

WV season opened 17 October. We were packing for the trip & did not hunt.

Shooting 1981

New York

Smithville

Tuesday 20 October

~~Smithfield~~ Flats

Belton 2 p.m.

sunny, clear, cool 55°

moved 3 quail / 4 flocks

$1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs }
 $3\frac{1}{4}$ hrs } $3\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.
1 hr }

moved 4 coveys - 5 flocks

Tried New York again north east of Birmingham in the rolling hills north of the Tusculum Valley, Galen Welkins taking us to state game lands by hunt. It was thick tangles of spruce, white pine and alders along a small stream, we taking one with Galen and young hunter, just past one year, the other. It was almost like



FROM THE
MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

a pattern, as had just started when Galen began shooting -
moving 6 quail and 3 cock. We flushed 3 cock - Belter
running onto the first, a hen, standing steady at flush, I walking
into #2, and Kay saw one, possibly 2, flush from what was a point -
Belter's bell having gone silent - no grouse.

That Galen on the road and learned he had shot 2 quail -
young hen and a cock. Kay had heard a grouse flush ahead of Belter
and Hambach came where we waited for Galen. Decided to hunt back
toward the corner where the other grouse had flushed and as we saw a
grouse flush and land in dense ~~thick~~ spruce about 100, reflecting as round
some after. That was it. The spruce stand was too thick to work and
Kay went for the car while Belter & I covered our edge of corn along the
road. Door to another place Galen knew when



3/81
we found the bottom over too thick, pines, alders, spruce.
Ray heard a grouse flash after Belter had stopped on point then
moved on, very hot. In that area we found an enormous sugar maple
going the way of old trees with the top branches lost but still alive —
all of 7 feet in diameter the largest sugar I've seen. Ray got 2 35 mm.
pictures. The balance of the cover proved inadequate and empty.

Rejoined Galen after cars and drove to a lake in another
place he calls Fair Streams — a very long steep hill we went down
along an old road. They remained in our car, Gage in Galen's. In the
bottom — about 3/4 mile down — Galen saw a woodcock flash ahead of
Belter who was working next. I saw none of it. On the way back —
a quelling climb after this first day of rather disappointing action,
Belter redeemed the day with a grand point in the center of the old
road, pointing intense and high at the right bank into some
starlings above him with the wind in his face. I moved up and climbed
the bank where he had gone up and reestablished. As I tried to
get over the pile of maple cuttings, I went down on the springing
moss, unable to get up at once and saw a flash of a bird
flushing left a few yards on the woods clearing — too small for a
grouse and too quiet — no doubt a 'cock. It was a grand piece of
work and helped bring me back.

Joined Ray at the car after long 36-mile drive to the
"cabin" on Meloddy Hill Road. Let's hope tomorrow at Pleasanton
will be more like it.

10

Pharsalia Game Management Area 61Wednesday 21 October

Sunny, clear, mild, upper 50s

saw 3 grouse / 3 flocks

Belton -

saw 2 "cock" / 3 flocks

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} 1\frac{3}{4} \\ \frac{3}{4} \\ \frac{3}{4} \end{array} \right\} 3\frac{1}{4} \text{ hrs}$$

The famous Pharsalia, my blood wouldn't set -

We drove 64 miles - thru Norwich and miles beyond,

and miles more thru Pharsalia, endless single-width roads thru enormous stands of red pine and Norway spruce, without even a trace of game habitat management or cutting of any kind.

Parked at last and we went up the hillside from a good looking corner with the famous apple trees that always bear grouse - none today - past a low stone fence corner with myrtle over the ground but no trace of a grouse. - I took a couple of still shots. The rest of the climb was thru tall spruce and into red pines that must be fifty years old with the "trail" lost in blackberry briars. No birds.

Came out on the ~~back~~^{side} road we should have come up and hunted out the top thru beech cover that seemed to have most on it. No birds. At a clearing area facetiously marked "game management" area we hunted thru some fair edge cover. No grouse and not even a woodcock. Back on the road with tall spruce plantings on the east side, we turned back and walked the road with Belton working hard constantly. In a small grown-up gap in the spruce he must have worked into a grouse, for it gave us the barest glimpse and disappeared into the spruce cover when it seemed to land in a tree instead of coming out on the roadway where I'd ~~had~~^{have} had a shot. Unable to refresh it, we worked back into the thickety gap to a cross gap where we ate lunch sitting on mossy ground under what ~~was~~^{were} its seedlings nearby.

Overlook at the cars to meet Galen, we went back the road to 5/81
the bottom of the hill - still no other signs - and learned that he had run
4 hunting the other side, two of which were at the area we had entered!?

Drove on out the road to a hill with large sugar maples set in regular
border - a common effect everywhere up here - and parked, with directions
from Salter to hunt around the dense planting - smaller trees - and
to circle them - tales of grouse heard here - and to come back up the
ravine behind us which he would hunt. We finally got among the
spruces - no grouse there - and then undistinguished cover ^{rather loose} -
and were circling up the ravine when we heard Salter shoot.

We had almost reached the head of the hollow and I was remarking the tangle of old cuttings covered with grass - bad footing - when a large grouse flushed from dense blackberry tangles about and to our left. I wheeled in time to see it level thru some tree tops and felt it out of range. Actually, I think I missed a good chance, but with so little contacts with birds and no shooting, judgment gets fuzzy -



Followed the flesh to the area we'd started in below the cross but no contact.

Galun came in with a woodcock.

Had turned 4 'code with a point by
young finger - a good solid one.

Before he arrived two Italian boys in a four-wheel - no dog, auto loader -
turned when we were finished. From South Otselec, they were starting to
hunt after work. Had apparently planned to hunt this week. One
announced he had shot ^{two} "Jeffy" ~~hens~~ ^{hens} last year. By. equanimity.

681
We drove to the foot of the ridge at S. Otselee and drove R23 to
the place we had entered Pharsalia where Galen & then McDonald had
mowed four groves at the run just off the hardside road. I took Belton
on one side, Kay waited at the car & Galen took Ginger the upstream way.

It proved to be a good looking 'cock bottom — scrubby arbores
and goldwood but no birds. Walked up the hillside then excellent cover
and near the top saw a hen woodcock ~~land~~ ^{walk} a few feet (not erect
but bent forward like a grouse, a very large bird) stand about 15 feet
from me and stare at me for a minute, then relax and squat in the
typical 'cock huddle'. I hustled Belton to me with difficulty, he came
to within 40 yards, saw me, turned as they always do when you want to put
them on a bird, and loved away. The woodcock & I waited while Belton
did everything but come to the attack, and then came and nearly stepped
on the bird with no evidence of scent. It flushed and I don't think I
knows it yet.

I marked it, sent Belton to it & followed.
He did scent on an edge thickety clearing,
held a moment then walked closer and
the bird went out. For work. Later
I stepped with a second cock around the
hill — a male. What was it except that
on the Pharsalia road at the top of the
hill above the cars, a boy in a passing
camper truck said there was a bird
sitting in an apple tree beside the road
hanging down the hill. I asked Kay to stop when she had begun to
drive up for me, and sent Belton to the tree on the left of the road

I don't know what happened, except that I saw a bird fly down 7/81
across the road - a small grouse - out of the area where Belton was
working. It may have flushed from the tree, he may have put it up off
the ground. He is not handling birds at all well, although he was working
as well as I could ask of him, especially on the last jig alone
with me. We must get into birds for his sake and my mental
stability. This is just too goddamned much.

22 October Thursday ¹⁶ Hunt Road 1 Belton 1 prod.
partly cloudy, warm 60° moved 9-12 flocks

~~1:35-3:10~~ ^{2 1/2 hrs.}
3:35-4:35 Today alone to relax from driving and to try the area near
the cabin. Drove up the road then pine and spruce stands - W of State Game
lands means mostly 50-year-old red pines and spruces, worthless for any game.
at top of ridge, parked within the State lands area but hunted onto a large
partly grown back field (everything is posted up to the very trees on the State
area. The view of distant blue ridges was grand with fall color nearly gone
except for some smaller aspen and a scarlet shrub I've seen in the Blackwater
that today I identified by an occasional dried blue berry as high-bush
blueberry. The color flames in spots over these fields.

Belton worked the spruce woods edge well and out into the old
field when I paused to check my license to see if there was any guide to game
laws. There wasn't, but there were two grouse under a small white pine
near a high blueberry bush where Belton was approaching - one
flushing left quartering for a distant woods and the other right-
crossing to the game lands tall pines, both too far for a shot.

Belton stood steady at flush but I could have preferred a point. ⑧

We followed #1 bird to and then a large open maple woods and beyond to a partly grown-up area where Belton drew to a point near another red shrub, fairly tall. One grouse flushed before I could get close - they are wild - and crossed high and right thru the thin trees. I mounted and swung thru firing a bit ahead - missed - and did it again. I will say the shot seemed too far - about 45 yards or so, but it is a weak shot for me.



HIGH AND FAR (55 yards)

It was like a Cassell Ripley painting, and in the same way the grouse was too far to shoot!

With no luck locating either bird in the high red pines, we hunted the large field with new interest in isolated small pines and high-bush blueberry shrubs. Belton but scent and began working but a grouse lifted well out - spooky - and we followed and got another flush out of our scope.

We hunted up an excellent row of corn - Kay took a ^{still} photo of a typical old apple tree with a stone wall - possibly with me - and we hunted the road and worked our old houses into the car - spiced everywhere in them.

After a breather we moved the car to the bend in the road where we saw some good corn on the way in, and had just started to get out when Kay saw a grouse run from the left side and passing thru run into a thick corner with a small apple tree on the right - a weak point of appearance and almost

blue gray in cast. We released Belton who circled on the left, 9/81
struck scent and froze while Kay caught him going solid - a
lovely thing even if it was hot scent after the fact. While he circled frantically
on the left, Kay heard the grouse lift well out on the far side.

We hunted along the line of flight and came out the far side of
the pine cover onto clearcutting growing back several years - the first
evidence of game management per as I have seen here. The footing is
abominable, because when cut, the branches and even trunks was left
lying with no log roads. It proved an expansive area but we had no
reflex. Looking to the road we had almost come out at the car when Kay
heard & saw a grouse flush from an apple tree and cross left ahead of
us thru pines - I saw nothing. Hunting in the direction of that flush
we followed a fair swath thru the brush & spruce up along a further
stand of red pines and from a stand of maple saplings about strip - sight
heard another grouse flush and go for the pines. The stands of pines have
an value - escape cover and the birds use it. That was #3 in
this area, #6 for the day. Suddenly a streak of dark cut across
to the left in front of me - a small grouse flushing from a big
cutaway brushy area, then another that bored parallel with our
path, followed by another that Kay saw go 90° away from us - 6
in here, 9 for the day.

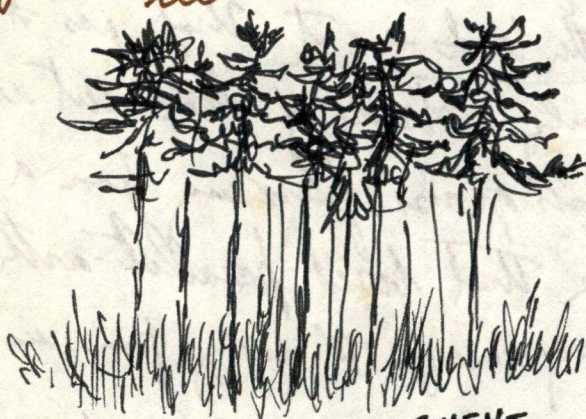
We followed the flight of the next-to-last bird, which had gone
into a stand of the tallest - and I say it with consideration - Norway
spruce I have seen - 80 feet tall. I paralleled that edge and had Kay
walk a bit out on the brushy area toward a group of tall pines we had

marked the lost bird into. I had crept ~~around~~ in below and was ahead of Kay with Belton to my left when the grouse was after, lifted before Kay got near a burn about it, and cut left across too fast for a shot and landed in a pine. I walked to it hoping for a shot but didn't see or hear it go. (16) 81

Kay reached me without knowing there had been a refash of the grouse.

These fast darting birds out of the brush were like the "surprise clays" we used to shoot and would be possible shots if only somebody would call Bird!! but that signal replaced the sound of a flush, and I no longer can hear it that far out.

At the car I lay waited while I made one more creck in the far side of the road with Belton. It had helped to burn powder at last, and it was good to have a grouse for 12 flushes. This gave us hope again.



N.Y. GAME MANAGEMENT

The first bird of the first brace from under the little pine flushed low, while the second flushed high. Belton found & pointed the first bird after the long flight, and its second flush was high. Male or female?!!

Saturday 24 October
cool, sunny 40°
3 hrs.

Melodny Hill

#1 0
#2 moved 1-2

moved 6-12 flocks

Beltin: 1 prod.

11/57

Galen met us at the cabin and after yesterday's long drive and visit with the Curriers at Cincinnati we hunted two crows in this area - the first a good looking place if a bit too much woods, but the old pine dotted clearing and the fence wood cutting on the ridge above should have held grouse. They didn't.

I saw at about first to the dead end road north of Hunt Road and found excellent 'cock cover on the north side. Beltin moved a woodcock I feel would not have flushed if not pushed. Followed on to a flat with excellent ^{low} ~~low~~ pine and some gray dogwood - bare - and moved two more 'cock - very wild. I saw one of them sitting ahead of me and seeing Beltin to it and he promptly walked into it with no scent. We followed the short flight and this time Beltin made a grand point high on both ends and solid in dense cover. I walked in after Galen & Kay got positioned - Kay got better still & saw shots of Beltin's point. The bird floated up and around thick cover but it was a grand feeling to finally get dog work.



AT LAST

George Bill Evans papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center

(12)
81
We followed but had no success and, unfortunately, did the same late afternoon thing as did the first day - walked down over a long steep wooded ridge to big barren cover with an mink creek contact - from dog work, and then had the grueling climb back up, deadly when there is no motivation at end of day.

On the dead-end road once more we flushed a grouse from our voices - a small bird that flushed from the left down the road and landed in dense pine cover on the right. Finally heard it take out of a tree and can't fathom where it went. We went into the same small flat of cover from the ^{road} end - good woodcock cover at this hour - and I saw a cock land from having been flushed by Belton. Watching I watched Belton walk right into it again. I know he wouldn't do this if he caught scent but he had seen the bird settle, had not taken his eyes from the place and still walked into it.

Galen bumbled on mink creek and was finally quiet at 5:45.
There is a good half-hour cover and should be handled as such. State land.

