird fluttering in a landing behind us, alerting Belton who moved in. In any case, Belton watched it and loved out and promptly bumped it a second time. This seems unlikely since and conditions were such that he should have had good scent, but recently landed 'cock are notoriously hard to point, and ~~George~~ ^{George} ~~Evans~~ ^{Evans} ~~Papers~~ ^{Papers} ~~to add to the problem.~~

39/28
Marking its flight, we followed to the edge of the woods on a
downline where our man Belter pointed, then flagged in and bumped a
bird. Almost immediately we walked into a second, and death a
third. Near bumping by Belter, and then as we crested a large open
wood, he hit a point - solid. He was doubled around in a half circle
and I walked in to flush. I was aware of Raymond (who was not
carrying a gun) somewhere to my left and rear, and when the bird
rose - a male - it cut back his direction before changing the corner
and I held my shot - a fair chance otherwise. It was a lovely hunt
and I was proud of Belter on that one.

(except a flash of a grass prong near the shot I'd shot my cock. No chance here.)
and then in the small draw with the grassy slope, Belter's belt
indicated he was working scent, and moments later a male cock
emerged ~~a few~~ feet off the ground with Belter ~~only~~ a few yards behind -
an magnificent spectacle. A second cock flushed with the opposite wing.
after I got him back I sent him into the triangular
corner between the field & the road when he began working scent in
a nice location. Working toward me. I put up another male cock
that rose toward the road, and feeling it going behind a triple tree
trunk, I fired too soon and missed.

It was the best day, next to the 12' cock day in the Piedmont
thorns, and the case is nice. Belter is presenting me with the
classic Second / Third - Scam situation: point - flag - bump. This
calls for me work with the electronic collar

Next day - (Sunday) I and I returned with Brian & Belter 40
 and went with Raymond, hoping for more remedial treatment. But
 today the corks were not here other than those of them, in first
 flushes. Belter lunched too without a chance to check him. Brian
 counted 3 and Belter backed at least 2 of them. One was a
 gorgeous ~~bird~~ protractor / backpoint - classic profile
 of both dogs. The other ~~bird~~ was also backed by Belter.

We saw and/or heard 3 or 4 grouse flushes from the dogs but
 just obviously not pointed. Why? Another perfect
 afternoon as excellent weather, a little more cloudy today.

data for above: Sunday 19 November Brian: 3 prod.
 should be counted: more 3-5 Belter: 2 backs.

no gun
 (3 new)
 more 4 grouse - 4
 no gun.

Monday 20 November
 clear, cool, gorgeous
 2 hrs.

(good for us all.)

Henckel Place no gun
 more 3-3

Brian: prod pheasants
 Belter:

more 2 pheasant hens.

Brian found & trailed & pointed
 in powerline right-of-way

Tuesday 21 November
 clear, then cloudy, cool
 1 hr.

Humberson Ridge

Brian:
 Belter:

Found 4 wheel vehicle parked at
 our usual place at end of road. I also heard 2 double-shots on far ridge.
 We came back to branch of Tab and hunted around Basin of old Brusa
 place. Good cork run in bottom but no birds today.

Wednesday 22 November Tabr Pen ★ 9
cloudy & clear later 50° moved 5-8 flashes
2 1/4 hrs. 1 shot - 1 shot op.

1 3/4 hrs. Brian: 1 k
1 net
Belton: 1 prod.
1 kop
41/78

yearling hen: inter; several tail feathers shorter
crop: grapes, few greens (tomato, ~~other~~ rutabaga)

Back to an old favorite area, finding changes on the Terpale place -
new house (senior Spano), large trailer across road (Spano son). Stopped to see
Orman Taylor to find he had lost 125 lbs. Cordial and wanted to discuss
his medical problem (looks better but on 8 types of pills). Granddaughter
suggested confidentially that I should check with new resident in trailer about -
Red Albright (red head, youngish) about hunting, which I did and received brief OK.
Why I should have to check about notices on land then people don't own is beyond
me but I play the game and am welcomed. Word is that there is no game around.

We drove to the side road at Tabr Pen near "chair stand" (still has but
"new" chair. Brian seemed in good shape but held to path more than normally;
Belton hunting side came well. We worked up the trail up west side of run and I
saw Brian move into the old sawmill site with giddiness & wuds. Brian began
flashing - #1 & #2 near sounds, #3 scaling across to far rocks but seeming to go
down soon, #4 crossing left then trees up hill about me. Why Brian didn't get
a point is beyond me but I don't argue with luck like this or faint 10 minutes.

Followed first three into rocky hillside to east when they heard two flashes
wild - rejecting the sound on topping the ledge. Hearing up over difficult
footing - leaves covering rocks with crevices - we carried the lead and topped
to the west - fair cover beyond for flashing refuge - but heard nothing. I had
removed the bell from Belton's stock collar and he worked much better, I thought, seeming
to check with me & handle easily, probably because he could hear me better.
Was using no bell on Brian, and the two days working in the still quiet

of the woods was lovely. Think I'll continue this or game work. 42
Coming back to Tub Run hollow, Kay fell behind me and I
stopped to wait for her to overtake me, surprised that it took so long. To my
surprise, and dismay, learned that she had stepped down into a crevice
between rocks and had been captive there until she removed her boot and
walked loose.

After eating a bit, sitting on a log in the midst of a large spread of
mountain laurel, we returned to the little stream and to the car, to let Brian
have a rest. In the cleared "grade" that crosses Tub and in the dense
rhododendron along the stream, I saw Belton on point — high and stylish,
but in moments he walked on. Standing by the car, I watched both Brian & Belton
cross the road & walk into thick cover above. Almost immediately a grouse
bored out and flew straight down the road, disappearing at the bend
a hundred yards away. It could have been a dust had I been quick but
the bird was out of range in seconds — fast.

Deciding to follow it with Belton, I left Kay to bring Brian in the
car. Brian, however, was having none of that and came with Belton. Walking
fast, I saw both dogs into cover along the road when we got what seemed
far enough. Brian was below on the right, Belton, both right & left.

I found him on point on the left inside a slight indentation of cover,
poised stylishly and pointing with his head turned right toward a large
rhododendron. There could be no doubt about the seriousness of the point,
a stud it was the grouse. I hurried to him and secured the point that

and saw Belton break. The round led me to expect the grouse to 43/78
tip and cut left then the blast over on the far side of the alcoholometer,
but round and motion made my wheel around to my right to see the bird
do exactly what it had done on the original run — cut out and fly
low straight down the road.



NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, BELTON.

The gun was going straightaway passing a yard or so above Brian who was
crouching down the road, and in moments Belton was out and following. I
recapitulated the chances of risk with the bird that low on the dogs, decided to
take the shot and made a fast mount and fired on the bird which
crumpled and fell fluttering twenty yards in front of Brian. Brian went
into action and caught the grouse, losing his grip and following it pell-mell
into the thicket on the lower side when I could see that he had it, falling
quantities of feathers as he stood over it. It had been a nice shot, dropping the
grouse going like the wind but straightaway about forty or fifty yards
by the time it hit the road. Kay who was in the car saw it all.

