

Shooting 1989

LGD

Monday 16 October

Little Sandy North

Quest:

cloudy warm 70°

Quest's 6th - O'Garra's 65th!!

hunted beautifully

3:15 - 5:45 / 2½ hrs.

The first season without Dalton. How I miss him.

Opening Day on Saturday, but I avoid them and people in recent years.

✓ Indian Summer at full blast, total color, even many leaves on the ground

in an Oriental-rug pattern of color. Hot with no rain for some time, and yet the leaves were not dry or noisy. There is still much green weed growth, and I have never before been so aware of witch hazel, golden and head high along the old trail. The hawthorn black-look against the gold are wonderful, and the busy rock formation on the left of the path is gorgeous. Little Sandy is a lovely rocky stream, and this brought back our first WV hunt and "Eden."

Quest hunted gorgeously, quartering every bit of cover and to side and kept in touch all day. Instead of hunting all the way up to Doc Castello's old house, where we haven't moved anything in recent hunts, we took the diagonal path up to the upper trail - where we also didn't move anything.

This is big country and the color today was magnificent looking down the gulches right-of-way to the south side. Here on the edge of the right-of-way.

✓ Blues made a grand Last Day point with 2 grouse under the big standards - memories, if we have nothing else in these woods anymore.

We passed for a bit of food - no dogs to cut on, no rat or not much more than a branch. Hunted to the big field on Sisters - or in it? - then down over toward the valley. On the way down the Trap trail, Quest pointed to the right into

a mass of rhododendron near where I shot my second grouse on that October 1939 day in Eden. This looked good - God, please ^{let it} be a grouse. It wasn't, and if

He had flushed from that rhododendron tangle, I wouldn't have been much more surprised than if a grouse had come out.

✓ We pained ^{about} the bridge and persuaded Quest to plunge into the deeps black pool, which he did, swimming with smooth grace and dissolving much of the black muck on his legs and ribs.

✓ The color is unbelievably and total, glorious substitute, in part, for what we don't have anymore. At least those other settlers knew grouse, even ~~the~~ Belmont. ✓ They should've behaved well with the light little 28-bore AYA.

✓ On the horrible Twenty-fifth of October, the date the woodcock often peak and the day we were to leave for north-central Pennsylvania, I was on the operating table at Monongalia General Hospital having gall bladder surgery. It went well and I was home on the third day after the operation but while it had been one of the grandest Indian summers, it was like ^{having} cutting my heart out - losing an entire season with Ray and Quest. ✓ I believed in God, I couldn't consider him a nice man.

I lost more than ten pounds, going down to 127½ and have had to come back slowly as to walking. Yesterday on November 20th, the opening of the WV deer season, we went, without gun, to the Sugar Loaf Mountain area in Pennsylvania to go back in years and look at Pauline Burnsworth's (Wilson) homestead.

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I had been there twenty-three years ago when I was nine, on my first trip into really backcountry mountains. It was a lovely experience today in cold but clear windy weather. The old lane is now a grassy mowed bridal path or snowmobile trail through excellent greenbrier canopy cover, leading to the old Burnsworth house, falling in on itself in an advanced case of years. I pointed out the upstairs room where I had shared a bed with Pauline's nephew, Tommy Tish, who, of more ~~sophisticated~~ sophisticated, I'm sure might have thought me gay because I slept in pajamas.

Down the rocky road.

There is a ~~large~~ ^{big} sugar maple at the east end of the house that could not have been very sizable seventy-three years ago when I was there; there is a large apple tree, ^{another} one that is ^{surviving as} still ~~living~~ although only a shell of bark on one side.

We followed the mowed trail north almost to the brink of Ram Cat Valley with fair cover on both sides and with Quest tottering it apart, Bless mine. After half an hour we turned back in an area infested with Gypony moth eggs sacs - the horror for next year.

On the return, I saw a grouse flush left-to-right across the path from a long distance ahead of Quest - how ~~can~~ ^{could} you get a shot at hypothetical birds like this? We walked a good mile to the benefit of the three of us. Kay took 35 mm pictures of the old house.

There is a grandiose ranch house on the hill above our campground that no doubt owns the old farm road. It is heavily forested ~~but~~ I doubt that there are any grouse there.

On top the mountain we drove in the Sugar Loaf fire tower road to a magnificent view of Sugar Loaf!

mountain. The forenoon is gone as far as we could tell. I do brave the (4)
howling wind to take some pictures of the ^{my extra shirt tied over her cap} best view, to hold it on in the gale, and
with her dog who ^{lost} ^{ends} blowing out from her ~~front~~ jacket.
On the way back, we took the back road behind Sugar Loaf Point,
a steep rather uncertain, although well graded, road that seemed to never
stop pitching incredibly down. The sun was dropping below the cloud banks
when we reached the Dimmick Road and we came home via Five Forks and
the old Lebnick Road.