Sunday, 25 October

16

Harford

Belton 12 noon

13/81

The Famous Twenty-Fifth!

Cold, partly sunny & cloudy 40°

mead 9-9 flocks

0

mead 8-12 flocks

4 shots - 3 hits

5 prod

3 kills

3 net

- #1 1/2 hr
- #2 3/4 hr
- #3 3/4 hr
- #4 1 hr

AF 2
IF 1

We drove west of Whiting Point and met Dave McAdoo and his friend Don Henderson at Richford at noon - new sun time. They had hunted since 8 am and had moved ten a twelve p.m. We all drove in 3 cars to the top of a high ridge with a relay tower and wind that kept slamming the open car door on me while I was assembling my gun. The #1 count was loaded with game food plantings - autumn dew, which they felt was attracting grouse, some multiflora, and viburnum high-bush cranberry - a striking shrub with clusters of scarlet berries. One grouse flushed wild as we moved toward some apple trees below the planting and soon after, Belton made a lovely point and stretched out solid and I saw the grouse - a gray bird - cut out thirty yards in front - no shot. We moved 2' circle without points and had a reflex. Circling to the top with the wind trying to tear us apart, we drove out the road through terrain that looks like the Blackwater country and joined Dave McAdoo. I had seen several ruddy - mouthed rocks that Don H. said were glacially stones rolled north by the glacial action. Henderson went to another corner. As we started walking down one of the crossroads I saw Belton solid in a stand of aspen and pine, and I got around below and waited. I ran out to him and took both 35 mm and movie and, at my request, walked in and flushed the woodcock - a large hen that came over me and dropped at my shot when I fired after turning to take it left - crossing against the day. Belton came at my dead end! and circled for some time before leaving it among the thick growth.

and returned nicely.



STRAIGHT OUT

McAdoo talks a lot and too loud and when we entered the cove farther along the road, a grouse flushed ahead of Belton with no work. A few moments later I saw a second grouse flush from in front - no dog near - and that was it for that cove, this we hunted well down toward a bottom and returned by a going up, ^{long} clearing with small points.

Grouse gunning in this country, and much of New England is, I can see, a matter of moving out a two grouse in small coveats, then driving in the car to another, perhaps hunting from 5 to 6 places a day. Reports of ten to fifteen grouse moved represents much moving by the hunter and does not mean there are that many grouse in any one coveat. But the birds do appear to be scattered over the general terrain. It might be possible to do something like this at home but it is not the pleasure I know.

Pippin, McAdoo's dog, littermate to Belton did nothing but walk near McAdoo - fatigued, he said, but I see lack of development and also see evidence of hacking at her constantly, a shame for she is a nice dog.

10/25/81
15

Event #3 was again with Don Henderson who knows these places ¹⁵/₈₁ and the birds by name. He insisted on leaving Logan in the car as he did at the first place and going simply as guide. This place was a good corner, much like our country, with a narrow strip of red pines with aspen & goldcrest along both sides.

Ray signaled a point and as found Belton staff - I don't know for how long - and when I moved in from behind him by necessity a pair of cock flushed and I tried to single out one, fired and missed. Belton was too kept-up and ignored my hold!, coming after them and flushing #3 on the way back. Henderson said all three had topped the tall red pines on our right.

Scarcely forty yards along I found Belton pointing in dense ground cover, his head turned left and low. When I walked then bird up and fired, it dropped solidly.



'COCK CLOSE

(16) '81

Beltan went at my dear bird! and retrieved nicely but only to within four yards when he laid it down and I didn't force the issue when he refused to pick it up again. These things must be handled with an easy attitude.

This lot of excellent dog work, coupled with a ground pattern and range that was perfect made me glow after yesterday's problem Beltan had with the woodcock. I felt qualified that my shooting had been what it was after the long beginning. I shot all three 'cock with AA 3-1 $\frac{1}{8}$ - 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ because I was hoping for grouse. We moved two more - reflexes, I think, and a third reflex on the return about the pines and, at the cars, decided to try the last covert, which was several miles away.

Das Mcadoo took off for last corner and then departure for Mansfield, and we ended at a huge pine plantation of medium & small ^{white} pines on top another ridge, passing numerous other trunks - not too noisy looking - on the way, part of Sunday hunting.

The wind was blowing a near-gale and clouds were falling in 17/81
and it was cold as we hunted along a slope near autumn olive, which are
sparsely here as compared with our plantings.

Bellon, who had the violet in his blood, moved out as if he were
freshly starting, and hit a point within minutes. Reestablishing, he
moved a few steps and a grouse went out. A first had had flushed
a lot before the point and we heard #3 go fifty yards beyond from
a dense stand of red pines. I saw none.

Don was carrying his gun this time but he gave me every chance
to move ahead and much of the time carried his SKB on his shoulder and
over his shoulder, barrels forward in a way that makes me shudder for
the huge bob.

We reached the large pine planting ^{large} whose edge was with woods on
our outside and not much good looking cover but Kay saw #4
go out far far ahead of us - Bellon checked at the sight of rise.
One final grouse, #5, left a pine tree over our heads with only the
roar and the swirling branch to indicate that I had gone.

This cover held fire, not bad, but almost impossible to
approach a tree out. I don't know how anyone gets shooting here.
But it was the distraction we'd had on the trip caught on during our
Hunt Road.

Don Henderson was one of the pleasant contacts you make too
rarely in shooting - knowledgeable, gentlemanly and nice. It was a good
afternoon. At a later date, Pepper was discovered to be a thyroid deficient, treated
and became a different dog.

Bumper sticker in afton: "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." 81
" " " Washington Mills: "Do it with class"

Wednesday 28 October 16

cold, wind 40° or less
damp and perfect conditions
2 ½ + } 3 ½ hrs.
55 min.

Hunt Road 1

moved 3 (not new) - 5 flashes / Belton: 1 prod.
1 shot - 0

Dead End Corner

moved 2 - 4 flashes
0

2 prod.

Two rainy days have kept us from hunting - yesterday we drove up and met Mrs. C.P. Hunt at Washington's Mills. Today we hunted alone on Hunt Road hill with conditions a damp cold perfect 40°. The brush had lost most of the rain from yesterday and last night pouring but the evergreens "still were weeping," and we tried to keep to deer tracks and edges.

We had covered most of the clearcut area where we had moved the group of four last time and were working across the south end when we found Belton odid as a grand point at a small pile of old branches. Ray moved in for moves, and 2 stills, while I maneuvered for advantage if the grouse flashed left a right. It did neither, cutting back past Belton and offering no view until it topped out far away. Belton went after the bird following a short steady at wing.

Soon after the flash and before Belton came back Ray called "George!" then "H!" and I saw a grouse sailing right - crossing with scarcely time for a fast mount and swing - then, which I saw myself miss by ducking under, I feel sure. It was the best shot I've had on grouse this trip and I hope the miss.

19/181



We let that bird go for a later try below the road (never found it) and followed Bellon's lead to the tall pines at the NE corner of the marshings - a wild flush from the tall trees. Marking it as headed for the edge of the big spruce, we worked into some excellent ^{adjacent} cover on "Bozents" and got a third flush wild ahead of me that went I don't know where.

We paused for a bite of food on a log near the mossy-green stone wall where they had taken a couple of still shots of Bellon and me earlier, then hunted back to the car, covering some of the west cuttings with no action.

While they got the car moved, I hunted the lower side of the road where I'd expected ground ~~the~~ but found nothing, and Ray joined me and we hunted the big field with its more isolated small pines, and high-bush blueberry bushes and aspen clump. At last, after cooing to below where I'd missed the long crossing shot from Bellon's point last Thursday (I stepped it off today and measure it as 55 yards at least) we came back up to the small corner with the old apple

tree and had a wild flush that topped out the edge and went to God knows where, for we failed to locate it around the old house site. This was the #3 crown of last Thursday, I should guess.

at nearly 5:00 (we are still in Daylight Savings time) we drove to the Dead End Corner, parked and hunted the narrow strip along the back road, cutting them to the lower strips of good 'cock corn below the evergreen planting.

Halfway along and up near the evergreen edge, Kay called point! and I found Belted pointing in a thick copse, headed toward me. Kay moved in and got some more film of the point, then called in to flush. Instead of a flush, which I was expecting, I heard Kay call, "I see it and it's running." Moments later I saw the woodcock - a large hen - running in a horizontal position like the one I'd seen on Pharsalia. I moved toward it and it flushed a low flight behind intervening aspen, and landed in a clump of pine or spruce not far off. For a moment I felt I'd at last seen the famous New England woodcock hen - out on a point, until

as recommended and realized I had not run out on Belton's point - 27/1/87
he had it pinned - but had run out when Kay moved in to flush it.

We moved Belton toward the bird and it finally lifted and
dropped again without our having a point. This time I tried repeatedly
to work him to the bird but sometimes that isn't possible. However
he curled wildly and then came in from in front and pointed
high and handsomely at a place much lower and I have to
assume the 'cock had run to that area. Belton held like a dream
and Kay moved in almost to his face and took a still shot
of the glorious point - very little light but with a 2.7. Exposure
reading. Hope it takes. The woodcock flushed when I walked I was
some long but ahead of Belton, who was getting a stiff wind in his face -
great dog work. Later, we had a wild flush from a second 'cock
with no chance to get a point a shot. That was it but it was a good
afternoon, fine dog work (good coverage to dream about) and a
fair chance snuffed. Oh well.



A NEW ENGLAND
RUNNER — ?

Thursday 29 October
cloudy, cool 44°
1/2 hr

2 hrs.
3 1/2 hrs
1 hr

Cedars
mowed 1 - 1 flush
0

mowed 2 - 2 flushes
0

German Corners

Abandoned Farm

mowed 6 - 6 flushes
0

Hidden Brook

mowed 5 - 6 flushes
4 shots - 0

Belton 4 pool

We stopped for a 1/2 hour hunt in the Cedars as discussed yesterday and found it good work. Had a good prospecting on creek with an undrivable run and later a second roadside flush and a grouse flush from a cedar thicket from a tree. Sound only.

The day began with two glorious skeins of Canada geese flying over the cabin, their wonderful voices querulous with a touch of anxiety. I had seen one go over us in the last canoe yesterday afternoon. These wonderful birds seem to show any loss of symmetry in the huge V and shift from one wing of the formation to the other to try to balance it. That magnificent spirit taking them the hundreds of miles with such nobility. How can anyone kill them?

We met Gullen at Greene and followed him north for what seemed as many miles as the wild geese traveled, finally turning off onto a back road



23/81

and onto a woods road that deteriorated into disaster. The heavy rains two days ago had flooded the woods and the road was a running stream. We came to a logging area that looked impossible for our summer tracks but Galen had gone out of sight in his eagerness and we had no choice but to follow. Ray was driving and she took the Points. There must have been holes and ruts I wouldn't have believed possible. Finally a steep dip in the road showed a washout when I walked ahead and I drew the line. I backed the car to a pull-off and parked and rounded the horn for Galen and waited. At last he showed up joggling up the hill and blowing like a horn. He insisted his car was just a little way further and that as we were on the worst, and with him to walk ahead and guide us, I took the car over some gruesome road and about half a mile to his Point station wagon, which had mud tires on it. To make it more incredible, we came to a good dry road, which we could have come in on. The bug is flakey when it comes to roads.

The old fields of the abandoned farm had grown up to hawthorns and aspen with a pine planting on top. Galen took the left side of the road and we hunted up the right, some mowing two years that sounded as if they'd gone to the pines on top.

Reaching the red pine planting - big, like most NY State Game Lands, we hunted parallel with them, Ray in a thickety area below our old stone fence, I followed a narrow cut-back border between the fence & the pines. Belton scared it well but a squirrel flushed from him and crossed left to the pines, too suddenly for a shot but within good range. Had I been alerted, later I say heard and I heard & saw a squirrel top out of the thicket near Belton who came in and acted as though he'd been pointing. We followed this flush out the ridge to a large woods with no relocation.

Turning back, we worked the hantons at a lower level. There 29 '81
here the first hantons are seen up here with a good crop - the very small red
haws heavy on the ground. N.Y. Spruce has little food that I can see - no
grapes or groundins, and they turn to apples and hantons as natural food,
and autumn oliv, highland cranberries, and multiflorous as artificials.

We had not gone far when Kay heard two separate grouse go up in a hunted area but neither of us saw them and we did not reflect them. Unfortunately, Bolter seemed unable to pin any of them to us and - a good bit of action in a good cause.

We rejoined Guler at the camp - he had also married 6 or 7 his wife.
 The doctor let a point by young Guler who is doing well this year..
 The 16th of Brach current - all on

We followed Gabe in the car to the Hedden Brook coast - all on good solid ~~roads~~ roads, and he hunted me into and into the upstems side. It was good cock covert but had neither cock nor grouse on the way up, tho I heard a grouse drumming. Approaching a dense stand of half grown spruces we came on Belton pointing in a thick piece of tangle. I crept left and they walked in for a picture and to flush the 'cock, which came at me, turned and dodged the thick aspen trunks without climbing. I fired and saw the bird with tho I was rather ~~the~~ sure it was not a hit. Belton came in to find crested and I saw a flash go out over the spruces and called to say that my bird had responded. Just then Belton ran over it and brought it.

Walking or down the bottom as our Belton once again solid and I walked
up a creek that I thought was going to drop. I missed the right barrel shot
and fired the left so the bird tipped out, having caught it but could not

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25/81
 just it down. One more followed by a two-barrel rain does not cut
 well from an woodscock and when Bella pointed again, I walked in
 determined to do it right this time. The bird wouldn't materialize and
 finally I saw it squatted a few feet from me watching me. I had to
 bend almost on it before it flushed with a sudden 180° turn from
 facing left to a right-cross rising flush, darting among the thick trees. I
 waited until it was almost gone, then fired right-on but felt surprised
 short behind. I should have held under it. Key saw the bird too and
 after looking at it, I'm as well satisfied I didn't hit, but as
 shooting, my effort today was pretty sad.

That was it. Somehow I can't get a shot at dawn and
 today couldn't hit a shot at woodscock.

10/30 Looking out the cabin window at eight o'clock I saw a red fox
 in the richness of the morning sun, slinking across the road and down the
 bank, scarcely visible thru willow leaves, with two crows in a tree above
 him giving thought to harassing him.