We spent the next ten minutes or more waiting for Brian to decide to
make the retrieval — ending with poor Belton sitting behind me watching Brian
mangle his bird. Kay finally returned Belton to the car and Brian, under

obvious threats from me, brought the good to me and held it in a
 case-like grip while Kay took some 35 mm. shots. Her movie camera was
 inoperative due to loss of a battery in her following the rocks.

NO PHOTO TAKEN AT 11:30 AM



This was a glorious moment for us all, and reassuring to find grouse once again
 in my old favorite type of cover - not the thickets regrowth which don't
 count, and I'm not sure all that thick stuff is the best to hunt. This bird
 is a yearling hen with several tailfeathers on the ~~left~~ right side growing back thicker
 than the balance as if from a near call with a predator (could be old mouse pattern).
 Brown had mangled the back unmercifully but I can't begrudge him his
 reaction - it has been so long. I was shooting 3-1/8 - 7/2 reload.

Kay kept Brown in the car while I hunted the meadow below the
 main road with Belton - hearing two flashes in the bottom but identifying them
 as ducks when I saw one at a distance still flying. This was a good
 afternoon - 5 separate grouse - 8 flashes in 2 hours a flos. Dard,
 and worth \$40.00!

Sunday 26 November
 cold, cloudy, 33°
 1 1/2 hr

White Oak
 award (not new) -
 no game
 award 2-4

George Bird Evans Papers
 West Virginia and Regional History Center
 Brown: 1 prod
 1 back
 Belton: 1 prod.

Wonderful flights thin & erratic.

45/78

Repts of good flights in Canaan & Blackmount

Castleton: Oct 30 - Nov 4

Huber: Nov - 8 - 11

New Hampshire: Dodge: approx. Nov. 20

Ohio: Roger Brown (jr) Nov. 18

Post-Deer Season

Tuesday 5 December

Cool, clear, sun, 40°
3 1/4 hrs.

Rehobeth Thomas / Arund Basin

March 3 - 4

2 shots - 0

Brian: 1 prod.
1 3/4 hrs.

Belton:

Probably our last trap of the season to this wonderful extent. Brian in good shape and sight but limiting his time out. I say dropped me and Belton off at near end, at bend in road just before topping Citymiller hill - excellent grapevine cover, old rail fence, tangles and logs but no birds. I say drove on to the Davis place (Clyde & Vera's old home).

I found the grapevine area limited, unless it extends around ridge lower down, and came to a barren open woods on top, but soon worked into the edge of good thorus as it were thicket. Belton handling beautifully without bell but wearing electronic collar. An old farm road (years - since) led back into a fine area of hawthorns that should attract 'cock in flights. Surprised to discover a fair-sized stream flowing south across this flat - must result in the boggy area to the north and probably seems larger even after violent rains in recent days. In old flat terrain is

waggy or actually flooded today (nice quiet conditions) 46
One short check by ~~Bill~~ ^{Bellan} on scent that proved a rabbit that I
saw sneek out. No birds.

I entered the good margin of thorns of some alders all the
way to the hedgerow cove where I was ~~deep~~ disappointed to
sight two men (heard 3) at our parking area, apparently leaving
in a blue pickup - probably having hunted the good cove I was
saving for Kay & Brian. Doubling back into the fur thorns, I
finally worked out the margin of the true thorn cover & rendezvous
with Kay at 3:00, hearing a grouse flush from the edge thorns not
far from the "feed-box oak", sound only and headed south. This
would not bear out the thought that the hunter had been here.

Finally made connections with Kay who had been further
south on the road (saw Clyde & Loren come by and talked), and we
got started back in the thorns with Brian about ~~3:30~~ 3:30,
working into a blinding sun. Why do you always hunt into the
sun?

Brian moved beautifully, covering long bit of terrain,
showing interest a couple of places (is this just faith?) but no
contacts. Kay suggested that we hunt to the far run, but still not
with any results. We considered working out the Arund Basin, which
looked lovely in its black-brown bleakness of December, far to the
west of south - ridge after ridge, but decided against it. Had
started up the edge of woods when Kay called that Brian had
stopped out in the open hillside and I found our pointing near

what seemed an old fence row with a few small trees and a tree, 47/28

He was sixty yards or more away, headed up the slope with his head high & turned left into the narrow strip of cover, and hid.



PERFECT

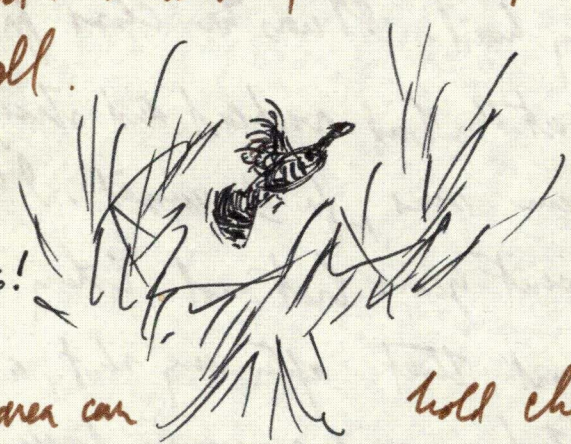
work!

We followed this flight - a long one across open land to good growth ahead and after some work, heard a flash from the dog - out of my view - and saw the grouse flash into a tree high above me, sit a few moments, and take off, coming over my head. It was too close for an incoming shot, and I turned and fired at the bird overhead and straightaway, hitting too far below it, I am sure, for I missed. I have been doing fairly well on this shot in recent years but not today. I did not see it, but Kay said afterwards that after my shot, a hawk swooped down at the grouse, missing its pass and zooming back up.

I had guessed this a reflex of Brinn's bird, but on further thought I have doubts that a grouse would, on reflex, have gone to a tree before taking off. This seems more nearly a first-flush behavior; most grouse, once flushed, are alerted to get out promptly the next time around. Unable to mark the flight, as failed to relocate, covering the area to the end of the woods where one year or more ago

Time was running out and we had a long way to go to the car; we took the upper edge over the hill and cut directly to the main thorn cover. There in the main thorn where we had hunted those about an hour or more before, I hoped to meet grouse #1. I had merely heard earlier. I was on the cow path that runs south just outside the thorn, when I heard a flush from the dogs and saw a grouse rising right - quavering and coming my way. I waited until it cleared the thorn, swinging up from the bird as it crossed the path and fired, sensing that I may have stopped my barrels, yet still expecting a hit. It wasn't, and the grouse was gone before I could fire another shell.

100%
KEEP SWINGING!



I can still clearly see another grouse crossing this same general path two or three seasons ago, and also nursing. Sometimes

think a given area can hold charm, or bad luck, affecting shots that would normally be made.

This was the end of action - which today had been good enough on grouse. But I think it is clear that the 'cock' has gone, a sad eventuality that we must face each season.

6 December
Wednesday ~~at home~~
sunny, mild 45°

Asa Wright
mowed 2-3
0

13/4 Brian: 2 prod.