It was a wonderful day and I shouldn't grumble when we can have
wonderful experiences like that. Quest didn't find fault.

On Wednesday, the 22nd, we drove to Five Forks and into what had been the
Nemacolin Trails Shooting Preserve, parking just short of the hill that used to be a
landmark to us. It was quiet but bitter cold, much below the 36° temperature at
home, with ice hard and dry in the ruts of the road.

Everything today was a ~~telescope~~ montage of memories of our days
shooting here, a series of scenes telescoped into this outwalk. Just behind where we
parked the station wagon today, Briar had made a lovely upstanding point against
a background of reedy dead weeds, that glorious integrity that will live forever
in my brain, a small white square of notice on the distant roadside (showing)

Today, Quest couldn't quite get into the swing of his usual manner of
going, tending to stay too near the road. Topping the hill both Kay and I
remarked the point on a calm pleasant that young Belton made ^{to} the left of the
road, and the shot that ensued.

In order to coast Quest into the hillside weedy field, we stepped into a
trace of old truck tracks that paralleled the road, coming back to the road
at the place where I will never forget the intense point Briar made as we were
climbing the rise from the opposite direction, his head turned left into the margin
of road hedge, somewhat bent over in the tension of the moment.

The crossroads at the bottom brought back the day with Dixie and 5/28/89
Bliss and Shadows, when Shadows went berserk and bumped a pheasant and
chased it insanely, ignoring my yelling and whistling — why are those moments
so wildly out of scale in importance? The world doesn't end with any sin.

The next day we returned and Shadows made a righteously perfect point at the
crossroads corner and later a gorgeous find and retrieval of a pheasant cock
that had sailed into the bottom woods, carrying a load of pellets in its back.

We had grand days on the Newacolon Preserve. We used to hunt ^{a few days} after
they had hosted a party of gunners. I remember one occasion when William Robb
had entertained a visiting Dutch dignitary by releasing 150 birds, pheasants and
bobwhites. The Netherlands hadn't been much of a shot, and three days later we
found game scattered naturally throughout the excellent cover. The quail had
gathered into small coveys in the big brushy bottomland and it was like
gunning wild birds.

The cover today seemed in no way different from the plantings
that was there ^{decade} a dozen years ago when we hunted young Belton in his early years.

We turned right at the crossroads and followed the ^{long} straight bottom road
south. That was the same stands of roadside thicket with field on each side,
still growing to canary grass planted when the preserve was in operation. I
could see the photo Ray took of Belton standing high on point crosswise in
the road while I waited behind him for the bobwhite that was there.

Farther down at the beginning of woods, the memory of pheasants and one
~~shooting~~ chuckle I shot on a snowy New Years Day in the thicket across the flat
to the left.

We walked far out the road with Quest working the woods on both sides
and, as if by signal, both Ray and I remarked about the crazy young cock
pheasant we found, or ~~found~~ ^{our} ~~found~~ ^{found} on the right. While
George Bird Evans Papers

Briar stood, sight-pointing the bird, I tried to shoot it ~~but~~¹⁶ of its perch. ⑥
But the pen-tame pheasant refused to budge, and we finally walked
away under its baleful glare. Present birds are not all simulation of
wild shooting.

Turning back in the frigid shadows as the gun dropped low, we
~~then~~^{cut} left at the woods edge and through rather rough footing in
canary grass and a ^{stiff} woody stem growth I don't know, following old traces
of truck tracks from the bird releases years ago. I was still soft after
my week in hospital and today's $1\frac{3}{4}$ mile walk was the longest yet for me.

As if to dramatize it today as it had been dramatic then, we
climbed the rise of weedy field in late afternoon ambience, reminiscent
of the pink ^{late} sunset afterglow when on that distant day we found
Briar, who had been out of sight, pointing, turned up the slope toward
us, solid for I don't know how long. Young Belton blinks us that day,
~~he~~ honored his sire like an angel. Briar's bird was a strong flushing
chukar that quartered right in the gathering gloom, falling from a
circle of gray feathers at my shot — I was shooting them with ~~no~~ shoulder
~~limitations~~, and at my command Briar retrieved and delivered to hand.

all that, the pink sunset afterglow, the November air, not cold like today,
the warm chukar, the precise expression in Briar's eyes and young
Belton's enthusiasm, are in my brain and I say:

Going out without a gun is not like the excitement of a hunt, not, unless
you have the memories. It's the memories, and having lived them, that ~~are~~
yours always when you go back to a event of your dreams.