Friday 30 October

clear sunny 45°

2 1/2 hrs } 3 hrs
 1/2 hr }

16

Hunt Road #1

moved 2-3 flocks

1 shot - 0

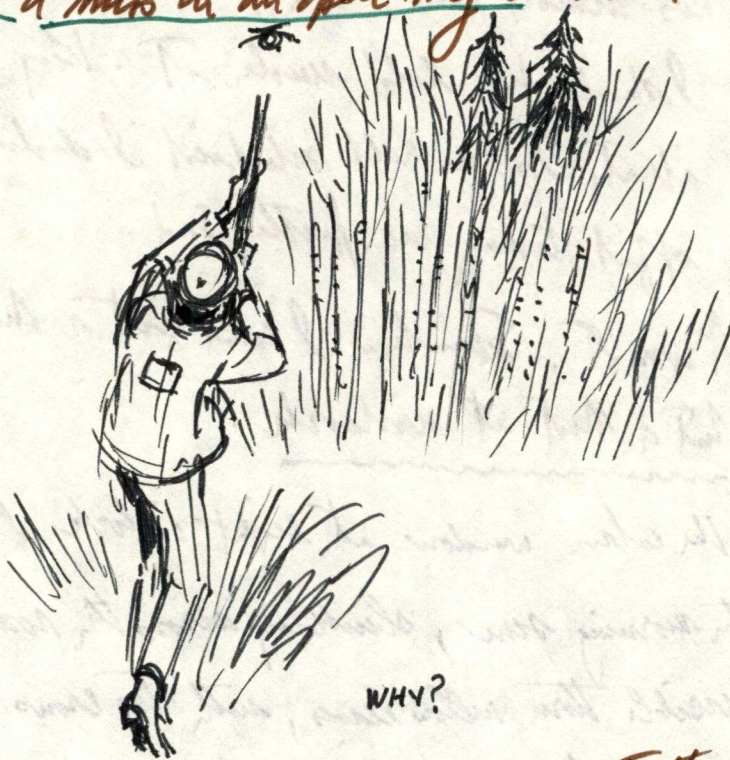
Dead-End corner

moved 3-4 flocks

Bella 1 shot
 3 shot

A blood sugar reaction to the stress of yesterday's
 experience on the muddy woods road. *on the day*
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Pushing out regardless never works well but staying in the cabin would be worse. We parked at the end of the State land on top Hunt Road and tried the big open field first. It proved a good move. Halfway down the length of the field I saw a bird coming toward me from Belton's direction on the left - almost too small looking for a grouse but a grouse it was. I turned and fired holding under it as it went overhead away, shooting exactly as I felt it should be done, but the bird didn't. A miss in an open day I cannot understand.



We followed the line of flight all the way into the woods to the big red pines and gave up, hoping all the while we might find the bird down.

There was no more action all the way to the double tree cypress and to the old house site where we ate lunch. Not was there any sign of the birds on the upper clearcut area today.

Rested back at the car and then made a move into the middle clearcut area we'd not tried yet and then I saw a grouse sail down above us from Belton's direction, a long flight that was still too

27/81
soon gone for a shot, the bird seeming to scale down toward the woods below the road. Belton seems unable to point these grouse and all I get are bumpy birds.

No more contact until after another rest at the car after talking to a grizzled ward of the government who had worked as a CCC boy on these prairie. His friend had joined and been sent to the Great Smoky Mountains. He & his brother joined (at Brambridge nearby) and were sent to Deposit. He had a leg between his knees and an autoloader, mangle-down took place on the seat which him. Explained that "these road hunters" drive these roads and shoot the grouse from their cars. Uncle Sam and God look after that type.

A final swing below the road put up the grouse I'd been looking for - another flash glances over before I could shoot - ~~for~~ I had seen Belton point and although he moved I feel he deserves the production.

We drove to the Dead-End corner and started about 5:05 (fast time) with a point immediately. It was in thick spruce/fir and as usual the cock merely twittered up and down, landing fifteen yards ahead. These woodcock up here many run but they won't fly and you can't shoot birds that move like grasshoppers.

Belton had another point later that was an immediate rise, and drop that flashed when Belton moved to it and the bird crossed the road. I walked into a third cock that melted into the dense cover. Belton became difficult to handle - moving too much and refusing to respond to the whistle for some reason. We ended the day - a lovely

piece of weather for late October with a run of dissatisfaction
with Belton, my shooting, and the birds, blended with a run of
physical malaise. Why must it happen?

(28)
181

Saturday 31 October

lovely weather cool 50°

partly sunny

~~9:00/7:00~~

12:15 - 2:45 / 2½ hrs

¹⁰
Plank Road/McClure

moved 5-6 flocks

2 shots - 1 hit

Belton

1 kill

1 net

tozato
young hen. inter. tail gray-tan
cups
white and red parts
brown-orange breast.

We hunted this good covert before taking off
in mid-afternoon for Glenn Baker's Woodcock Hill.

Glenn Wilkins sent us to a steep hillside suggesting us hunt above
the hemlock/pine/hardwood on the lower slope.

after covering a good 'cork piece' in the downstream bottom
we hunted up the hill and found good hawthorn cover all along
the top with a large field above with a few spots of small pines and
thorns. Belton was being a problem today, working wide in search
of birds that didn't seem to be, and I saw a grouse tip out far
ahead. We continued and suddenly a grouse came zooming back
as a right-quartering meamer pitching downhill close. I swung
and fired and saw the bird go down leaving feathers that kept drifting
down for minutes afterward.

They saw the grouse lying dead well down below us and Belton
came in to search at the shot and hit scent and found almost
immediately. However, he lay beside the bird, about a foot long, and

29/81



A TOGATA
HIT SOLIDLY

groomed in a sassy manner like someone else I knew.

Nothing I could do, in spite of an affected calm, would get him to
bring the gunner beyond picking it up and dropping it. Wrong as I
think I was, because it may not a pattern as it did with Brian, I went to
him and when I reached for the gunner Belton picked it up (without Brian's
bluffing growl) and did transport - I went my retriever - The bird
a few yards and sat and held it for Kari's photo. It was a small
bird but with fairly rounded tops on the outer primaries so I suppose it
was an adult. The tail was grayish tan (was so then any way) but
the balance of the plumage looked like a monticola other than ~~the~~ predominant
white underparts. I suppose the moment could have been enhanced
with a good retriever, certainly a point, but I was no one to quibble
with a togata on the last day of the trip, as on last year's trip to N.Y.

We followed the brim of the hilltop in the edge cover of hawthorn,
which showed no point. Finally reached a hedge on the hedge separating
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cover like ours at home with an exposure of hawthorns on the crest of
the open field - cover us well for last.

Pursuing them breaks and startings - good - I came up under
a maple branch that shortened my neck and what I said put up
a gun twenty yards ahead - as they heard and me and I didn't.

We followed the flight and came to two roads that "diverged"
in the tall wood - and took the left one. Suddenly from under a wild
apple tree on my left the gun flashed and gave me a right-arming
miss that I told myself I was hitting but as I fired I felt
~~my~~ my gun whirled about the bird, possibly from my gun shudder
possibly because I didn't do enough shooting to soothe my nerves. It
was an unreasonable miss - close enough, crossing the opening of the log
road. We failed to refresh the bird altho we covered the rocky wooded
top, and finally ate lunch.

On the way back with our allotted hunting time running out
we fought through the dense hawthorns that crowned the field - then
with a few scattered junco (most ~~haws~~ are nonexistent here in NY this day)
and a big grouse flushed with no look at all to shoot. Later we
missed a second one in the same small cover. ^{piece of them} It seems to me that
Belton is not handling these birds at all - but neither did I on the
second one.

Hunted back ~~down~~ the knob the way we had come with no
further contacts. Oddly there wasn't a woodcock in the hill. At
the cars we took Golden Goose-Lyn and, changed into leather boots,
headed for Pennypacker and Woodcock Hill. The end of a good trip.
disappointing lack of game ⁱⁿ most woods but enough to give action, together
with some 'cash'.

Grouse gaming in NY is in contrast to my method of hunting a
single covert for the half day I am out. Up here they hop from spot to
spot like woodcock summers in Maine, spending twenty to thirty minutes in
a "patch", rarely more than an hour. Nowhere do they seem to find
the large numbers their plum reports imply - 2 or 3 grouse as about ~~par~~
for each spot. One Henderson showed us 5 in the largest covert last Sunday,
but the birds add up to fair numbers as a total for the day - and
these days are often long ones. I may find it works in some of my coverts
at home, and will try it sometime the season ~~but he had his work days~~.
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Sam Stock called 11/2 and reported good shooting in Michigan
crus; woodcock sparse. Found numbers of grouse up to 11:00 am in
hazhorns; after that birds scarce and in trees. Reports of good grouse broods
in Upper Peninsula of Mich. and at Cloquet in Minn., only to
have hunters find it disappointing in the grouse season.
Sam's birds were feeding on hazhorns, aspen buds, and greens.

Bob Holmgren's letter on 11/23 reported a large number of grouse in
Mass.

First day in W.V.

Mist, Storm

31/81

Tuesday 3 November
sunny, clear, 55°

Covert #1

moved 2 quail - 2 flashes

Belton

⁰
moved 5' cock - 6 flashes

2 1/2 hrs.

Rehobeth

small 1 - 1

2 prod.

⁰
moved 6-7 flashes

2 shots - 0

Tried Covert #1 for the first time I ^{seemed} ~~seem~~ in years altho we were here once last year. We parked at the tavern and moved nothing until Belton worked scout out on the edge of the thorns but did not establish before the cock lifted and flashed back toward the allus.

Up in the very thick ^{new of the} Hawthorns - this covert needs cattle - we heard a quail ~~left but no one~~ fought them to the far edge with no action but with Belton hunting hard. In one of the scattered clumps of cover out beyond the far edge I saw Belton work scout low and move into a grouse that took off down the hill, dodging behind the neck of thorns. Belton has been giving me problems by going to the ground for scout - result of woodcock hunting - and while he frequently works it well with most a bit up above ground, at times he takes the trail like a hound, something new and bad. We moved another grouse by ground, and had a total of 5 woodcocks for 6 flashes - ^{points and} no shots.

(32) 81

about 4 pm. as got to the car and drove to the Rehebeth
Thorns - a blessed court full of memories of Blin and Brian.

We moved our grass - round only as much as this season - and
six woodcock, two excellent points in the hedgerow cover at
end of day.

Belton knew exactly to expect me there and bored out for
ahead of me as I rounded the corner of woods on the old road. Kay came
to where Belton was already drawing an scent ~~mark~~ where he'd hunted me
last year. I walked on the ~~narrow~~ narrow passages between the hawthorn
clump and the fence row trees, with Kay outside and Belton having gone
in, and high on the outside of the clump. I walked as fast
as my side, knowing I ^{would} hit the bird, and when it flushed right
quartering into the woods I missed.

Later, while Kay went for the car and brought it up the
road, Belton & I covered that wonderful evening corner and moved
on a two mms. Finally we curled back and worked the wind of the hedgerow
edge, with a ground point by Belton in some dense blackberry cane.
again I walked in, letting myself to see the bird. I did and saw
and missed a rising away shot I couldn't have helped hitting if I'd been
dusting. This season I feel I have shot poorly, altho in NY I did
well ~~some days~~ on cock and the ~~one shot I hit on ground~~ but then



BELTON ON THE OUTSIDE

most shots I fluffed magnificently. Today at Rehoboth I seemed so aware of my ² two sore shoulders - the left one bothering me four years after my fall. It takes a month's rest to handle these birds and I'm not functioning in that manner.

But it had been a good day with 11 'cock marsh, and it was so wonderful to be in this covert again, bringing Brian back so vividly. It was especially his.

Wednesday 4 November

Lake Noël

Belton

~~clear~~ clear, sunny 58°
warm, this wonderful
string of weather 2 1/2 hrs

Hog Run West

marsh 3-3
0

We have never seen the leaves go so cleanly - all of them are gone and it is November rather November - black woods. Today we felt certain of some action in the Lake Noël thorns, but all we got was ~~chips~~ ^{chips} ~~some~~ ^{some} ~~from~~ ^{from}

the far end where they seem determined to remove the world. If it affects the game I don't know, but we did not move a feather, altho the hawthorns are hanging red with leaves. After three-quarters of an hour we had covered the knob and moved on to far side of Hog Run, parking on the corner of the Walter Frazer field. Star Lebrun had reported a brood of 14 in the woods last summer.

We moved nothing (the coverts were open) until we crossed the puntline and walked downstream thru the hemlock/abundant cover where I heard and saw a grouse shot out from Belva, probably crossing the stream. This creek is built on boulders along the stream, and I followed a tortuous passage over the rocks with no further action. I saw where someone had trimmed off the tops of small whipsage growth - I imagine to offer an open shot along the woods path at turkeys.

We turned and came back to the puntline, following it up the hillside with some good spots of cover on it. At our elbow, lower

35/81
watching when Belton was working the left edge cover when I
heard him say: "Horse! Horse! You could shoot a dozen times!" It
had flushed fifteen yards straight ahead of where I would have been
walking if I hadn't looked at Belton. I neither heard nor saw the bird.
These things are no disturbing to me with my poor hearing and with so few
good chances for a shot in the open.

They had marked the grouse as going far into the woods in the
night, and we declined to follow - have had no luck finding reflections this
noon. On top as we walked into an open field and started to follow
the upper edge of woods we heard a ^{red} grouse flush from Belton and I saw
it pitch back over and down the plantation.

This area is excellent, tangles, grapevines, everything good, but
difficult to get shots in, and I seem, pronto - Walked the old
back road down to the ~~car and~~ ^{car and} ~~and~~ ^{and} drank tea before starting home.
Sunny weather. Neil Sheehan phoned and invited us to hunt
with him on Saturday.

Saturday 7 November

Neil Sheehan's Place

Belton

snow on ground, windy cold 40°
3 3/4 hrs.

moved 3-3

It was a gorgeous day but bitter cold in a biting wind.

Met Neil at the entrance to his home and we hunted some excellent

cover, partly slashed, some old field cover, and good hemlock 36
cover with no birds. It was a revelation to see the amount of '81
land they have accumulated - 400 acres with some beautiful hemlocks.

Ray decided to cut out the best portion and we took her to the
cabin and then parked Neil's large blazer-type vehicle at the barn
and hunted down to the bottom, hoping to find some cack. For some odd
reason, they don't seem to nest here, but the first signs of the day were
out of a good woodcock already cooed too far for shot - Better somewhere
wider. Point?

Neil was anxious to show me a large circle on his land and we
pushed on, although the sun was already down behind the hills. At the
far end we came to Hawthorn on a hillside down that should have held grouse if
grouse were there.