49/88

Belton: flushed

2 3/4 hrs

Another in a string of glorious days - incredible for December. We drove to the
Asa W. place to find the quince Steve Leiblich says are there. We, as usual, chided.
The cover is still prime quince cover, grass, tangles of brush and weeds, old roads,
shrubland, rocks. We hunted the upper margin from the corner below Wright's,
having walked the abandoned road part Brian and I'd apple trees that would hold
quince in New England and don't here. There was nothing in the good cover, so we
dropped below the log road to less optimum cover - and found Brian on
point. He is gorgeous - as perfect as ever. I hurried around to come in from
the side in front of him. Belton was out in on this one; the quince simply
flushed from Brian's me, I suppose - too far out to get a shot. I might have
got closer had I continued moving, but Brian had turned as the scout was coming
from nearer us, and I stopped. The bird went out fairly low and in fact I
admitted this is followed the bottom cover as far as I that it went.

Back along the log road, Brian had another point - he was
coming into dense tangles like a youngster - and we only guessed at
this one by his and Belton's actions. I suspect Belton of moving in a that
quince - but we can't get the evidence on him except to use the shrub, which
altho he's wearing it for this purpose.

We followed and feel as had a refresh on this one - no
point - and climbed to the upper edge at the pasture when it having
been ~~1 3/4~~ 1 3/4 hours, they walked Brian back to the car. Seeing the ~~two~~

of them going up over the skyline, Billy leading Brian on a leash with frequent stops while he turned and looked back for me inquiringly was heartbreaking for me, but he has no way of understanding why. And I do, so clearly.

Belta & I turned and plunged back down the ridge thru perfect cover with no game in it - heartbreaking in another way. We hunted all the way to the area where I shot the quon with my Fox the day I was losing faith in the Purduy - or myself - and Blio's retrieval. She had little enough wisdom to read game numbers but, thanks to, she had for more than an hour now. Belta hunts so hard with no little reward, but happily for him, just hunting seems reward. I'm using both dogs without bells and without a game cover. Belta keeps nicely in touch, and if he occasionally widens too much, a touch with the whistle brings him around.

All the way Blio flat on the French West play as hunted - hard - and I was tired but missed nothing. Day was waiting at the dip in the road and I climbed in the car with pleasure. I wonder if I'll see game shooting within of the name again.

Monday 11 December Fisher Place
perfect, sunny, clear 32° moved 1-1
2" of snow 2 1/4 hrs.

Brian :
Belta :

Star Lebrun's report of quon - again ~~two~~ years.
Good cover around Beck place, no birds. Saw tracks of 2 quon about Melburn/Fisher fence on way down. On way back I followed them to upper level but found nothing. Saw one quon flush from top of tall tree and fly over to old Hambok. at least something

Tuesday 12 December

Cherry Run

Brain: 1 prod.

51/78

cold, cloudy to 2 1/4 hrs around 3 (not now) - 3
clearing at end. 35°

Beltan:

Snow still on ground. Excellent cover here for a day like this
A grouse flushed from the dogs on far side of first run at breakfast; Kay
saw it cross back over; I merely heard it. We doubled back to try to
locate it in the dense tangle along stream but missed nothing. Hard to
miss them this stuff.

Returning to original direction along log road, as walked the
road upstream along bulldozed area - fine snow cover here. While dogs
were working elsewhere, I caught motion down along stream and saw a
grouse run out on a small snow opening, rest, and flush across to far
side with no trace of sound. Kay, a few yards behind me, heard nothing, so
I know it was a silent takeoff. How many birds do this - birds we know
nothing about unless we happen to be looking in their direction?

We worked both dogs without bells - conducive to good
handling but occasionally unwieldy as when we lost sight of Brain,
after we had started on following a lot of leeches. Whistling produced no
reply of him, so we moved on out the road. Suddenly a grouse exploded
within yards of me but hidden by a mass of brush, and Kay watched
its flight back to the south. At this stage I saw Brain was in from
where he had certainly been on point all the while near us while we
were whistling. What a magnificent dog!

We hunted back the flight but had no reflex. Ended the
day feeling we had had action but also frustration. Both dogs worked
beautifully. Brain is doing so well this is only 4th day after his 2nd treatment

Wednesday 13 December Walkers Hollow

Bruin
Bella

Cloudy, windy,
mist - 44°

March 3-3
0

2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.

Snow gone on many slopes but still on shady areas. On way up the hollow, I missed, if I can be called that, a goose leaning a tree ahead of legs. Very nervous. New cuttings - last 2 or 3 years to present - on upper slope of Walkers Hill - will be fine cover in a season or two but will there be any grass to eat it?

Hoped to find something in the upper end in thorns but nothing. Bruin working like an angel, took us up the ravine at back end to top where our holiday stream was shot a grain pointed by Bruin on face side of fence - a grain that flew on, hit, and cut into top woods where we found it - Bruin did. at least, as has memories to hunt in these great events.

Today we creaked to top of hill (we saw "bones" that Jim Reevad had moved on the thorn hillside - great to hunt) and down the big "towerline" to run at bottom, crossed and hunted back west along path - Beautiful cover in here - grasses etc - but no grass. Heard Bruin bark "tree" and hurried to him with Bella standing at my feet most of the way, nearly throwing me, only to find a small possum clinging to a thin sapling a few yards above Bruin and looking terrified. We got him away with difficulty, and hunted up the "small" towerline to top of Harade ridge, and out top path to the big towerline again when a

Once more hunting west to top field and nearly froze in high north wind, trying to get Brian to come with us down over the hill toward the run. Less windy here, and we worked thru good grasses - no grapes in sight - and crossed the north wing fence into the dense white growth. Just before reaching this, a grouse flushed back from further out ahead and sailed like a leaf in the wind back the way - too far to try a shot. Strangely small looking bird. Finally, with Kay taking the lower traces of path while I fought an old cover of bent-over sapling, all leaning about 45° and nearly impossible to pass them - probably from 1974 snow. Once thru that, I was into briars. When the goddammed bears tear the goddammed cap off your goddammed head, it is time to take a day off from hunting.

Kay heard #3 grouse go out from ahead of her - no dog, no sound, so put it up. This is not grouse gunning.

Friday 15 December Upper Beaver / Fred Rodchever Brian alone

sunny, windy, 44°
 2 3/4 hrs. moved 1 (not new) - 3

still snow mostly. Took Brian for a day alone, with Kay, to give him the show to himself, having waited for the weather to mellow, but the wind is still high after a couple of days. Nice cordial reception by Fred Rodchever - said no one had been hunting other than deer. We started in same area as when with Charles Neatter. at edge of woods, Brian almost immediately began working ground next - a tracks, and a grouse flushed about 50 yards ahead from some brush,

54
flying south. I've noticed that Brian has been involved with
low head work on ground recent more than normally, but since he
handles grass so beautifully, I haven't minded. But today I
felt he missed the real scent by such an approach.

However, it may have been partly due to the brook wind that
cut thru even this woods. We marked the flight - a low one, not
suggesting any distance, and followed up the log road. Before
we reached the area of the 5-rod flush last time, the grass flashed
from a relatively open piece of the woods - away down branches and
over small rocks - and headed for Beaver Creek and the ledge. Brian
and I lay well away of the flush, again, a low one.