Saturday, 25 November, we took off for Deer Lake Game Lands via the Crow farm road from Wharton Furnace. Detour sign at Ellisthills was knocked down and, it being Saturday, we felt there would be no work in progress and so drove on. As we drew nearer the Furnace, signs began to appear warning of construction at 1500 ft., then 1000 ft., then 500 ft. and finally we came to men working on a bridge cut, not half a mile from where we wanted to go.

Turning back to Ellisthills, they drove at a fast speed and we made it to Ft. Necessity in about 15 minutes. However, it was nearly 3:30 and we decided against trying to reach Deer Lake in time for a walk and instead chose to walk Mrs. Burkes road, and we reached the entrance to Dick Groves at 3:30 even, just 20 minutes lost.

It was a cloudy damp day, perfect for grouse work in cover that could not have been more ideal, with grasslands, and greenbrier loaded with berries and the woods in an ideal stage of ten to fifteen years after timbering. We walked $\frac{1}{2}$ miles and for an hour and twenty minutes and didn't see a feather. I just had a wonderful time and had two indications I meant but I wonder if it might not have been squirrel or rabbit, and I fear we may forget what a grouse is.

On the pipeline above Mrs. Burkes we met three boys who turned out to be grandsons of "Grandma Demeter" — Virginia Grover. She is living now in her old home, and after we returned to the car, we drove in and found her — wonderful personality — at "the other house" when there was a birthday party in session for one of her 12 grandchildren. I can't guess how many of her family was there. It was a grand experience with Virginia matron and plump and not much taller than we remember her as a little girl. She is a joy, all heartiness and warmth and it made the day seeing her. On our way out at dusk, we stopped and visited the Barclays — Walter 100 last July and not looking too different, the "girls" aging. It was a pleasant day in lovely cover and a good — back into the Part.

Wednesday 3 January Marshall Shaper / Bishop

Quest

Residual snow, clear 43°

2:40 - 5:20 / ~~2:40~~ 2:34

(tracks)

Out at last to carry a gun for the first time since the October surgery after a long spell of bitter cold and much snow. The back roads are still bad with frozen ground and icy surfaces so we tried good old Marshall's place as available on the cleared hard surface roads.

In the strip of pines on the Bishop hillside Key, who was walking the inside, came onto grouse tracks large and small and we found them for the entire length of the pine woods. It could have been only a hen and a cock but they were all over ^{and} ~~but~~ no birds.

at the last end we climbed to a higher level to a road (drill test) and turned west and up, coming onto hen tracks (fresh) but no bird. Quest, who had started out working in such range, had begun reaching out too wide and without the shock collar could not be controlled, the rascal. But he was having a wonderful time and we were, too.

The cover on this ridge is excellent with grapevines and regrowth. at the top we came out on the cement block building that seems to be lived in but no one home. We stopped for lunch sitting on a wooden seat across the road - heard a distant shot and a rabbit chase to the west.

afterward, we covered the good cover on the west of the road and then swung back to the hill road, which was a horror of solid ice. It was impossible to walk it and we worked the woods parallel, crossing at last to the east side and finally mincing our way down the limited footing on the roadside.

A disappointing but not surprising day, but the outing and exercise were good - I felt like a new man - and Quest never stopped bawling.

Friday 5 January

partly sunny 42°
damp, quiet

2:30 - 3:10 / 40 min

3:30 - 5:10 / 1:40 hr

Paul Uphold / Charles Kelly Quest 1 prod

missed 3-4 flocks

9/89

} 2 1/2 hrs This was a lovely hunt, and while I had no shot, I think that having hunted so little, each detail of a day seems more precious.

As we drove across Beaver Creek - we took the long way around to avoid icy hills but found the road almost clear - and along Charles Kelly land, we saw a grouse at the roadside in the large autumn olive growth. It moved into the lower cover and we decided, after we had passed, that we should hunt that hillside and give Quest the contact - and us.

We parked at the side place at the entrance to the Kelly lane and began hunting down a freshly used log road through the autumn olive, with Quest at high anticipation. Pat Debooy is having some large isolated white oaks timbered and this is grand cover, with the dense stand of olives.

We doubled back and down the hillside with Quest covering it all but did not find a trace of the grouse - about usual for such a situation. We spent 40 minutes and returned to the car and drove on to Paul Uphold's place, where we parked on the flat of the road at our usual place.

Paul's Place could not be better cover, with grapevines and greenbrier, all with evidence of fruit. In the excellent triangle we found grouse roosts, one regular tenant or three separate, and grand grapevines down toward the corner where we stopped last year to have lunch with Bolton. It was his last real hunt, and today it was full of lovely memories. Today I sat on a boulder on the upper log road and all while I lay reloaded her camera and took a few pictures of Quest sharing my food (chicken breast).

We followed the log road west through cover that is inconceivable as empty, although it was, grand grapevine cover all the way to the old

hill road with the tangles of grapevines and pines above.