In near darkness we started the circle back around the knob above
the little Youghiogheny River and moved 2 grouse separately, one giving me
the ~~most~~ merest glimpse as it tipped the tree. If I had hoped to try all
shots regardless, as if I'd been getting shots I might be ready for such a
far-out chance. I'm not, I haven't, and I am not.

Neil carries a flashlight so we would have been even later
getting out of the woods in actual darkness. Not enough grouse here.
Better hunted like a dream, man letting up which of course he doesn't do.

Tuesday 10 November

Bayard Cemetery Ridge

Bellin

37/81

gorgeous day, cool, sunny 44°

5 p.m.
1 kill
1 net

2/3:05 1 hr

} 2 1/2 hrs.

10 Rifle Ridge

4:35/5:10 1 1/2 hrs

moved 6-6 flocks

IF

4 shots - 1 hit

We stopped over on way down to first trip to Blackwater and the big mountains to investigate the water table hill above Bayard Cemetery, only to find it inhabited with scattered trailers & houses and no corn.

Traced the good thorns next to the cemetery and down over the hill into excellent corn and back to the edge of the graveyard with hemlocks and thorns and trees. Not a feather. I lay wait for the car and met me on the paved road and in chase to the Rifle

Ridge corral - grand and looking grander.

We found a Maryland camper truck parked near our old parking place and as drove into the big field and left Bellin in the car then, starting to hunt the west margin edge - good mixed hemlock/hardwood but with no birds. Moved to the small thicket where we is more grass & oak on the part; today, nothing.

Along to the first corral as circled to the east side before we had action in the form of Bellin's working went intensely, stopping almost on point but more gentle, continuing to fly. I refused to accept this as foraging, and what he tried to work it out, I walked into the woods.

But far around the edge Belton went in point in a very high
manner with no flapping and I walked all around with no lead. I lay back
both stills and rubies, and then I sent him on when within twenty
yards he hit a very hot point in dense brush & beans. Near there
there was a 'cock' - a straightaway that dropped nicely at my shot
(using Federal 2 3/4 - 1 1/2 - & Neel Shuhun goes over) Belton circled
exactly after holding at shot at my command, but under too
wide and it took a long time to get him to come in and find the
woodcock, and then he rolled on it, lay beside it and refused to
bring it to me. Finally I told Kay to come on and we walked
away from him, when he picked up the 'cock' and delivered it
nicely. These nervousities! It was an anniversary here, very unusual
We missed Belton for some time and ~~Kay finally found his cell~~
~~about~~ ~~for a long time~~ and when ~~Kay finally~~ located him ~~and~~ saw a
woodcock flash - he'd had a point - but too far out to be of
any relation to me. As he ran toward us he ran onto another 'cock'
that I saw reach the end of the woods and appear to land. We
searched but failed to miss either 'cock' and at last as the sun was
setting low, we cast toward the big hawthorns on the edge of the
spruce/hardwoods in the flat. Belton seemed to remember his grand
point and our bird here last season, and he hunted it thoroughly but
with no action. There are great hawthorns, and many thorns today had red
haws with both red & yellow! haws on the ground.
Moving south, ~~along the edge of the forest~~, Belton walked the cover
while we hunted the edge. After his wild casts when his point was so
far out, we put the shock collar on him and he seemed to improve.

I find Belton has a tendency to work woodcock scent very hot³⁹
but flagging until he makes a positive find — a mobile point — but
it leaves me to have to remain uncertain as to taking the shot,
and finally, when he gets what I still have the harrowing moments
as I tramp around in front only to have the bird after he scents I
nearly step on it. This occurred not far along the edge of woods as we
worked toward the distant car. The cock came up nearly brushing
my left cheek, and I turned and tried to settle the mugs on the
climbing bird in an opening, missed, and tried again probably too
far out, and missed. I seem wild this season, yet I am "on" the
bird as nearly as I can make it. May that the second shot seemed
very far out; certainly the first one wasn't.



TOO CLOSE

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As we approached the car, Kay left and ~~waited~~ ^{walked to} ~~waited~~ for it which Belton and I kept to the edge over, still good briars and ^{dead} ferns and thick margin growth. In a slightly more dense stand of edge woods I saw Belton ~~here~~ ^{here} shot, no flagging this time and I rushed for a gun. But as the bird hid I knew it wasn't, and I wasn't. The woodcock went straightaway but climbing out far ahead of Belton and I fired as nearly "on" it as I knew how and it ignored the shot. Kay called but I couldn't hear her, finally realizing she wanted to know if it was a grouse. I wasn't sure I didn't hear a grouse left - a ^{muffled} ~~door~~ and a twig snap near the road but can't call it that. My means on woodcock better now this year. I don't know quite the reason. Both means today were with the Holland & Holland

#8 shells Well game on
But not the left hand try.
Which was an AA 3.1 1/8 - 7 1/2
Grouse land. Will see

tomorrow.

Drawing to the Canaan
Valley Center on Rt 90
and over Canaan
Mountain, the enormous
limon-yellow Hunter's
Moose - full round -
hanging in the eastern
sky and over Cabin
Mountain when we topped
Canaan Mt. We found them the
Woodcock ~~there~~ ^{there} this year.



41/81

Wednesday 11 November Grassy Ridge: Belton:

cold, clear, cloudless 45° Church corner

windy

50 min. moved 6-8 flashes
1 shot - 1 hit

3/4 in Spruce/Thorns
moved 1-1 flash 1 shot - 0

3/4 in Pigeon Roost Road
moved 3-3-0
1 shot - 0
5 shots - 3 hits 2 head
1 k
1 net

1 in. 10 min. moved 7-9 flashes 2 shots - 1 hit

The Gate
moved 3-3 2 shots - 1 hit

3 IF

3 head.
1 k
1 net.

3 head
1 k
1 net

Nineteen woodcock moved today. Two quies.

I recaptured something of the past in this late afternoon in the Gate. It is a sort of sweet memories, probably more than almost any other it has belonged to all of our Old Humble settlers since Ruff.

This is the day of the full Woodcock Moon and the flight is in. Or as Ray said it much better: The Woodcock Moon is full and the flight is in. This is our second day of our woodcock trip and we left the motel in the Canaan Valley and drove to the Stony River country, starting to hunt at the Church corner on Grassy Ridge. It looked like a blank with no action on the lower side of the spur road where we have found both groups of cock. I made Belton lead across the main road then sent him into the edge corner where he immediately drew on scent, then pointed. I stepped to him and flushed a cock that fell obligingly at my shot, when

a conservative six hundred for 9 flocks

We drove out to the far end and Kay waited with the car below strip mine spoilbanks while I hunted with the Spruce/Thorns from the lower back way. Saw at least three deer float out ahead of Belton.

I found this a vast coast I had not appreciated in scope - many more thorns than I knew were there. The spruce woods had been cut in spots, making good clearings, but found no birds. I did see a flash that was a woodcock flash from Belton, who was difficult to keep in touch with in this dense cover and with his roost out of contact.

Kay drove around to meet ^{us} on the upper road where she parked and I hunted above the road - also cut and excellent cover and surprisingly devoid of birds. Dropping over was below the road I hunted a good corner only to have Belton, ranging wide, put a woodcock error in front, followed almost immediately by a very small grouse that took me a moment to recognize as such. It, like a fool, tried a belated shot as it disappeared over a pine plantation - wasted shot.

We moved for the last coast to the Pigeon Roost road where we'd seen a car parked earlier as we passed. Whatever they'd done, they didn't spoil anything for us. Parking there side of the road end, as hunted to the edge and almost immediately Belton began working next, almost pointing, flagging, then almost pointing - something he seems to be doing more this year. It springs from a desire to be cautious, trying to avoid a flash, yet being out front, able to get scent

strong enough to point. At last he did point in a difficult (44) '81
place to reach, very sidly, and Kay walked into the cover with no
flush. Finally I sent him on and he moved ahead and the cock
went out. I had the feeling it was a justifiably shot - an order to
flush - and I tried for the bird and felt it ^{and} ~~was~~ left out of my
pattern. We followed up and around the edge to the hawthorn where
last season two quinn had flushed (one of them the incoherer overhead I
drew for the illus. in "Affair" opposite the title page). Today we
didn't quite get to the place before Belton pointed in some ^{brown} ferns
and scattered locusts. I walked up the cock, shot and that I'd
missed, then saw the bird continued in a slowed-down flutter that
looked like a hit, the movement for a 'cock to carry shot. Kay
noticed the same action and we marched when Kay saw the woodcock
settle in the woods some distance up the slope.

Belton but went and began his uncertain working again,
bumping a woodcock that certainly was not wounded. Still searching
in the same manner he got near another that also flushed. Then
suddenly he pointed, very sidly with his head almost touching the
ground and I knew he'd found it. Realizing it was a wounded bird,
he took hold of it only to have it flutter a few feet, before he
caught and held it. He began his act of lying beside the bird
and looking less than smart and I ^{George Bird Evans Papers} ~~tried~~ ^{tried} the walk-
away treatment, both Kay and I ^{West Virginia and Regional History Center} ~~nowing~~ ^{nowing} off as if to leave him.

45
K81

This is most effective, and Belton got up and carried the
bird to me, sitting to deliver as perfectly as could be desired

We moved 7 woodpeckers in 9 flashes in this cove and finally
heard and saw a grouse flush ahead of me - Belton not near.

I had always thought this should hold 'cock, yet had never
moved more than one as I recall. Today I'm sure we could have
found more had we been willing to stay there. But we wanted to
hunt the Gators, and took off on the rather long drive to Doves and
down the Valley.

* 16 at the Gators we found the road abominable, parking the
car before we could reach the gate itself. Belton entered the thick
cover on the north side and almost at once pointed - a 'cock
I tried for and missed.

No more action until we got well into the old cover and had
started to swing back. Near the thorns on the edge of aspen where
there are some unexplained mounds in the ground, as if from small
excavations. Belton hit scent, swung around and without the
low ground scenting he'd been doing, entered into the aroma and
pointed, then which still solid, seemed to lift, body and tail,
into a glorious point. The bird left without a view of it, but it

was a grand piece of dog work. It was near where Brin had made our first point in 'cock.

Hurry up, as we used to do with Dixie and Blon and Brin as pushed for the road with the cast of sunset shadows reaching us and with Belter racing, ^{as} Brin has done, covering the ground like a dream.

We crossed the road and entered the south Hawthorns, with it looking as if we would find nothing there even when we used to almost always find one or a two. Then Kay called to me that Belter was pointing and I saw him 80 yards ahead pointing on edge of the cover near the clearing to the west. He was high, head and tail and he was there for the height of the woodsman's stage. It was so like the point Dixie had made - a white wreath in the dominion not far from this spot. I hurried to him and he still

blue belter held, a good blackest with ✓



with underparts black canvas

THERE TO STAY

A situation like that in these thorns is an impossible chance & that if you put into it, and tho I don't want to later a mean advantage of the 'cock, it meant having Ray flush the bird, which she did, finally by breaking a branch where she could go no further in. The bird - a hen - came out left to right and I dropped it rather close, a nice culmination to a beautiful piece of work.

Deltin's three points had been flawless, and while it was hardly a cock, it had been a good thing to be back in that wonderful old car with all the ^{recollections} memories crowding in it so many places. We walked the black mud road out to the car

with a great sense of satisfaction. A fine memory car!
That night we again saw the full Woodcock Moon - totally full. The day we had the most luck.

★ Enroute to the Poles from Grassy Ridge we stopped at the Weimer spring for water and when we moved on, Ray saw a grouse fly across the road from the right bank and land in the mountain ash trees on the left that we had noticed on the way out. We stopped to watch while the grouse, a fair sized cockbird, walked along the branch and began consuming the raised red berries. I was never aware that grouse would eat mountain ash berries, but this one didn't know that. I think it would have filled its crop if we'd had time to wait, but we didn't - the afternoon was late - and I knew some scoundrel would come along and shoot the bird off its perch, so I got out and flushed it - lucky thing

Thursday ¹² November
clear, sunny, cool 46°

2 hrs } 3 hrs.
1 hr }

1F

Clyde Davis / Poplar House

marked 3 grouse - 4 flushes
0

marked 6 - 6 flushes

1 shot - 1 hit

Rehoboth

marked 2-2
0

Belton 1 prod

3 prod

1k

1 ret

1 prod

8/81

The last day of our Canadian trip, we drove to the Clyde Davis-Poplar House court, down the last stretch of road over rocks that were part of the mountain, requiring planning to get over them. It was good to see the old Poplar House again looking exactly as it had the last time we saw it.

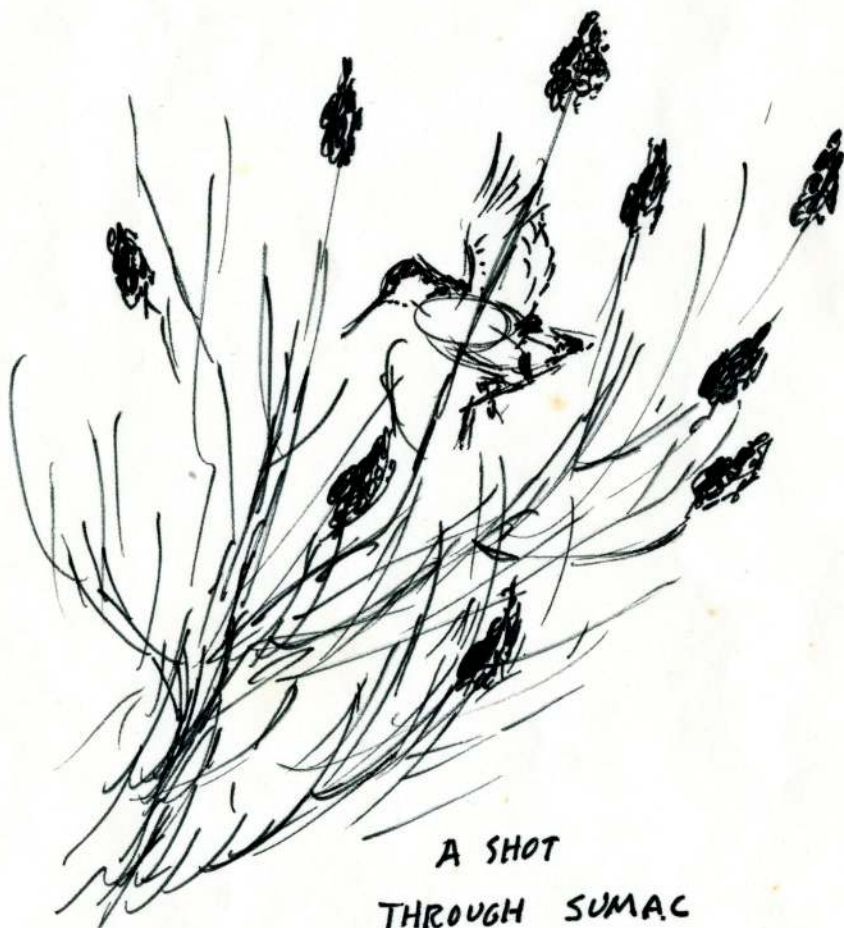
Three things mark my memory of the day - a lost dog, German shepherd type, on Route 93, a cat I could not avoid hitting in the dark as we drove home, and seeing a red-faced boulder drive down the road as we had just started to hunt across from the Poplar House - Olie Conway, looking either drunk or ill-at-ease. You get stuck with that type from time to time and ^{although} you dump them you never quite get them out of your life.