The next and last contact was a flash Kay saw from the
top of the rock ledge, too far off the ground to have swim a dog's
chance. That was it. We combed the top flat and down side to
below the ledge - huge rocks in an area - with no results. Brian,
who worked too independently today as if trying to convince us he
was all the dog we needed, got separated from us for a long period,
but finally reappeared from down over, trailing us, after we had
washed long and hard.

at the road, as returned to the car and took Brian into the
new slashing on the north side. At one place he worked recent and I
felt as we were going to find the 566 bird from last time but it didn't
happen. Brian worked very well of the woods, and showed no fatigue.
Back of the empty barn below the road, I saw him just as he went over
a board fence, his hindquarters ^{resting on the top board.} What a dog
George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center



THE OLD DOG.

The trip is always elevated by the view of the sunsets from the top of this ridge — a sweeping expanse of our world of ridges. Sleds, and as I dropped the car and drank it in, along with some coffee.

Saturday 16 December

Humberston / Meathens

Prin

cloudy, some wind, 50°
3 1/4 hrs.

count 5 - 7 flocks
1 shot - 0

Bellon: 1 prod.

We hunted longer today than I could have wished for Prin, but he showed no real fatigue, hunting hard for the 5th day this week. Saw some from some fields and not much credit on shady hillsides. Saw nothing on the Humberston land, largely because I could seem to keep us on decent open footings — this having grown to hellish blackberry and greenbrier swamps. I seem to hit into more thorny briars this season with few good woods roads, and in spite of the abundance of grapes as in see earlier, the greenbrier as a counter hunting are almost lost!?

First contact was in the Meathens piece below the lower road — rhododendron clumps and small woods. The green flushed off open ground a short piece to one side of Prin who ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{again} ~~ground~~ ^{scout} again. I

felt he should have had a point. We searched it and the ravine
between Humblorn &
Mathews and Kay heard
it flash with noise.

I got across the short distance
ravine without realizing I had crossed, so continued up onto Mathews. Here
again, it was almost impenetrably briars and brush, the old paths being
almost obscured. Hunting up the slope we saw a grouse, ~~the~~ flash
from ~~the~~ the left of Brian, who our man was walking foot next. I feel
this was another chance lost.

at the top of the ridge, in line, I saw Belton point briefly,
then was as the following the flash a short bit. Belton's point was
a stylish one as far as I could see, but brief - not his fault.

Again, we fought a miserable way thru the briars and brush
at top, coming out to an open road, at last, when we ate lunch
with both dogs ~~at~~ lying at our feet.

at the end of the ridge and after crawling some more cutting
with no results, we stepped onto the open field at the bottom, as I
considered the time when it would have been possible to expect a grouse there.
My remark was broken by Kay's "there!" and I turned to see both dogs
at a clump of tall sumac growing around a few saplings and a grouse
rising in the open and banking around the clump of cover. I suppose
there was a time I was fast enough to have snatched off a shot - I would -
but today I wasn't. The entire sequence was unpredictable.

We followed down over to the road at the lower edge, but found no sign of the bird. Leaving Kay in the old road, I creaked with the dogs around to the right and back in to some new doornings cut within days, and worked back toward Kay. Suddenly Belton took off as tho' after a flushing bird that must have pitched into the large woods below, and I heard Kay call that she had heard a flush.

Following on east thru downed treetops - good cover - I saw Pinin working ground about mid and I think I called a whistle to start him on when I saw him feather and go in as tho' a bird was taking off. It came down across, giving me a grand shot right-to-left and about twenty yards away, and I swung in from behind, passing and firing at exactly the right spot and still missing them. I knew it would fall. It simply flushed at the sound or perhaps the proximity of the passing pellets but went on into the large woods. These incredible misses are beginning to unravel me when I seem to do them right and fail to hit. I can't stress last as two new birds.

It was late, and I tried for the most direct way to the car - not wanting to keep Bruce out so long. Heading to the Escalant line, we followed it up over the ridge (as tho' the dogs flushed a turkey that came back over my - high (as had seen droppings). Crossing the ~~the~~ shortlander paved along the fence line, we took the top of Humberson's back, with Kay in the field about me. A long day for Bruce, but a good one with first success. But what abominable shooting! I can't believe it

Monday 18 December

Jimi Collins

2 1/4 hrs. Brian

cloudy, cold, traces 35°
of snow, ground frozen
windy 2 1/2 hrs. moved 4 (3 new) - 5

Belton: back (improv.)

Took Kay and Brian back to where Belton & I had
stopped in late one "rite". Today, we hunted the excellent grapes (with
lots of grapes) out to end of upper stratum of cover with no action. Both
dogs tending to move a bit wild in eagerness. In semi-clearing at end -
old pasture with clumps of wire and thicket, Brian made a grand point
that sent my pulse up and I stepped Belton to back, but the point
proved empty (an early flush?).

Kay decided to go to bring the car to bottom of hill which I
walked the two dogs back thru the woods lower down. All went quietly
until I came out on a woods road. I saw Belton stop on the upper side
and immediately heard a flush and saw Belton break as the grouse
bored away and across the ^{main} road into the stand of pines on the far side.

Hearing toward the road I heard a sound and saw a second grouse
flush across the road far ahead of Brian, this bird starting the
left edge of the pines.

I signaled Kay to join me from where she stood at the car,
and we put the dogs into the dense pines. A few mowed paths
divided the stand and we covered the area as well as possible.
On our return higher, Kay walked into a grouse in the dense spruce.
We first considered it a reflex but then came on a fresh roost,
which would seem to make this # 3.

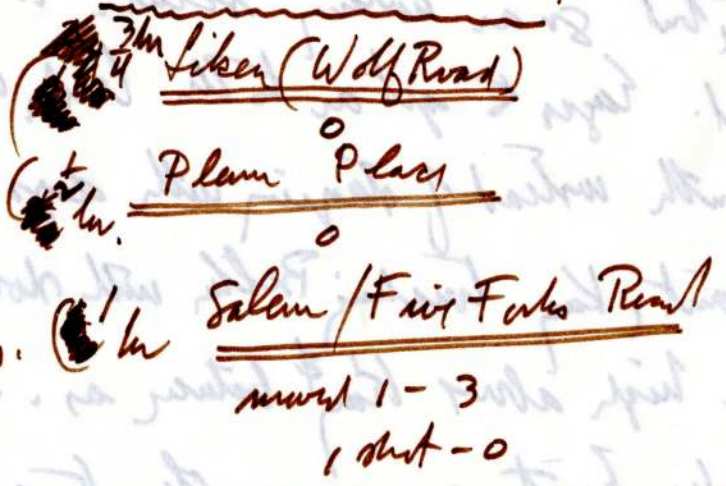
We dashed back to try to reflect the light but this dense
cover is too thick. Coming round house, Kay walked into another,

which must have been #1 - reflected. But why are the dogs
nursing these birds? And why am I invariably in the wrong place?

Kay went to the car with Brian and I took Belton into the margin of
the big woods on the north side of the road, hoping to locate the lost
bird. I walked there unsuccessfully, then cursed and again covered the
east margin of the four sides (pines) while Kay drove slowly down the road.
at the bottom at the old house site, Belton behaved as tho he'd flushed a
bird or seen one flush, in the thick pines above the clearing, and at that
time Kay blew 4 shots, having seen a grouse soil in from the left side
and land below the clearing in some pine cuttings. Can this have been the
bird Belton saw, crawling across and back down?

Kay walked into the area from above while I waited on the road
hoping for a shot. Nothing. Exchanging dogs, I took Brian into the good cover
along the east of the ridge and down the hollow - made old roads thru
the pines. Finally gave up and returned to Kay & Belton in the car.

Tuesday 19 December
cloudy, cold, frozen
ground, 36°
traces of light snow



Brian: back (unfed)
Belton

missed 1 - 3
1 shot - 0

First try on basis of report of 6 grouse missed thru Saturday (Vicki
Nicholas last evening). Good cover but unmercifully thick, after adequate
coverage - no birds - I walked dogs to upper edge across from mine
house - unoccupied now at this season (grouse probably not up (good
quarrying corner in there). Drove to Plum pines when Jim Bennett drove

always reports birds - none. Drove in last part of day to Fair Forks / Salem road to find a rabbit hunter and 4 wheel vehicle parked where we wanted to hunt. Heard the woods road on right side and hurried in fading light into cover.

Good grapes here but hellish briars & brush. Deciding between two good grapevine clumps I picked the wrong one - for for me this year - and heard a flush from the other - turning in time to see the grape top the car (too late for shot). Neither dog ~~then~~ had been in the area. Why? Kay, as usual, had a great view of the bird. What is this?

Followed flight and put Belton right on the bird which he evidently heard start out, for I saw him turn and fail to hunt. Again followed.

at far edge of woods - field beyond on north - I saw Brine almost point, but go on walking recent. Belton joined him and nothing happened. Eager to get on to the bird, wherever it was, I moved on down a path instead of staying with dogs. They put the end out with no point, Kay touching Belton with stock collar. The grouse came back high above Kay & between us. at last moment I followed up to be in front and swung them to a good lead and fired, still swinging, and of course missed what is this goddamned thing? Was using a 3-1-8 lead hoping for better pattern and it was about 40 yards but still ~~missed~~ ^{was a shot}.

Getting out of the woods in near darkness wasn't easy with no
paths and trees to kill you. Got to car at 5:30. I am fed
up with such luck. Don't understand why the dogs, at least, aren't effective.

~~Friday 22 December~~

Friday 22 December
partly sunny, cool 40°
snow on shady slopes
3 hrs.
speaking here: inter
crop:

Birds, Place

moved 1 - 2
2 shots - 1 hit O.P.

Belton: 2 prod.
1 kill O.P.
1 net

Briars under pan from Oneain shot yesterday; Kay stayed
at home with him. I took Belton to valley behind Marshall
Shepard's, moving nothing all the way up west base on
good bulldozed road with fine grass cover with grapes.
Climbing the east side to the top on Fortney edge, I came to the clearing
with dead goldenrod & ferns and began hunting south toward the woods on flat.
I was musing over my recent string of misses - four - and contemplating
how I should swing on a crossing bird - bad medicine - when a quail
flushed from frozen goldenrod/fern cover in front of me and about 25 yards
ahead and gave me a grand straightaway low chance in wide open air,
headed for the woods in front. I mounted and held exactly as it and fired at
a fine range, about 30 yards or so - and watched it fly on after a brief
flinch at the report. Realized afterward that I'd had time for a left

Carrel shot, which I can't seem to remember.
These things are incredible. I could perhaps have done well
to hold a bit above the bird which was only slightly
below my eye level, but on clays I think it would
have been a hit.



Belton would walk in the woods when we followed and at two places gave
signs of flushing but scent around some branches on the ground, ever rooting under
them. But the snow was untraced and ~~walked out anything~~ there.

I mention the following in detail as an example of what not to do 62
in following a flushed quon. We came to excellent quoneries at the south
end of the ridge, with fresh quon tracks and I expected our bird to reflash
there, but it didn't. Doubling back the narrow woods to the site of flush, we
hunted lower, then out across an open field to good cover on a hedge row —
fine cops of quonier berries on vines — and once more back to the narrow woods,
where we stopped to eat.

Afterwards, I sent Belton on beyond where we had hunted first and
deeper into the quoneries and before long I saw him on a fine point, standing
just outside the cover on the field's edge, but turned and pointing into the woods.
He was really a seventy yards away — solid — and I hurried toward him after
giving the key whistle to let him know I saw. Keeping under the woods, I
avoided the fallen logs & brush and vines and long before I got close I
saw, and suppose heard, the quon flash cursing right, well up in the
trees. Doubting I'd have a shot, I mounted and took a chance, firing as I
continued surging well ahead, and saw the quon go down with a
broken wing. It was a long shot — 40 yards — and a good one, but the
quon went down in a hellish tangle of quoneries and fallen timber. I
ran toward it, picking my footing as well as I ~~could~~ could, and calling Belton,
who was coming in from his site of point. He does well ~~in~~ in these circumstances,
and follows my direction, but I judged the distance a bit short, stopping
at the tangle of vines and snow-covered logs, and then saw Belton at the
right and below me, pointing, and knew he'd found the bird.

It was a glorious point — high head, nice tail, and so steady that
I'm counting it as a separate production for the ~~quon~~ quon.



FROM THE EDGE.

scrambled over many logs and saw the quon on this side of the log when Belton was pointing the bird erect but drooping but at my approach, it fluttered out and in a moment, at my command, fetch! Belton had it, the

quon fluttering in his mouth. I dispatched it and let him hold it, then retrieved it to me when I had walked away from him. He was ecstatic.

The quon was a yearling hen and the plumage was undisturbed, for all the struggle and Belton's grip. This was Belton's first quon retrieval, and a lovely piece of work - both on the original production and on the second hunt when he found the fallen bird.

It was about 4:30, and as hunted across the head of the valley to the tangle of yuccas, all in shadow, on the hill behind the Bishop stable, when I reached the road after a haul up that slope, and hunted the road to the bottom, then cut to the car at Shufers - a cold hard hunt, but what a feeling of pleasure! Belton was hunting hard to the last minute.

Saturday 23 December

cold, cloudy; ~~40~~ 40°

2 1/2 hrs.

Cherry Run
new
murd 1-0

Belton
hunted well

Ray took Tim, still not hunting, to Penna. to do some chores (car wash etc) at ~~Memora~~, and decided Belton & me off at Cherry Run. I hunted the usual roads up the valley, no flickers today, and to beyond our normal area, starting up ~~the~~ toward the farm on

the cliffs, when I passed for a
 lot of lumber, sitting on a white oak
 log at the edge of the road. It
 was 4 p.m. and I was to meet Ray
 at 5, so turned back, taking an
 alternate road at one place near the
 stream. I was, again, thinking of

my shot - and miss - when I heard a fleck of wings - not roar -
 and turned to see a grouse rising left-quartering toward the stream.
 Feeling it too far to shoot, I mounted regardless and held on the
 bow leveling but with my finger on the second trigger, just as
 practice, only to realize that the grouse was probably still within
 left-barrel range and not out over Cherry Run as I had thought.