Belton had struck scent as soon as we put him over the fence onto the Clyde Davis side - we were fail to find out how - but for some reason (perhaps the electronic collar) he seemed unable to join the 'cock. I have never seen a dog crawl over such a large area so carefully - quite unlike his style - and finally he worked into the bird beyond where he'd started, and flushed it.

Not coming to relinquish the Poplar House side to the Conway, we cut across the road and over the rail fence near Rehoboth, before



UNDER HIS NOSE



A SHOT
THROUGH SUMAC

WV



UPPER HIS NOSE



THROUGH SWAMP
A SHOT

the cracking action again until I sent him on. Moments later he had
a point but Mr. Thomas was too close to get a shot and I watched the
bird go. High on adrenaline, Belton raced over the flat top and
was on point again - this time just beyond a fallen snag near
the fence. I couldn't get over the snag and had to work around
to the point from below. Ray took both movie and 35 mm film
of the point - ^{high and} so intense Belton had long strings of drool
hanging from his mouth. I got as close as I could with no
flush, only to have the cock flush from behind my right side
and bot over the ~~corner~~ wire fence and far out over the field on the
outside, curving back into a stand of briars - no shot.

We flushed 4 woodcock on that little flat - a grand place,
but then we worked down and back the lower level and once again to
the corner, we had no action. ~~and we returned to hunt the Clyde Davis side~~
The Clyde Davis side ~~seemed~~ seemed devoid of birds, and we hunted
well out to the north, about halfway up the hillside. Ray called
that Belton was on point below and I saw him standing high near
some blackberry trees, very solid for I don't know how long. I hurried
to him over ^{the} dry noisy leaves only to have a grouse run up about 60
yards ahead of me and 25 yards beyond Belton - a lovely point on
ground. These grouse are so jumpy it is nearly impossible to get to see one,
let alone get a chance to shoot. We ~~later~~ had a ~~round~~ flush - no view

(52)
81

Following the flight by guess, we came to the rail fences that
cuts along the far end, eventually leading to the "inroom ~~my~~ maple"
when I took a run of Kay and Blum on the rail fences years ago. We
crossed and stopped to eat on a large log not far from when Kay took
the still life of the woodcock, Pandy and Belton on a log last year.

Waking back to the upper level I saw Belton work scent
and then stretch out in a low point with his back down no
more than 18" high, immovably with his head turned away from
me. He was so intense I considered a grouse but it lay too long
and let me get too close for that. Finally I saw the cock with Belton's
nose so close to it I was uneasy he would think it a cripple and grab
it. I moved closer and closer until the bird jumped straight in the
air and came left crossing close above me and I caught it with a
quick shot through ~~the~~ ^{any} intervening pattern of gumac cones - a hard
hit, and Belton retrieved a large hen - "one that came to me in the
Woodcock Morn - and stayed." Lovely bird. I'm not happy when
they have looked at me with those big dark eyes but it seems I see them
in front of the points so frequently.

Kay had moved up for ~~the~~ pictures of the point and delivery.
We heard two grouse go out wild as we walked around the hillside to the
cave and drove to Rehoboth in time for a last hour's shooting.

We were let-down with Rehobeth - only two woodcock - and

I walked into as we entered the thorns; - the second a male - the only male I can remember so far this season - that Belton pointed and had held a long time in the fur hawthorn. The bird when it at last flushed, kept cover between us very closely and I had no shot.

In the late period, we came to a less than half-grown ^{whiteface} deer in the thorns near the poplars - a pitiable little thing separated from the few cattle elsewhere on the place. It seemed so frightened by Belton's sudden appearance it appeared to lose its equilibrium and began moving in ^{close} circles, clockwise and counterclockwise, making no sound but with bulging eyes that gave no evidence of vision. I later showed Raymond Zinn about it and he said it was difficult to state what might be wrong without examining it but that sometimes when in a wild situation they did react to fear in that manner. Sad.

Saturday 14 November

sunny, clear.

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

Cranfills Area

Raymond's Corner

heard 1 - 2
0

1 prod.

heard 2 - 2
0

Powerline/Swamp

0

Sister/Hoy's Run

heard 1 - 2 flashes
0

Disappointing day in good cover. Weather too perfect to believe. Found nothing in first count until a grouse flushed back over us too silently and swiftly to mount a gun. Later reflected it would only be in woods across the clearing. But on the way to follow it, Belton had a ground point on a 'cock on the edge of the woods where the grouse had disappeared - too soon to be the grouse. The flush was low and like a butterfly - impossible to shoot. So many have done that this season.

The second 'cock was below the road as we returned to the car. I had sent Belton into the cover and he ran onto it before he could go wild.

There was nothing in the powerline covert at the Swamp - good cover, but think I'll forget that place. Hurried on toward the Sister count and I made the mistake of not looking back to the old and new spring farm

but instead had to drive across to the Cranberry road - actually
it comes out in Cranberry after an interminable stretch. Never do
that again.

Reached the Hays Run cove at almost dusk and as we hurried
down the hill saw Belter making gun and Key saw (I didn't) a
quail flush from his area and go to the stream. We hunted at them
and heard a flush (Key did, I didn't) and extended a flush back to
the far side, but had no luck finding it. The hawthorns are hanging red
with haws and it is ridiculous not to have quail in most of them. I
hunted up the hollow in near darkness while Key went for the car
and met me when I came out on the road at the Sixth Camp.

Disappointing lack of game.

Monday 16 November
Cold, rainy, windy 44°

Grassy Ridge

Far and overlooking Stony River

Belted:
2 per

ward 1-1

0

ward 2-2

Pigeon Roost Road

0

Rehoboth

ward 1-1 (sound)

returned to the car and hurried the long trek to Rehobeth —
 certain there would be some 'cock there.

We combed the area thoroughly, Bolton unable to accept the
 idea it was empty but empty it was except for the mere sound of a flick
 of wings as a grouse lifted ahead of Bolton and far-far from me on
 the edge of woods beyond the furthest reach of the hedgerow cover.

I can hardly recall a time when at least this last piece of
 hedgerow cover did not have at least one 'cock during the actual
 season, unless it was after deer season. The strange thing is that every
 woodcock I have shot — in N.Y. or here — has been a hen, and I can't
 remember seeing more than a couple of males in all we've flushed, giving the
 feeling as were seeing only the beginning of the flight. It was with an
 empty feeling — a sense of deprivation — that we changed back at
 the car and looked back at the Rehobeth thorns with the angry glow
 of sunset behind clouds, and started home.

The Story River / Grassy Ridge country is too empty of birds — but
 in spite of this it is big and it is wild exciting country.

Tuesday 17 November
cloudy to sunny 47°
3 hrs.

Hartman Place

moved 6 - 6 flasks
0
moved 2 - 2 flasks
0

Belton: 2 prod.
2 prod.

58
181

I think we enjoyed this hunt almost more than any day this season, not because of the oif grouse we made — almost spectacular nowadays — but for the charm of this big covert in its wild expanse of hawthorn and crabapple, its lack of people, and for the grand points Belton gave us.

We found the road up from the Woolen Mill improved and good travelling. Parked at the old hamlet (is this where the Steamboat House was located?). Crossed the rough "field" to the hollow with its impossible thorns and Belton worked too far ahead of us and we saw a grouse flash back up the valley as ^{we} did last season. This time we had no further contact but Ray and Belton saw a turkey at the head of the hollow; also saw grouse feathers on a path that could have been from a shot or a predator.

Coming back down the valley we worked the stand of cover below the last high tension powerline and I found Belton in a lucky joint at the edge of the little stream. It was a woodcock that I flushed with no chance to shoot because of the thick cover altho I could see that it was a hen.

This creek of cover tapers to a point of thickets on the stream

59/81



NO SHOT

and as we approached, we heard a quon flush and saw it come back to our left, followed shortly by a second quon followed immediately by Belton in ignominious chase. It may have had a point as credit.

Following these two birds back the direction we had come from, we missed another quon that seemed much too soon for a reflush. Had no further contact with any of the three, altho we hunted all the way to the head of this one piece of cover. In my search, I found the stones of a large barn foundation on the woods above the powerline, suggesting that this had been farm land once.

The cover is excellent on both sides of the powerline which runs angles left to parallel the second powerline coming off the slope to our right — some hawthorns with haws, but no more quons. at the place where a sort of wild road forms a barrier across with a ~~sub~~ drawing of the stream, we turned up the hill and started hunting back north in the valley below the main old road. With enough time, I'm convinced it

18/92

60
18/

would be worthwhile to explore the edges of the powerlines on and on into the south for there is a world of cover here.

We lost Belton's bell sound and are certain he had a 'cock'. In it flushed from where he'd been quiet, the bird another hen (they all seem to be hens this year) but I was not certain at the time and passed the shot. We're unable to relocate it above the main road where we marked it.

Walking the muddy road - the best chance for a shot - we let Belton cover the sides, which he did beautifully, and saw him draw to a point on the left at the last of the old strip-mining spoilbanks that runs along on the upper side. He moved to reestablish and the grouse lifted from the side of the spoilbank, giving me a short look at it but no shot. It must have topped out for we were unable to relocate it although Belton covered the area beautifully. I must climb up there the next time and see what is in top - probably a Terrace with beards.

We came to the corner of the road where the powerlines cut down, the grand memory of Belton's high point and the

6/18/81

'cock that dropped in the middle of the road, a bird Belton nearly ran over in his eagerness to retrieve last year. Today it was empty.

On the far side where the woods takes up above and below, Belton pointed in the cover on the left and I that perhaps we'd found a 'cock after all. But this was a grass point, solid, high and gorgeous. The bird flushed sharply and topped the cover in a mixed haze of branches and fading light, seeming too far for a shot but looking back now, I wonder? This was our north ground of the day, making it seem like grass growing again. We followed into the thorn field to his nest - excellent cover - but could not find the ground.

But it was a great day.



Wednesday 18 November

Morris Place

cold, cloudy, breezy 44°

moved 1-1 flock
0

(62) 181
Belton 1 point

3 1/2 hrs

Morris Place

moved 2-2 flocks
0

Wanted to try the ~~Morris~~ Morris Place before the deer hunters move in.

Worked the first corner next to Dennis's carefully and finally had a flock from the old regular. Ray said he had seen Belton on point. Unfortunately I so often miss seeing the point, don't hear the bird and often don't see it. It doesn't add up to great grouse gunning. This time I missed seeing Belton but did hear the flock and saw the grouse take off and head for the old road. We hunted for it with no luck.

We did in fact have a single contact all over the Morris Place - the area (below the pines) in the bottom, up in the pines, up on the good flat on top.

We decided to hunt into the woods on the east end, following the ~~big~~ ^{woods} road into new cutting, kept going all the way to the slashings on the Morris Place - excellent cover that today was empty. Belton hunted hard and at one place had a point he was almost certain was not a grouse. The bird must have lifted before he hit the very hot scent. There was wind and it was cloudy and cold.

63/81

did not push on to the old Mount home site that I meant to try
this year, but instead hunted toward the Salem / Fair Forks Road.

I put Kay on a trace of a woods road I knew would take her all
the way to the road where I parked. Then I pushed her over about. When I
came to the dim path that runs transversely down the
slope, I cut down to meet Kay. Her whistle and voice got me
her whistle and answer that to my wonder: "I'm on the road."

Coming on, I came to the ~~road~~ woods road she'd been on,
walked into a flash that lifted with a roar on the lower side of the
~~path~~ - good view of the green right quarter and rising but further

life of me I couldn't get my safety off the gun mounted. My
shoulders are both troubling me as to a smooth mount anymore
and I know this was a chance I didn't even get to try for

after the road and the tracks, I called for Kay and she finally
came out of the woods where she had that she was lost. She had
crossed my path ahead of me and had been above me in the woods
when I had she was already on the road. I waited for Kay not for
upset or frightened and this time she was. She had also moved a
grove in that upper area a more round flash. We walked the road
down the hill to the car a disappointing experience over

Monday 7 December

cold, windy, cloudy 38°
snow on ground but
drizzle, turning to
steady rain at end
2 hrs.

Matthews Place

moved 1 - 1

Belton: 1 prod

(64) '81

First day after deer season and we
selected our favorite covert to resume the
season. On the way in the lane a ground ran
left to right across the rough road near the top of the hill. I
was involved with getting the car up the muddy road but Kay
pointed it out on the right side where it walked parallel and
then flushed toward the top of the rise. A good omen.

at the house we were greeted by the appearance of
two corn hounds - one an enormous near black fellow
with huge ears and flews, the other a yellow and white hound
not so large, tied to another kennel behind the house. Belton
who had been grieving all the way in the lane seemed impressed
by the sight of the black beast and suddenly forgot what he had
to say. The hounds who had been curiously silent all the while
we turned the car into the yard - the road was a horror -
saw Belton and opened up with voices that would curdle the
blood of a corpse. Kay took a movie of the black hound.

We took the road out to where the trails had once stood
then instead of climbing to the field and across to the foot
of the hill, we took the bottom dog run down the hollow.

65/81



A VOICE TO CURDLE
THE BLOOD OF A CORPSE

We climbed the small rise to the flat and soon were as familiar to
roads. Belton had not missed a square yard of cover in the totem or on
the top and before long he went solid in a point that bespoke a lead
right under his nose. Nothing materialized when I got to him,
losing my cap in the process, and I saw two sets of fresh snow
tracks in the soft snow. After that we methodically covered every
portion of the slushings had a couple of indications of scent but
no points and no leads.