Another chance passed, from lack of alertness, but I am not
 concerned. Belton moved in after the bird lifted and I had not been
 aware he was on them. I am not certain he was not pointing, but
 can't count count it as definite. I think this is a new bird in here.

Hunted all the way to the road with no other contacts, but the
now and now, indicates no other hunters in here. This is a
 fine piece of winter cover and we'll see more of it later.

Am hunting the dogs with falcon bells (from the Obamas) instead of the large
 sheep bells. Same pitch exactly but less "clonky" and carry well, but I think
 less disturbing to grouse.

Tuesday 26 December

Jerome / Nicholson

Brian alone

65/78

Sunny, cold, snow 33°
on ground.

2 1/2 hrs. Tooke Brian alone, hoping for an old-fashioned day of luck together. But we did not move a feather (as he on the 5 that Eric Hewett saw in deer season?). I saw one lone, fresh, track on the lower slope of the Jerome hollow. This is all great cover, with the entire Nicholson (Chorpenning) ridge in perfect slashed after-timbering condition - old brush piles, grapevines, bulldozed roads, but not a bird. Discouraging. Brian hunted hard with no sign of fatigue. Ray home with a cold, worst luck.

Thursday 28 December Bob Mathews

Brian

Bella

cold, ~~partly sunny~~ ~~to~~ ~~about~~ ~~3~~ ~~hours~~ ~~0~~
~~slightly~~ sunny, ~~about~~ ~~3~~ ~~hours~~ ~~0~~
march 2 (not new) - 2

My 72nd birthday and I think I can say I feel like 52, though there have been a few in between when I didn't. Tooke both Brian & Bella to what I thought was a good chance for ground. Ray still home-bound with her Christmas Eve cold.

Drove to the now-empty house to learn that even the trailer is no longer there, so I had all this afternoon's plans to myself. It was hanging with snow - about 4" on the ground with knee-deep dead weeds & sedge full of snow that was like wading. The sky was cloudless, the air perfectly still.

We worked ~~up~~ ~~the~~ old field road and up to the left along the margin of woods. Brian began ground-working tracks in the woods - too thick for me to enter but Bella went wide and I heard a flush from his location, then a second that might have been the same bird leaving a tree - a quail that I glimpsed, ~~at~~ ~~5~~ ~~yards~~ ~~away~~.

Followed the flock up into the top of woods, using log road but had no reflex I could detect, the Brian was gone a long time with no sound of his bell and many hours had it pointed.

Returned to lower margin — and the same clump — no end then today — and hunted out to the far woods where on Christmas Eve 1973 Brian pointed and I shot and Brian returned the $16\frac{1}{8}$ " quon — what memories! Hunted down to lower road and started back, noting the new starlings when I missed my shot last visit. Found this cutting much more extensive than I'd realized. Paved for lunch after feeding quon #2 from pine down tree top starlings from Brian — no view. I sat at the brunt of a cliff I didn't know was there with both dogs at my feet — Brian begging food all the while — and realized how fortunate I am, this unparadised as concerns quon numbers.

It was getting late and I hunted the lower edge over back — more starlings all the way — I suppose so vast I can't even it.

at ~~one~~ place I walked out a bulldozed road and suddenly felt my left foot go thru the snow and into a hole ~~of~~ halfway to my knee — a coal drill test hole.

Walked to the car in a pink sunset with both dogs working their hearts out to find quon that weren't here. at least today.

A good way to spend a 72nd birthday, if I'd had been there.

Friday 29 December
Cold, cloudy, 36°
2 hrs.

Salem / Fin Forks
mixed, not near,
0

Brian alone

Still snow on ground. I don't like it. Took Brian here to try to find birds in the grapes but found only tracks. This is land of Playland Mount. Brian hunted too far from me and too much with nose to ground - even mouse tracks. Found good cover north of here but no quon. A cutting wind as I crossed a field made the woods feel good when I reached it - Tried to unravel what were one two or three sets of tracks in snow of forest area - no action - then sat in car to eat lunch at 4 pm; Brian eager for his treats. Found 7/4 hour along edge of pines on Ralph Muller's land across road with Brian behaving outrageously moving every inch of ground. Coming toward car at end, I heard and saw the only bird of the day flicker from a low crabapple with clump of dead oak leaves in top - cross the road and direction toward pines. We followed but that was all. I am getting fed up with this sort of thing. Food and exercise is not enough!

Tuesday 16 January '79 Wilderness (Cherry Run)

Snow, cold, cloudy 30° mixed 1-1
crusty 1 hr } 2 1/2 hrs. tracks.
1 1/2 hr }

Brian:
Belton:

This seemed a good day to try quail, so we drove to the Wilderness and hunted the George Bird Evans Papers quail at

the far end beyond the impoundment. The grapes was still on a number of vines, there were no human footprints, and it looked right. Well along the woods road we saw tracks of grouse moving into cover above the road - about four sets. The dog worked a bit too far about us and they saw ^{one bird} and that she heard at least a second flush.

We marked the flight back toward the strip mine scar and thro we followed, we did not relocate, altho the bird had no place to go. Finally saw some tracks moving to lower side of road (don't understand why we had not seen these on way out) but moved none.

We worked along the north edge of the impoundment clearing, saw two more sets of tracks in slashings there, and they hunted around lower margin but well in the cover. This is excellent slashbed cover here and should hold grouse in winter conditions. There was frozen flooded water thru the woods, making walking difficult at end of our hour, we returned to the car and drove down to the Cherry Run court, setting on the way.

at 4 pm. we started hunting in the log road and found a number of grouse tracks in one of the old fields to the left, but no birds. Further out the log and bulldozed roads we saw nothing until we returned, when we looked below where Thom had made a mistake on the way out. There on the flat along the creek and among slashings and thickets we saw what appeared to be tracks of 3 or 4 grouse. They could have been the same birds whose tracks we had seen in the old field. But we found no birds. Could they not move the tracks?

Tuesday 23 January

Cherry Run

69/

cloudy, ^{of sun} warmer 37°

moved 3 ^{2 near} 4 flocks

Brian: 1 ret.!!

2:45 - 5:30 / 2 ³/₄ km.

1 shot - 1 hit

Bella: 1 prod.

young cock: solid
crop: loaded with thick
green leaves that must
be laurel, very few buds, twigs

Day milder and snow softening, and we headed
for good courts, planning to try the Wilderness.
But as we approached on Rt 48, we saw the
ice glistening on the upper portion of the
ridges above Hazelton, and, encountering

a glare of ice on Carstool Road, backed and parked opposite Arthur
Teet's land.

Hunting out the usual way, we found no tracks in the old
field this time, nor in the creek edge further on. About here, Kay
tripped and took a bad fall that seemed to do her no real harm,
but during the evening, her wrist was strained handling a plate and
gave her considerable discomfort.

It seemed odd, with the softening snow, that there had been
no activity along the bulldozed roads, and no contact with birds
by the dogs. Both were hunting beautifully, Brian in fine spirits
and Bella handling well - a joy to hunt over.

Finally, beyond the "marker humlock" we started up a log
road leading to an upper level I had never tried, but from my position
ahead of Kay, I turned when I came to the ice band - a
distinct coating of ice on most everything. I suggested there was no
use expecting birds in that condition, but Kay suggested since we

had plenty of time that we explore it.

It proved to be a flat with excellent shocked condition - brush piles recent enough not to be choked with blackberry briars, and with a lacuz of log roads that looked like perfection. Brian & Berta had moved out one of the roads and they called that they were looking birds, then exclaimed when she saw a grouse go out beyond them and cut down the hillside. Suddenly, after both dogs had pushed out of sight, a grouse came angling out toward me from left/front and cut across left-to-right about head high and going fast. It was a shade closer than the 20-~~yard~~^{yard} ~~yard~~ ^{yard} about distance - about 15 yards - and I instinctively mounted and swung through, firing when I got ahead. For a moment I thought I'd missed - I've had too many disappointments this year - but saw the bird go down and heard that wonderful sound from Kay. Both dogs raced to me and I directed them down the slope into the tangle of brush piles and rocks. Brian soon got the bird and disappeared. When he didn't come in view, I knew he had it -

He was standing with his head down among the mowing tangle, instead wagging, and we approached and prepared to get a word of the retrieving ritual. That ritual became a disgraceful spectacle as it wanted and coaxed him, and cooed, and begged, and demanded, and ordered, and threatened, which he watched us and stood and deliberately despised that body course.



JUST RIGHT.

Still, I wanted Brad to have that as a bona fide retriever, and I moved below and waited longer, certain he wouldn't hurt the bird. He took time to grope at Belton from a distance, and at last, when finally went to him and got him started. The delivery, when it came, was with a sorry looking bird. It must have had a lovely tail - there were 3 or 4 feathers left, and both legs were bare, and the back plumage gone. But still we made over Brad and he was delighted with himself, the scowdrel. Next time I went out there. It was a male, and I think a yearling, tho' the primaries were soaked.

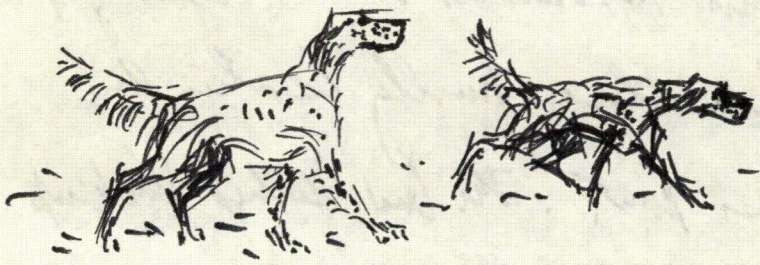
After parsing to eat, we hunted in the direction of the second bird (first to flush) in case we got a point. Found fresh tracks that might well have been laid by that bird, tho' a short flight, and Belton came in and pointed. He handled it beautifully, pointing, then moving in to pin closer, finally locating the grouse with a nice stylish intense point. The bird flushed back up over the ridge - a small bird.

160%
end p 173



BEAUTIFUL WORK.

We hunted up one of the many log roads to follow, but at the flat saw Belter point again, in an area that could not be the same ground. Brian moved in instead of backing but also point, obviously on hot scent. Both dogs stood sporadically, and I got it on more film. As I moved around to the right to approach from the side, Belter broke and moved on, reaching intensely for scent but Brian held with his head very high, almost leaning back. My pulse was racing, it looked so certain, but there was no land there at that time. A possibly pre-flush. Anyway it was a honey of a double point.



HIGH VOLTAGE.

We hunted up one of the many log roads to follow, but at the flat saw Belter point again, in an area that could not be the same ground. Brian moved in instead of

We circled the area with no further action and, since it was after five, headed down one of the difficult log roads. This is a grand coast up here with potential.

1/6/79

+ 1.23 x .73 = 1 1/8

Partway down the slope, Belton & Brian were making a large
Mudohunian clump and a group - #3 - flushed out low and
down the ridge. Can't tell if either had any trace of a point.
No more action but a new track crossed the log road near the
small bridge but no bird. A grand day in spite of counter-
contacts.

Wednesday 28 February

Bill Ringer

west in ^{not} cold woods
Brian
Belton

Last Day.

Sunny to cloudy 47°
snow everywhere
1 1/2 hrs.

Weather fair enough overhead but snow deep,
and we would not have gone out but this was the

last day of what may be the last season for Brian. We drove to
the Escentronts and parked in their garage entry - too much snow to
park along road - and attempted to walk along the open fields above them
toward the Matthews Place. We waded boots top deep into the woods
and saw it was impossible; waded back to the car and drove down
off the ridge to Hamilton.

There we decided to try the Bill Ringer place as mentioned near
the Cherry Run road. Parked and found the snow here only slightly less
deep. Brian & Belton, very keen, were loyal and waded into the
deepest deep snow, hunting the excellent quail which cover as we
struggled up the ridge.

Partway up, we came on grouse tracks - fairly fresh - and Brian
tried valiantly to find game that wasn't there. The blackberry briars
had taken over what was left of the path and we, too, took to the

woods in self-defense but found ~~ourselves~~ ^{ourselves} stepping into holes 74
under the deep snow.

At the top we came to the ^{old} road along the fence line, saw another
set of snow tracks older than the first, and hunted out to the end of
the cove.

Working down over the big jumble of rocks, we hunted along the
lower edge of woods back to the new little lawn, and down toward the
main road, where they went for the car, meeting us at the road —

Both dogs worked as if they ~~that~~ ^{would} be a tomorrow, with no more
by an unremitting Fate to give us anything right. I would
ask for a lot more.

Brian died on May 10, 1979. He was pointing quail at
Hunting Hills on May 2, very much slowed down but happy
and intense and honest on his points. On Saturday before Easter —
April 14 — Brian made his last point on a grouse just beyond the
big aspen in the Gates in the Canyon Valley — a glorious point
held far ahead of us as we approached. As the bird lifted and
came back around to our left, Brian's bell sounded from where he
had been hovering. Brian's work was magnificent to the end.