The rain was getting a little more insistent but we pushed on
south and beyond the area of large rocks and Mesquedendron where
we usually was a snow. Today was like an last trip in here
last season — heartbreakingly barren. The cover is excellent,
the weather is continuing to cut firewood throughout and nothing
could be better.

Belton's bell went silent in a thick area of downed trees
from four years ago and Ray & I pressed on my through.



deer-cropped greenbrier, with Belton obviously holding a point all the while. Then a large grouse flushed about sixty yards above us and Kay said Belton's bell held still for a few seconds and then broke, and I saw him return after his rush. The bird had gone on north and we fought to a log stand above — probably where the point had been — and walked all the way to where our grouse had fallen into the sawspruce. This in 1979. Belton covered the area thoroughly but we had no further contact. At this time the rain got really nasty about it — at the farthest distances from the car — and we set our faces back — huddled against the drizzle of rain on our backs and walked steadily to the house.

Conditions were about ideal for dog work and Belton had worked it ideally, but if there had been other grouse present we would have found them. A sad situation. All three of us were not.

67/181

Thursday 24 December

Kelly / Beaver

Belton

melting snow, cold 36°
cloudy to sunny to cloudy

2 hrs

55 min } 3 hrs

Kelly / McCarty

march 1-1 flush

after 2 plus weeks of indoor confinement with snow that seemed forever, we got out for the first time, our December 7th hunt. The day was perfect, damp, some snow in woods and on back roads. Sun came out before we left home but clouds took over after we were in the woods about an hour.

We parked just beyond the bridge on Beaver Creek on the Charles Kelly road and hunted down the valley then good cover, a bit open at first but improving as we approached the "Disembled Road," now nearly gone. Belton was hunting hard but a shade wild, and we put the electronic collar on him, with results. The only sign of a grouse was tracks of a hen crossing the old road trace behind the Kelly farm, but no bird.

During deer season Mike Deberry had reported seeing five grouse in the area we hunted. The flat woods on top proved less than we'd hoped, and we reached the car after two hours of hard hunting, disappointed.

Had some ^{hot} tea with food, then drove to the McCarty place and hunted the good cover on the boundary between the two properties.

On our way back we doubled into the thick stand of
autumn oaks on Charles Kelly's, some heavy with berries - Deer have been
using him - their droppings red in places. Finally, I worked out to
the pines and hunted the line south along the deer autumn oaks
stand. Belton was off in the cover to the right and I whistled him
to me. He came out behind and raced along the edge as a quail
flushed about thirty yards out and bore low and straightaway. I
almost tried to shoot at 40 plus yards but saw Belton in line
and held fire - a possible chance that had to break wrong.

We followed a good quail flight along the right-of-way but
had no luck relocating. That's how it goes these days. Perhaps better
luck tomorrow

Christmas Day 25 December ~~Father~~ Tarleton Hemberson Belton:

perfect day, sunny, clear, cool 39°

~~1 1/4 hrs.~~ 1 1/4 hrs. } 2 1/2 hrs.
1 1/4 hrs }

0
South Hog Run
moved 2 - 3
1 shot - 0

We got to hunt, at last, on another Christmas. There
have been few of such. The weather was lovely - some of the
simpering "white Christmas snow" the weather forecasters drizzled
about. We selected one of the best of our woods and had it

69/181

entirely to ourselves - not even the sound of a shot -
but we were not to have a break.

There was spotty snow, frozen, then the woods, and there was not a
game track anywhere. Ray heard a grouse drumming on the northern
ridge and at two times that she might have heard grouse flapping
far, far away, but there were not contacts as could count.

We started along the top beam, hunted to the Halland shot
and back out of the old traces and down to the Boundary Road
and up to the chukchedum gap, then to the top again and to the
back road. Ray wanted to get the car (we could have driven to the
woods corner, although the mud was bad at the turning place, but
we had walked in. While Ray went for the car, Bolton and I hunted
the flat across to the road where Ray parked me up.

After tea in the car parked in the road, we drove to the
Lower Hay Run cove and also had it to ourselves, although there
were fresh tracks from yesterday it seemed.

Bolton was by now frustrated from lack of birds and
reached out. I had relented and insisted we not put the duck
collar on him for this last time and regretted it.

In the small thicket of woods between the path and the bottom flat he moved out from us and ignored our wrath. Finally as we stood out in the flat from the woods we saw a grouse jump and appear to go straightaway about fifty yards from us.

Suddenly I realized it was coming head-on, but I have an instinctive resistance to incursions from fear of hitting the dog.

This bird would have been a soft target for it was light ~~enough~~ enough but by then it was passing to our left - close and shiny and small. I wheeled and fired at the same time Thicket - a going-away-left and got a double discharge almost like one shot. The right-larvel shell was an alarm 3-1-6 (one of the few remaining) and was not heavy enough to have ~~caused~~ caused the kick-off. I

thunk my right hand, being in a knitted glove, slipped off the front trigger because I was firing almost across my chest with the rather long pull placing only the fingertips on the trigger.

Anyway, I didn't hit, which would have been a welcome break.

We followed well up the bottom, but there were a dozen places the grouse could have gone. At last we were back to where the action had been, only to have Belton go into the woods and

from the same general area a second grouse flushed, 7/81
topping high and left crossing above the trees, far beyond gunshot.

I marked its apparent descent - quite a short flight -
into the old strip mine banks and tried to get Belton to aim toward
it. At such times dogs rarely do it, but I ended up bellowing
at him and he obeyed. The grouse obviously wasn't holding for
that sort of thing but it rose farther up the slope than
expected - too far for a shot. Belton froze at the sound
of the flush, but then went on.

We worked hard and well in the broken cover
to the left but had no relocation.

The day had been a grand lot of weather, but most of
the time I was hunting under the burden of a thick head pressure
and lack of steam - something that has ruined many days for me.

Birthday Hunt
Monday 28 December

cold, cloudy with
some sun. Patches 40°

9 snow remaining

2:20 - 4:50 / 2 1/2 hrs
scant.

McKean / Forquer

moved 3-5 flushes

0

Belton: 2 prod.

My 75th birthday gave us a day w/1
could hunt with weather that didn't

George Bird Evans Papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center

inspired a long trip, as we hunted the Mc New place
on the strength of Lefay B.'s report of seeing 4 grouse earlier.
This is the first we've hunted here for years, but now that the Mc New
has left, we felt free to go there. The cover along the Mc New Run
except for the south margin is grown out, although a couple of
corners below Rt 48 highway could hold grouse. Today, they
didn't.

We worked to the head of the hollow with the electronic collar
on Belton and he did well, at the edge of the "Bruce Court" we
marsh south up that fork of the run - too tall and open -
and into the old fields grown-up on the hill back. About a
road track along the hill, I saw Belton turned on point but
almost at once his actions indicated a flush up the hill -
can't say how long he'd pointed.

Worked up the hill then excellent grouse and Thicket
shots to the margin of the powdering at the Mc New/Faguer
line when they heard two flashes far to our left & birds that
no doubt pitched back down the hill. Not coming to follow back, we
hunted the powderline and soon saw Belton hit a point in the
far side in the Faguer woods, and again marked the flush
by his action, not a sight of the bird, ~~understand~~ it had gone to

The pines above the del Spallbank

73/181

~~We ate lunch on a log at the edge of the pines and then~~
We hunted along the spallbank and doubled back on top —

Good gopherine work along an old stone fence of Max Pagano's.

Among the fair-sized pines on top we finally got a flush from a pine tree, close to our but Ray had the view of the grouse cutting them pines ahead. No shots today, but at least two productive, brief as they were.

We found a log near the pines and sat and ate lunch before hunting down over a surprisingly well hollowed on the ground — tricky footing on the slippery old snow. Ray had two shells, as

that broke her up more than she would admit.

It had been spitting a sort of sleet/snow from time to time and finally began chattering rain on us as we reached the car. It

wasn't a great day in terms of sport — too few are anywhere —

but it was great to be out and in good air. I don't know

how much longer we can expect to be hunting grouse in this lovely country of ours. Other people seem to have grouse. We don't.

Wednesday 30 December Maunt Place

Belton

(74) '81

beautiful day
sunny clear 36°
no wind

2 hrs. This is a gorgeous covert - with nearly a hundred acres of slashed cover - the entire hillside with grapevines and grapes, even barberries red with berries around the old homestead. If grouse would be anywhere, they would be here if cover alone were the answer. We hunted at hard and I saw one grouse roost on the upper margin of the slashings. No birds, not even the two we moved near the Fur Forks road earlier in the season. A great disappointment. Walked Belton without the bell.

Saturday 2 January

Spiker Place

Belton: 1 proof
(and a honey it was)

glorious day, mostly
muggy cool

40° moved 2-2 flocks
no shots

2 1/4 hrs. (A cock grouse called across the paved road as we pulled out our gun; ~~had tried to flush it but it ran up into the pines.~~ This covert looked even better than anytime before.

We walked it in magnificent air high above Little Sandy valley. Belton worked without the bell again today but with the electronic collar and hunted beautifully.

We moved nothing in all the good cover until we had worked to the excellent grapevines above the Beaver Hole field, where we hunted north to a clearing. at the upper edge, in a narrow margin of cover at the edge of the top field I found Belton on point, doubled in a U-shape, ~~pointing towards the field.~~ I saw the second whistle once and

75/81



RIGHT THERE!

climbed the steep slope and was faced with a jumble of fallen branches and logs and patches of snow with no way to get around and come in from the front. Accepting the alternative, I stood within eight feet of Belton who was frozen, staring at the area in front of his face. ~~waiting~~. Finally, before they could reach us, the grouse exploded, going out toward the edge so low I couldn't see it until it cut right, still low, and was gone.

It would have been a grand thing to have had the shot, but as it was, the point - done perfectly - made the day one of the best in the season. Belton held for a moment after the flash, then broke - and I don't blame him after all the blank time.

When he came back after a short burst, he ran around with glory radiating from him - and us.

We moved out the neck of woods on top, where I have a memory of having found four grouse one day with Rufus, and there a huge

18/29

(76)
181

RIGHT THERE!

oak log we ate lunch.

On the way back we hunted the margin of the top field to the gap in the woods near the powerline where we hunted up the right-of-way toward theittersweet tangle. Ray was about me to the left, and I was deep in the small ravine in the opening and was climbing the steep bank when Ray called Grass! Grass! and I looked up to see a grass or set wings straight above me but gone before I could mount and shoot. I think it was the most nearly straight-up bird I can remember seeing.

We crept into the cover when the grass had gone, going to the top edge and walking down a log road but, altho Belton searched loyally, we didn't relocate it.

It was a grand two hours, weather and conditions perfect, and even with the scarcity of birds in cover that would have held a half dozen, it made no little difference. George Bird Evans Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

Tuesday 5 January
lovely day, partly sunny
~~8~~ breezy 44°

George Ringer
march 1-2
0

Bellin

2:30-4:30 } 2 1/2 hrs Kelly / McCarty edge
4:45-5:15 }

Parked at Beaver "dam" on Kelly's near Beaver Creek bridge.
Walked across and up old road, Bellin working on the right in thorns.
A grouse flushed out and up the road, very low straightaway and
I didn't shoot! Why? I have a block about low birds and nothing
a dog, but I'm sure this was safe. Just not fast enough reflex.
Followed and grouse again flushed from right side into woods on left.
Bellin had no work. Second flush too far for a shot.

That was it. We hunted around the old Ringer Place -
no sign of grouse in our last summer. Hunted up a steep hillside to
stop near an up and around the square of woods in Clyffe & Spitzer place.
A man named Rithley lives there but no one home but sheep and a
red white and orange pointer who tried to breed to Bellin & Bellin's
embarrassment. Came down old road after eating lunch on a steep
mine refill, and hunted excellent thorn and crab Thicket on left of
road when there should have been birds but absent.

At car, decided to have Ray drop me off at the Bob White
Trails and I hunted the border of Kelly / McCarty autumn olive with no
results, and Ray met me at road below Linnis. I'm so frustrated
I'm in a state of nerves. What is going on here?
George Bird Papers
West Virginia and Regional History Center

Friday 29 January Hog Run (lower)

meridians 36°

0

Bellin:

(78)

'81

1 in. after what I am sure is the Fifth Glacial Epoch,
we went out for the first time since New Year's week. The
snow is less deep - 5" to 6" - but ~~that~~ ^{has} a frozen crust
that almost supports you but not quite, with much
crunching sound that is part icy crust and part
your neck bones grating.

We saw one set of grouse tracks - deep old - and
two sets of hunters tracks equally old. (You never see
any other grouse hunters!!). We hunted up along the last
of the strip mine tracks with Bellin hunting hard. He
and we deserve better.

We had found one cock grouse of the pine at our land
dead in the middle of the frozen road, and not wanting to
have it remain there, as took it with us and left it near
the car when we parked.

The hour's hunt covered this small event and we decided to
drive to the Wellburn place. The road from Hazleton to
Cherry Grove was nearly bare but the road up toward Mountain
Dale became gradually horribler as we drove higher. At
Wellburn there was no place to park a team and we kept

going, finding thicker ice entirely covering the road 79/181
as we approach to top of the mountain. Hoping for the
best, we turned left toward Hagler through four foot walls
of snow and started down the mountain. The road had been played
and rutted in places and we finally came to bare areas.

Stopped to eat lunch at the roadside near Harkling's,
and then drove home. Saw John Upso four times during the
afternoon. So much for winter hunting. I hope it shuts out
other hunters but they will back it if it kills them. We
should be so lucky.

Monday 1 February
sunny, cold, windy 32°

Frank Wright

Belton

moved 1-1
0

50 min }
1 hr } 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hr.

Mr Mullen Place

0

Finally the sun came out and we had to go. Snow mostly
gone here, except for patches, but when we started down the back
road headed for the Brown Place we found the snow solid in the
old road and like stone. Had to retreat, using the stubble
cornfield and nearly broke our necks; 1 day lost.

Tried the far side of the road, entering the corner where one
day Brian and I took a lovely redroff creek. Today not even tracks.

(80)
'81

We tried to walk the deer trails to avoid the crumby ^{snow} ~~snow~~ that would support our steps and let the next break them, but the irregular lumpy ice on the deer trail was like walking on rough stones. Gave up before we got down to the run in the bottom, and came back up the south margin of the woods where one day I dropped out of a brace of grouse over Brown's point. Today Ray heard a faint hint of a flush inside the woods - no view - and Belter corroborated it when he lost hot scent, but that was the extent of our contact. Too rough to follow the flush into the bottom.