THE LAST POINT ON GROUSE

THE GATES APRIL 14 '79

George Bird Evans Papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center

COV.	DAYS/HRS.	GROUSE/FLUSH	SHOTS/HITS	1978 BRIAR PROD. BACK-KILL-RET	BELTON PROD. BACK-K-R
34	4 / 10 1/4	6 / 11	3 / ①	1	2 · 1 · ① · 1
29	32 / 74 3/4	58 / 90	11 / ③	8 · 1 · ① · 1 · 2	5 · 3 · ① · 1 · 1
1	3 / 7 1/4	- / 3	0	"	"
30	35 / 82	58 / 93	11 / ③	"	"
1	3 / 6 3/4	2 / 5	1 / 1	0 - 1 - 1 - 1	1 0 1 0
31	38 / 88 3/4	60 / 98	12 / 4 ③	8 - 2 - 3 2 + ① 8 prod - 2 backflts 3 kills (1 kill o.p.) 3 net	6 - 3 - ② + 2 - 1 6 prod - 3 backflts 2 kill o.p. / 2 kills 1 net.

then 12/23

then 12/30

then 2/28 and

1978 WEEKLY LOG

COVERTS	DAYS-HRS.	GROUSE-FLUSHES	SHOTS-HITS	BRIAR				BELTON				WOODCOCK		
				PROD	BACK	KILL	RET	PROD	BACK	KILL	RET	BIRDS/FLUSHES	SHOTS/HITS	
3	4 / 14 1/4	16 / 22	0									2 / 4	them 10/14	
1	1 / 2	2 / 3	0									2 / 2	them 10/21	
4	3 / 7 1/4	6 / 6	2 / (1)	1 -	(1)	1		- -	1 -			13 / 17	3 / 2	
5	4 / 9 1/4	8 / 9		2	1	2	2	4	3	2 -		15 / 19	them 10/28	
6	4 / 11 1/4	12 / 20	1 - 0	1 -	-	-		-	1 -	-		20 / 27	5 / 1	
11	8 / 20 1/2	20 / 29	3 / (1)	2 -	(1)	1		5	1	1 -		35 / 46	8 / 3	
5	4 / 9 1/2	6 / 7	1 - 0	8	1	3	3	9	4	3 -			them 11/4	
16	12 / 30	26 / 36	4 / (1)					1 -	-	-			them 11/11	
3	4 / 8	1 / 3		1 -	-	-		6	2	2 2		16 / 19	5 / 2	
19	16 / 38	27 / 39	4 / (1)	1 -	-	-		1	1	1 -		51 / 65	13 / 5	
3	4 / 6	11 / 15	1 / (1)	3 -	(1)	1		9	1	3 3		15	6 5 2	them 11/18
22	20 / 44	38 / 54	5 / (2)					1	-	(1) -		3 / 5	no gun Pa.	
-	11 / 1 1/4	- / 1	no gun	3 -	(1)	1 - 2		3 -	-	-				
22	21 / 45 1/4	38 / 55	5 / (2)	12	1	3 3		15	8	5 2		54 / 70	13 / 5	
				1					1 -	-			them 11/25	
				-	1 -	-		1 -	-	-		2 / 4	no gun	
				4 -	(1)	1 - 2		2	2	(1) 1 -		56 / 74	13 / 5	
				12	2	3 3		16	8	5 2			them 12/2	
1	2 / 6	5 / 7	2 / 0	end of deer season										
23	23 / 51 1/4	43 / 62	7 / (2)	1										
3	5 / 13 1/4	9 / 17	1 / 0	7 -	(1)	1 - 2							them 12/9	
26	28 / 64 1/2	52 / 79	8 / (2)	1				1						
				8 -	(1)	1 - 2		3	2	(1) 1 -			them 12/16	

LOCAL 1978

21 COVERTS 45/77 2.14 B/c

HOYE RUN O20 2.3.0.2.2.0

WILDERNESS O28 4.4.0/N1 ^{new} 2.0

CHERRY CREEK N1 3.5.0/N15 2.1.0/D12 3.3.0/D23 ^{new} 1.1.0/J16 0.0/J23 3.4.1 ^{2 new}

UPPER BEAVER (RHODEHAVER) N4 6.9.0/D15 1.3.0

EZRA KELLY N6 0

LONG KNOB N8 3.4.0

WYMP'S GAP FURNACE N10 1.1.0

JIM COLLINS (LAUREL) N10 1.1.0, 1.1.0/D18 4.5.0

SUGAR VALLEY N11 1.1.0

FRANK WRIGHT N16 1.1.0

WHITE OAK N18 1.1.0.11.13.1/N19 4(3) ⁽³⁾ 4.0.3.5.0/N26 1.1.0.2.4
(Sunday) N6 (Sunday) N6

ASA WRIGHT D6 2.3.0

FIKE PLACE D11 1.1.0

WILKINSON HOLLOW D13 3.3.0

MATHEWS/HUMBERSON D16 5.7.0/D28 2.2.0

WOLF ROAD D19 0

PLUM PLACE D19 0

SALEM/FIVE FORKS D19 1.3.0/D29 1.1.0

BISHOP PLACE D22 1.2.0

JEROME/NICHOLSON D26 0

BILL RINGER F28 0

MASS.

1978

3 COV. 16 5.3 B/C

#1 BECKETT 010.5.5.0.1.0 / 012-11(9).15.0
VALLEY RD.

MORAN AREA 011.2.2.0

SHOLZ 013.1.3.0

BIG MOUNTAINS

7 COV 7 1.0 B/C

EDELMAN 025.2.3.0
 REHOBETH 025.8.11.1 / N2.12.16.1 / ~~DS.3~~ 2.4.0 3
 COSNER 027.2.2.0.3.3.1 2
 BAYARD 030.5.7.0
 BAYARD GRAVEYARD 030.3.4.0
 CRAZY DOG N2.2.4.0 2
 GATES N13.4.5.1

PENNA.

3 COVERTS 8 2.6 B/C

HENCKEL N20.3.3.0
 HUMBERSON RIDGE N21.0
 TUB RUN N22.5.8.0

DATA 1978
 MASS. 4
 GEORGE 38 DAYS - 88³/₄ W.M.
 KAY 29 "
 60 GROUSE/98 FLUSHES

12 SHOTS/4 HITS (3 O.P.) 33%

56 'COCK/74 FLUSHES

13 SHOTS/5 HITS 38.5%

3 MASS 5.3 B/C
 31 COVERTS 1.94 BIRD/COVERT
 28 WV 52/87 1.85 B/C
 21 LOCAL 45/77 2.14 B/C
 7 BIG MT. 7/10 1.0 B/C
 3 PA. 8/11 2.6 B/C

BRIAR 9 YRS. 9 MO. (10TH SEASON)
 LAST

DIED MAY 10 '79

31 DAYS

GROUSE 8 PROD.
 2 BACK PTS.
 3 KILLS (1 O.P.)
 3 RET.
 'COCK 12 PROD
 2 BACK PTS.
 3 KILLS
 3 RET

LIFETIME '69-'78

514 DAYS

GROUSE 482 PROD.
 91 KILLS
 (39 O.P.)
 71 RET.
 'COCK 485 PROD
 12 BACK
 144 KILLS
 122 RET.

BELTON 2 YRS. 5 MO. (3RD. SEASON)

36 DAYS

GROUSE 6 PROD
 3 BACKPTS.
 4 KILLS (2 O.P.)
 1 RET
 'COCK 16 PROD.
 8 BACKPTS.
 5 KILLS
 2 RET.

LIFETIME '76-'78

94 DAYS

GROUSE 10 PROD.
 14 BACKPTS.
 6 KILLS
 (2 O.P.)
 1 RET.
 'COCK 31 PROD
 46 BACK
 22 KILLS
 3 RET