We reached the car and drove to the rear road on the Mc Mullen place, finding the old road nearly clear - good walking with Belter working the left woods, now dashed back severely to make promising cover.

Hunted into the basin where the road filled our way with ice and we turned back into the slashing in the north, only to find we were fighting ten inches of snow with frozen crust - heavy and fatiguing walking. Struggled thru to the clearing near the "No Dringung Whiskey" sign and gave up.

Good to be out again but, oh, so disappointing.

Friday 5 February
mild, cloudy, damp 40°

Forquer

macd 2-2 (1 new)

Beltan: 1 prod.

8/1/87

snow gone almost everywhere

2 hrs.

~~Full~~



THE GRATE GAVE IN
A SECOND AND A HALF

With the car at Murphy's, I decided to take Beltan to the Forquer Place while Kay was in town, but she was driven back by Mark Murphy. However, Kay felt she should stay home to take any calls from Rich Hopkins who was in Baltimore to pick up the books at the breeding!!

I walked them to the Forquer house, greeted and abased by the "Black Pack" who almost escorted me to the far side.

I found stunning grapevine cover along the base of the ship mine, with a number of grapes (large ones) on the ground. This could

not be better game over, and more of it than I'd
realized was there, but no birds.

At the top of the hill I crossed the powerline to the east side
and worked the thinner woods where we'd moved a pair last time.

Beltan was working a lot
wiser, trying to produce
birds, and I wrestled
him back up the hill
to me and turned
him toward a

tangle of vines and

branches where he immediately hit scent and pointed. The grouse

gave him less than two seconds to enjoy it and gave me about
a second — a good view of a red cockbird but no time to mount.

I was pleased that my sending Beltan to the spot produced a
bird — good experience for him.

We followed the flight, which I could not make well, and
had no refresh. Hunted to the road near Dave Selse's and
crossed to the far corner woods on the Forgiven Place, fair
cover. We moved nothing in the main covert but at the

THE GROUSE GAVE US
A SECOND AND A HALF.

780/0



83/81

south edge, just up the slope about when Belton and
puppy made his first point on Haining quail. I
saw him that scent, winding and working down slope. He
went below and had started toward the edge but the grouse
wouldn't hold - lifting from a thin stand of ~~these~~ locusts
and coming down the woods margin on the outside, far
beyond gunshot from the start.

One grouse to a covert is about par this year. I
worked Belton on up the hill to the long field and passed to
eat, sitting on the lone stump in the powdered right-of-way
that James Sees has bulldozed into pasture. The view into
the south was striking. I hunted the woods ^{just} below the
long field, recalling grouse I used to meet here. No longer.
At our border below the hilltop pines I removed the shells
from my gun and walked the woods home, with Belton
showing a distinct recognition that it was home.

Tuesday 23 February
sunny, perfect, mild 50°
train of mow in patches

Upper Wilderness

Belton:
hunted like a dream.

Tucker Place

2 hrs. } 2 1/2 hrs.
1/2 hr.

A good piece of weather and we drove to
Escentments and were getting out of the car when Ray heard

hands running in the covert as we were going to hunt —
rabbit hunters also can be hard on grouse.

(84)
181

Drove off and arrived at 48 and out to the far corner of
the Upper Wilderness at the Carlos Shaffer road. at least no one
there and we hunted out to the deer hunting cabin with no
trace of feather or track, other than deer and fox and rabbit.

The cabin brought back memories of a summer walk there,
with a dusty gray-looking spaniel face peering out at us
from an opening under the house — a poor lost soul that
turned out to be Brian, the rascal, poking and crawling under
the spaces below the floor!

Today we walked beyond the cabin and back toward the
greenbrier stretch, with lots of berries, and back to the
bulldozed road where we ate lunch and tried to comprehend
why there are no grouse at all in here. The only wild life
we had seen was after Belton hit and shot about us to the left
and then walked across the trail when I saw some movement
that at first looked like a groundhog had raised a foot off
the ground, only to see a wounded deer flounder to its feet,
fall down, and finally struggle off over the brink of the hill.
Like the young dog at home with her right rear hoof shot
off and infected (don't think my narrative) these

85/81

distressing cripples - hangers-on - after the deer season emphasizing the ineptness of too many of the deer hunters - gun and bow - who take uncertain shots because they are the sporting types.

Today we tramped (this is what happens with no motivation - back to the car and at the last, down past Bartholomew's to the Tachin place - good area, as was all we were in today - and hunted a final ^{half} hour there. Disappointingly empty. Zero grouse for two counts.

Friday 26 February
cold, overcast, 32°

2 hrs. } 3 hrs
1 hr }

Gravymist Glade

search 2 - 2

Frankie Wright

Beltin:

hunted well

Phoned Ed. Eisentrout and Jim said the same two "vehicles" were parked back of Humberson house as were there Tuesday. No any hunts during the late season. We decided to try the Gravymist Glade and found as had at the ourselves. The north slope down to the swamp was still iced in with snow and we turned back and hunted the margin of the field, which was late. I stayed in the car while Ed, who is moving & last

worst sprain from a fall on an icy lawn at the first land, 86 181
stayed in the clear.

Belted hunted like a dream again today - much determination -
but did not get any work on a grouse that flushed below us, by
round seeming to go to the swamp. Unable to back that swamp to
the other side, I worked the field edge with Kay - Belted carrying
the thrust, and after for and I saw fresh grouse tracks in a
patch of snow. Moments after I started toward the thrust, I heard
and saw - the first grouse I've looked at for months - a
grouse flush about fifty yards ahead and cross back west. I
called, thinking that Belted had run into it, only to have Kay tell
me Belted was above me in another piece of cover, excitedly making
scent on the earlier tracks of the grouse.

Kay waited - cold - while Belted & I hunted the thick
cover - all good - back to the site of the #1 flush with
no success. That was it.

Rejoined Kay ^{and I} hunted out the bottom then the white pines
and hawthornes to the far end where last year it was good. I
saw the same deformed hawthorn tree the grouse perched in before
flushing and a grand shot and retrieval. Today there was no
action. Now occurs the pattern this year: down from poor to
worse.

87/81

We hunted around to the end of the ^{low} ridge and up over the
good thorns to a newly fenced area which also appeared to be
countless buck rubbings on the chestnut and small trees. Finally saw
much wood rubbing on the trunks of oaks and decided that it
had been there, no longer there, during the bark, with deep scars
letting them reach higher than normally.

Came out the woods road from the graveyard to the
car, too soon to stop hunting, and decided to try the Frank
Wright place. Ray made the sensible decision to drive to
Mary Idubich's and come back for me in an hour.

Bella and I hunted out the barren flat thorns where
that wonderful time we stopped with Ben on our way back from
Penn. and had a point and shot and hit at the corner. No
bays. There was excellent cover all over and I hunted around to the
low Wright side and into the dense cover down over and across
to the south corner and back to the road - dead beat. Bella
has more courage & endurance than I have, and more hope.

As Ray says, it is not as much frustrating as sad.

Last Day
Saturday 27 February Spiker Place, Little Sandy South (8) 181
mostly cloudy, 33° 3 hrs. wind 1 - 1 fresh
snow gone, good day to hunt Belton: 1 prod.

Planned Jean Kelly for report on road part her
place: bad by both routes, so saw up and hunted back on
Little Sandy and the Spiker Place.

This was Season's End of the poorest grouse season in
my 57 — a bird/cant ratio of 1.14, simple disaster.
Other than, like most cunts this year, having the pleasure of calling
them good even — and there is no lack of that — and see a
gallant dog hunt his heart out as the then were given present!
It has been mostly looking the memories of what happened in
these places, once upon a time.

We came on Ward Crane, who looks amazingly like John
Percival and about as old, and his son Clifford. Crane said we are had
been hunting there that he knew of, but he had not seen any grouse.

We hunted all the way to the corner where Belton had a grand
point the last time here (nothing today). It is the highest piece
of land in Little Sandy Valley and we could see over the line on
the boundary with the Foreign place.

Coming down to the triangular field at the Brownthol,
we walked thru the enormous boulders and troughs of gophers —
with papers when Kelly had not been before. I showed her the

89/81

place where Shadows had found and of course retrieved the
hard-lit grouse with tailfeathers stuck in the deep snow like an
Indian war bonnet — wonderful memory.

In the corner Beaver Hole field we did find a single
grouse dropping, suggesting that perhaps the old grouse may be
back at this time of year, if at all.

Walked the trail back to the gate at the hard-top.
Near the tiny run where we shot our first W.V. grouse with Blue
on his first day, Belter pointed above the road and they
saw the grouse — about as large looking as a robin — forty
fifty yards ahead of him and cross down the creek. I
had no look at it. One lone grouse in a covert that should
hold a dozen. It is truly sad, and I doubt if there will be
that grouse for years from now unless the DNR rambunctious
wake up. A poor season.

~~~~~  
The question arises: why do I hunt in these late months if  
I am so convinced it is wrong? It is rationalization. I have not  
shot a single grouse in WV this season, had but 2 ineffectual  
chances all year long. You reach the point where you feel you have  
something coming to you, at the expense of the grouse. How many  
years, how many days are they going to be?  
Belter, however from his chance, has been a dream of a season



doz with integrity that never lessens, always hunting (90)  
8.  
In those birds that are almost never there - and he too, has only  
so many days to live it, probably far fewer than I have.



Post 1981-

Hunting Hills

Friday 12 March

Lovely sunny, warm 55°  
1 1/2 hrs.

missed 6 chukars / 1 woodcock  
5 shots - 4 ~~hits~~ (5 hits)  
kills

Belton: 6 prod. chukars  
4 ret  
4 k.

at last the snow had gone, the rain stopped and the weather was ideal. Ray had been wanting to give Belton and me - and in some action with birds, not the forlorn hope of birds, and this day came them beautifully. We got to the new Hunting Hills Preserve later than planned and didn't get started until 3:45.

The new preserve is more striking than the old - a hilltop stretch of sparse corn strips, with some oaks, strips of weedy ridge and blackberry briars in small patches and steep hill slopes that are strip mine banks planted to small pines - good cover - and much wooded gulleys and steep hillheads - 600 acres with a lot of such strip cover - corn - for birds that may be out.

We hunted alone and for a while it appeared as if we were going to find nothing - except a hen woodcock that Belton found but did not point. It flushed low after a short hop, and landed on the bank of the pine covered bank where we saw it but when Belton got no trace of scent for all my effort to get him on it. Strange! Back I went.

We had doubled back to cover the top well, almost directing to have Ray put out some birds. Both suggested that



9  
we should hunt out the corn strips to check 7 for birds before going in.

Almost immediately as the idea was a good one - Belton pointed in the sparse corn cover. I hadn't seen him until Kay remarked, and I saw the chicken moving out on him. I pushed it and it flushed, offering a nice right-quartering shot, and dropped solidly about about thirty yards out. There was no suggestion or consideration in Belton's part of "steadiness to shot" and I hardly ~~blame~~ blame him, after all these months of frustration. I was feeling a pleasant surprise that also after all this time (the last shell fired was Xmas Day) that I could even point the Pandey, let alone hit with it.

Belton was mounting the chicken and pointing from the best and I thought there would be some delay in the release but he shortly picked up the bird and brought it nicely to me.

Then happened what I've read about many times but the thing has never happened to me. Instead of sitting to deliver, Belton simply stood erect and went into a trance with the chicken in his mouth, his head kept high and looking from the far side



of the corn stubble. Ray exclaimed, "He's pointing another one. I  
see it!" That wondrous quality of nose that comes, with the  
feathers of the dead chicken fluffed about his muzzle, get  
the scent of a living bird and distinguish it from the scent  
of the bird-in-mouth.

By that time I too saw the second bird walking out the  
fur edge and, restraining Belle while Ray took several pictures of the  
point, finally freed a net and took the chicken from his mouth and  
held Belle, quivering with excitement by the collar and at last, after  
the running bird had disappeared, released and sent him on.



POINT WITH BIRD-IN-MOUTH

✓  
enlarge head  
p 181



Bellon, thoroughly forested up, sailed through the tarrans & finally located the bird in a small clump of birch, first flagging then freezing in a sure point.

This chicken flashed in much the same right-quarting manner as the first and dropped at the same distance. This time Bellon retrieved promptly and delivered. But he broke at shot again in spite of my hold! and again I couldn't blame him.

We paused for a bite of food - no logs to sit on, so we stood and looked at the magnificent distant mountains, Chestnut ridges blue in the east and stretched for twenty or thirty miles.



JOINT WITH BIRD IN MOUTH



We hunted out these strips of sparse corn with no further action, but at the head of a hollow on the left we found an expanse of sedge, tan-orange, filling a small basin where the mud trail curved into the next piece of corn over the rise. On the right there were more corn strips alternating with sedge and weeds and stretching far into the distance - possible bird cover.

I came into focus on Belton standing in the mud track, his head turned toward the sedge in front of me, an ear thrown back, and his tail at a right angle, on a lovely high point. I requested to Ray to get shots from a three-quarter angle and the mud up, taking exposures with Belton never moving a hair and not letting down a trace of his intensity. He is glorious dog to gun with.



I found a brace of chuckers muddled in the sedge. One started to walk out, the other flushed in a climbing straightaway and I fired and saw it flinch and drop a leg but continue a labored flight. I fired the left barrel and again hit and the bird settled, flattening.



3  
Belton, unable to restrain himself, broke and soon found the bird,  
first pointing, then picking it up and retrieving it, dead.

As Ray and I spoke, Belton excitedly cast about his site of  
point and again froze solidly along the mud track. I moved in  
fast and a chuckar flushed in a nice straightaway leveling  
flight, dropping, centered at my shot. I was using my  $3 \cdot 1\frac{1}{8} \cdot 7\frac{1}{2}$   
AA reloads and they seem ideal. Once more Belton broke and retrieved.

This was not the day to correct him for lack of steadiness — he was  
perfect in every other way and we were out for fun.

Ray took a few still shots of the last brace of chuckars  
with Belton, gun and gunner, and we decided we'd shot all we wanted

and worked back toward the lodge.

In a last corn strip to the south of the lodge, Belton  
pointed far ahead, and held while we moved up. I wanted a still photo  
of Ray taking a picture of the point and of Ray laying my gun on the



grass, tried to get an approach to include Belton & Ray. Not  
being in front of the point, it gave the chuckers a chance to run,  
which it did, and Belton missed on. But we found the afternoon  
ideal - less than 2 hours but a nice lot of action on birds that,  
according to Ray, had been out. I'm never quite sure, but I saw  
no fresh truck tracks that would suggest a planting today.

The "Quail Lodge" (they have quail out but don't shoot  
them) is attractive, with photos of Hunting Hills dogs, a bear head mount,  
and a cast-iron-land painting of 2 porcupines by Jim Forte, but mostly  
done in nice taste. We plan to return soon. Let them clean our  
chuckers. Pound of Belton, and the Purdy satisfied me, too.

Friday 2 April  
Sunny, hot, 70°

### Hunting Hills

2nd trip

moved 6 chuckers / 1 woodcock  
5 shots - 4 hits

Belton: 6 prods. chuckers  
4 kills  
4 ret.  
+ 1 mistake & ret!

1 prod. quail  
1 prod. W.C.

2 hrs.

This time we had to hunt with no results, except  
for another find and productive on what I think is the same hen  
woodcock in the exact spot as last time. Farther out the edge of  
prairie on the opposite bank, Belton pointed a single bobwhite - one of a  
number we were told had been released for a trial the previous weekend.  
Very weak flier.

after that bit of action, Belton had no further contacts  
altho he hunted beautifully in spite of the intense heat. I



was hunting in a thin shirt and shooting vest. We were interested<sup>h</sup> in trying the far end of the big flat - all good open country with woods and briars and grass - but today we lost the pleasant impression we had last time that there were many birds out and scattered in a sort of wild condition.

It was not until we were back at the head of the ravine on the southwest edge that Belton pointed at a good-size stand of briars. He was about my eye level and as I climbed around the left side of the thicket to come in ahead, I saw a chicken lying tight in the dense briars. I was about to flash it, when I realized Belton was pointing a spot still above me and to my left. Knowing then, I put up a chicken that flushed back over Belton and curved for the ~~front~~ head of the ravine below, dropping I had lost at my shot. Belton was not steady, as he was not <sup>on</sup> the first trip here, but he made a lovely retrieve and delivery, with me losing two new shells from the ~~thorn~~ open breach of the Powder as I accepted - a silly trick. I must empty the gun in future, for there is seldom a need to shoot during the retrieve. We paused for a breath and some food, sitting under the slope of the left shoulder of the hollow.

Belton was eager to go back to the scene of action - only a short distance in front - and he was soon on point again -



2

one man on the brunt of the slope above the briars, and again headed left. I was certain the first bird of the briars had moved up there, and saw the chicken squatted in the open in front of Belton. This bird flushed, clucking and curving much in the manner of the other and I must have fired too raggedly, for I had to shoot again at about thirty yards and then it only slanted down with Belton after it. He delivered this one still alive, and it required a lot to dispatch it — chickens seem indifferent to having their necks wrung. These birds were noticeably larger than the ones we shot this week before.

We discovered that the original chicken sighted in the briars had not moved and that we were without doubt in a cluster put out by Ray Siler — a poor way to present some and typical of a preserve. Taking the opportunity to try for a 35 mm of Ray taking a move of a point, we walked Belton around to the briars and he was soon solid. I got a couple of shots of Ray and Belton in the briars.

With the chicken still immobile, and uncertain that there were any others out, ~~and~~ and with Belton still statuesquely pointing, I exchanged camera for gun, called up the bird which flushed into





78%  
p12 ✓

the wind and fell leaving an enormous cloud of feathers back-lit  
by the late afternoon sun, floating larger and larger.

Beltan was again unable to restrain himself and we let him (try to stop him!) go to the fall and retrieve the bird.

Crossing to the corn strip on the far bank we found Beltan pointing almost immediately. I walked in but the chicken ran instead of flushing (I probably did not go in from the front) and when at last I rushed at it, Beltan had already broken and the bird lifted just in time and headed, very high, for a distant woods. Beltan, however, never stopped and was almost under the bird all the way to where they disappeared in trees. I guessed the worst. He must have been there when it went to the ground, a, finding scent, overtook it running, for he soon returned very proudly carrying a big lump ~~chicken~~ <sup>chicken</sup> all the way back to me.





This season is the most deplorable experience for him and next season we are resolved to bring him here in September or early October and steady him down our way. He is such a mannerly fellow normally.

On our sweep down the corn strip, Belton had another good point and I flushed — a low flying partridge that dropped rather close, and was retrieved.

There was one more point and this one flushed to the same distant woods, but this time Belton didn't follow for.

It was obviously a matter of the six partridges having been set down in a hundred good circles and it was false action, unlike our experience the first trip. However, the cover is nice and it could be handled with judgment to afford good sport. Certainly Belton did a beautiful job other than breaking at short a good end to the season.



## RELATION OF LATE-WINTER SEASONS &amp; GROUSE NUMBERS

|      | Grouse per Covert | End of Season |
|------|-------------------|---------------|
|      | 2 4 6 8 10 12     |               |
| 1939 | 8.77              | Nov 29        |
| '40  | 8.33              | Nov 30        |
| '41  | 11.75             | Nov 29        |
| '42  | 9.75              | Nov 28        |
| '43  | 8.66              | Dec 31        |
| '44  | 7.69              | Dec 25        |
| '45  | 6.29              | Dec 22        |
| '46  | 6.2               | Nov 16        |
| '47  | 5.58              | Nov 29        |
| '48  | 6.52              | Nov 27        |
| '49  | 6.34              | Nov 19        |
| '50  | 6.36              | Dec 30        |
| '51  | 8.43              | Dec 31        |
| '52  | 8.61              | Jan 3         |
| '53  | 9.0               | Jan 2         |
| '54  | 9.83              | Jan 1         |
| '55  | 9.64              | Jan 7         |
| '56  | 10.0              | Jan 5         |
| '57  | 9.21              | Jan 4         |
| '58  | 9.83              | Jan 3         |
| '59  | 7.92              | Jan 2         |
| '60  | 6.27              | Jan 14        |
| '61  | 5.39              | Jan 6         |
| '62  | 5.55              | Jan 31        |
| '63  | 3.0               | Jan 25        |
| '64  | 3.32              | Jan 30        |
| '65  | 6.42              | Jan 29        |
| '66  | 6.44              | Feb 11        |
| '67  | 3.14              | Feb 24        |
| '68  | 3.55              | Feb 22        |
| '69  | 3.08              | Feb 28        |
| '70  | 4.2               | Feb 27        |
| '71  | 3.92              | Feb 26        |
| '72  | 4.61              | Feb 24        |
| '73  | 3.8               | Feb 23        |
| '74  | 1.52              | Feb 28        |
| '75  | 2.03              | Feb 28        |
| '76  | 1.4               | Feb 28        |
| '77  | 1.3               | Feb 28        |
| '78  | 1.85              | Feb 28        |
| '79  | 2.28              | Feb 29        |
| '80  | 2.07              | Feb 28        |

Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

George Bird Evans Papers

West Virginia and Regional History Center



# WEEKLY LOG 1981

BELTON

COCKS/FLUSH

SHOTS/HIT

| COVERTS       | DAYS/HRS.                    | GROUSE/FLUSHES           | SHOTS/HITS           | PROD./KILLS/RET.     | PROD./KILLS/RET. | PROD./KILLS/RET. | COCKS/FLUSH  | SHOTS/HIT        |
|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| NY 13         | 5/12                         | 25/30                    | 2/-                  | 1                    | 8/3/3            | 20/32            | 4/3          | 10/20 then 10/25 |
| NY 4<br>17    | 4/12 1/2<br>9/24 1/2         | 12/21<br>37/51           | 4/1<br>6/1           | 2/1/1<br>3/1/1       | 5<br>13/3/3      | 12/16<br>32/48   | 4/0<br>8/3   |                  |
| WV 5          | 3/8 3/4                      | 9/9                      | 0                    | —                    | 2                | 11/13            | 2/0          | then 10/31       |
| 11<br>16      | 4/12<br>7/20 3/4             | 7/10<br>16/29            | 1/0                  | 1/—                  | 19/5/5<br>21/5/5 | 35/40<br>46/53   | 10/5<br>12/5 | then 11/7        |
| 6<br>22       | 3/9 1/2<br>10/30 1/4         | 11/11<br>27/40           | 0<br>1/0             | 3/<br>4/             | 3/<br>24/5/5     | 4/4<br>50/57     | 0<br>12/5    | then 11/14       |
| 1<br>23       | 1/2<br>11/32 1/4             | 1/1<br>28/41             | DEER SEASON          |                      |                  |                  |              | then 11/21       |
| 4<br>27       | 2/5 1/2<br>13/37 3/4         | 3/4<br>31/45             | 1/0<br>2/0           | 5/1<br>0<br>5        |                  |                  |              | then 12/12       |
| 2<br>29       | 3/6 3/4<br>16/44 1/2         | 5/7<br>36/52             | 0<br>2/0             | 3/<br>8/1            |                  |                  |              | then 12/26       |
| <del>29</del> | <del>1/1<br/>17/45 1/2</del> | <del>1/1<br/>37/54</del> | <del>0<br/>2/0</del> | <del>0<br/>8/1</del> |                  |                  |              | then 1/2         |
| 1<br>30       | 1/2 1/2<br>17/47             | 1/2<br>37/54             | 0<br>2/0             | 0<br>8/1             |                  |                  |              | then 1/31        |
|               |                              |                          |                      |                      |                  |                  |              | then 1/9         |



COVERTS DAYS/HOURS GROUSE/FLUSHES SHOTS/HITS PROD/MILLS/RE1

0 1/1 0 0 0  
31 18/48 37/54 2/0 8/

then 1/31

4 3/8 1/2 3/3 0 1  
35 21/56 1/2 40/57 2/0 9

then Feb-27

BIRD/COVERT 1.14



DATA 1981 (my 57th season)

GEORGE 21 DAYS/56½ HRS. (+ NY 9 DAYS/24½ HRS) 30 DAYS/81 HRS.  
52 COVERTS

WV 40 GROUSE/57 FLUSHES (+ NY 37/51)  
[TOTAL 77/108]

NY 17/37 = 2.18 N/C  
WV 35/40 = 1.14 b/c

~~2 SHOTS~~ 2 SHOTS - 0 WV. (6 SHOTS/1 HIT NY)  
[TOTAL 8/1 = 12.5 %]

10 SHOTS/9 HITS (2 on 1) CHUKAR / 2 DAYS 90%

WV 50 WOODCOCK/57 FLUSHES (+ NY 32/48)  
[82/105]

WV 12 SHOTS/5 HITS (8/3 NY) TOTAL 20 SHOTS/8 HITS = 40%

BELTON 5 YRS. 5 MO. 6TH SEASON

30 DAYS

LIFETIME '76-'81

PRESERVE  
2 DAYS

1 PROD QUAIL  
1 " WC  
12 " CHUKAR  
8 KILLS "  
9 RET "

GROUSE 12 PROD.  
1 KILL  
1 RET.

'COCK 37 PROD.  
8 KILLS  
8 RET.

205 DAYS  
69 PROD.  
14 BACK PTS.  
20 KILLS (5 OP)  
15 RET

LIFETIME  
119 PROD  
46 BACKS  
41 KILLS  
21 RET.

This was the worst season in WV in the 43 I've summed here.  
And I hope it will be the worst I will see. Game shooting  
here is disgustingly bad - not just shooting, so much as sad.  
They tell of game in parts of the state; they now can  
show them to me. Somewhat there is fantasy. Belton - and Clay and I -  
deserve more than this.



NEW YORK STATE

9 days 1981  
27 1/2 km.

31 'cack  
17 coverts 37 grouse = 2.17 birds/covert

SMITHVILLE FLATS #1 020-2.3.0.3.3.0  
#2 " 1.1.0  
#3 " 1.2.0  
PHARSALIA #1 021-1.1.0  
#2 " 1.1.0  
#3 " 1.1.0.2.3.0  
HUNT ROAD #1 022-9-12.0 / 028-3.5.0 (not new) / 030-2.3.0 (not new)  
MELDNDY HILL #1 024-0  
DEAD-END → #2 " 1.2.0.6.12.0 / 028-2.4.0 / 030-2.3.0  
HARFORD #1 025-2.2.0.2.3.0  
#2 " 2.2.0.2.2.2  
#3 " 4.7.1  
#4 " 5.5.0  
CEDARS 029-1.1.0.2.2.0  
GERMAN CORNERS  
ABANDONED FARM 029-6.6.0  
HIDDEN BROOK " 5.6.0  
PLANK ROAD/McCLURE 031-5.6.1

BIG MOUNTAINS

11 COVERTS / 12 GROUSE = 1.09 b/c

MT. STORM COVERT #1 N3-2.2.0.5.6.0 12  
REHOBETH N3-1.1.0.6.7.0 / N16-2.2.0 / N16-1.1.0  
CLYDE DAVIS/REHOBETH POPLAR HOUSE N12-3.4.0.6.6.1  
BAYARD CEMETERY RIDGE N10-0  
RIFLE RIDGE N10-6.6.1  
GRASSY RIDGE: CHURCH CORNER N11-6.8.1  
SPRUCE THORNS " 1.1.0.3.3.0  
PIGEON ROOST ROAD " 1.1.0.7.9.1 / N16-0  
AURORA/EGLON/SHEEHAN N7-3.3.0  
THE GATES N11-3.3.1



LOCAL

1981

DONALD MOVERS THORNS NH.0

23 COVERTS / 30 GROUSE = 1.3 1/c

HOG RUN WEST NH - 3.3.0

CRANESVILLE

RAYMOND'S CORNER NH. 1.2.0. 2.2.0

POWERLINE / SWAMP "0

SISLER'S / HOGVE RUN " 1.2.0

HARTMAN NH. 6.6.0. 2.2.0

MORRISON NH. 1.1.0

MAUST NH. 2.2.0 / D30.0

MATHEWS D7. 1.1.0

KELLY / BEAVER D24.0

KELLY / MCCARTY D24. 1.1.0 / J5.0

TARLETON HUMBERTSON D25.0

LOWER HOG RUN D25. 2.3.0 / J29.0

MCGREEN / ~~FORQUER~~ D28. ~~0~~

~~MAUST D30.0~~

~~MAUST~~ SPIKER J2. 2.2.0 / F27. ① 1.0

GEORGE RINGER J5. 1.2.0

→ FRANK WRIGHT F1. 1.1.0

McMULLEN F1.0

FORQUER ~~F5 2.2.0~~

→ D28. 3.3.0 / F5 2. <sup>new</sup> 2.0

UPPER WILDERNESS F23.0

TUCKER PLACE F23.0

GRAVEYARD GLADE F26. 2.2.0

→ FRANK WRIGHT F26.0