We came out opposite the "terrace trace" and I saw Quest, who had worked into the far side, loping up the spine of the pine wood crest above, against what was our ^{close} skyline. On the peak of the high point a grouse flushed and Quest stopped while the bird came out over and sailed out the terrace trace, disappearing through white pines. I doubt if I could have gone into a swing even if the bird had been within gunshot but it was, or looked, at least 40 yards.

At this moment a second grouse came off the high crest from the same spot and ~~it~~ followed the first flight almost identically. I couldn't see what Quest was doing, possibly pointing, for a third grouse came out over from the point of land, and this one crossed the trace and pitched for the drop-off.

It was a grand moment of excitement with three grouse against the sky, their pinions spread.



LIKE OLD TIMES

Probably the three birds was within range but distances always seem greater at such times. Too, I find my vision focus is slower and with no experience shooting for the past two seasons, I am not in fast reflex as I would normally be.

We followed the trace in the direction of the three flushes and shortly came on Quest on point in the open pines on the left. It was a convincingly solid point but with a low tail. I walked past him to the brink of the drop-off to the next strip below, with not much room to hold a grouse. Suddenly Quest broke and I knew the bird had gone off the edge of a ~~bit to my right~~ ^{bit to my right} ledge, who had been

getting a proton of the point. heard it as a muffled flush.

11/89

That was the sum of our contacts with the three quess, and I can only guess that the other two - the first two - had pitched down over into the gimbles of ravines and shoulders of the high wall below, but it was excitement on the old manner.

We doubled back and up the sloping path to the basin above, where Quest gave the crown cover of pine a good workout. We followed the right edge of the basin - excellent looking cover but I'm never near anything there.

at the narrow shoulder between two deep gullies, I wanted Quest over and waved him into the left and he came immediately and plunged into the dense black thicket. What a bird dog! He worked beautifully today with only two times that required the shock collar touch, one of which didn't reach him through the thick hair on his neck (- I must trim it).

We worked to Paul's two shades and I lay went for the car, as last year, and I worked Quest in the excellent cover below with loads of open under berries black against the sky.

I lay pushed us up at the place where last year Belton, tired but happy, lay on the roadside with Quest and me standing watching the glorious ~~red~~ sunset that burned ^{nearly} red all the way home. Today that sunset wasn't there, but there was two sports, Belton's, who had been with us all day, and Paul's, who is convalescing at Martha Nicholson's from open heart surgery.

On Sunday 7 January we went up to the Hatched Place for a "dry" hunt. Parked at Sue & Marc's old trailer and walked the long track to the back country. This time I tried covering the flat in reverse, coming out to the "7-guess clearing". Quest hunted well and fast. On the way down to trail to "the shoulder clearing" Quest made a nice point in thick cover to our left. I creaked below and came in to him with no reaction ^{was held doggingly, watching me.} I lay

had moved in from his side and after she got a picture, I waved her ⁽¹²⁾
to move in and flush. Quist saw my hand signal to Kay (I should
have known better) and thought it was my intention for him to move in, which
he did. There was no flush and after he walked toward me we heard (Kay
did) a flush some distance beyond his point site. Neither of us saw the bird.

It was getting late and lowering clouds shut out light, and instead
of circling back the back trail to the deer camp - which might have been
best - we together circled down over the ledges to the trail above Fisher Run.
There we found grouse tracks (fresh) in patches of snow still down there,
and Quist eventually moved into the woods without a point but stopped
at flush. That was it, 2 grouse when our day we had secured about 11.
But the case seemed to have changed little. Did not get her last season
because it was such a long job for Belton to take.

Tuesday 9 January

Ray Guthrie

Quist

partly sunny to cloudy 43°

moved 2 - 2

3:10 - 5:40 / 2½ hrs.

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Yesterday we wanted to hunt on our 59th Anniversary but the
day was dark and uninviting and we postponed the hunt to today with a better weather
forecast. We drove past Daisy Reed's down to the bottom of the hill only to find the
road blocked by a cable and notices of the Interstate Hunting Club on the Ray
Guthrie land. We might have managed to drive across the sagging cable, but a
deep drain across the road was too ominous looking amidst a horror of soft
mud, so Kay backed our car up the hill to Daisy's where we parked and walked
cross-country to the granular corner. There we found changes.

Part of the quadrice corner had been swallowed by a wide swath of stripmine that had been replaced - running east/west and having consumed part of the dense clearcut, at ~~least~~ least an improvement.

We turned right at the crossroads, nearly unrecognizable, and hunted that corner (it's been years since we've found the birds there we found them that early season ago). We had hunted to the field and turned back by the deer trail that bisects this cover when a grouse flushed high from well ahead, crossing to the road above. I marked it lost as possibly going into an oak on the north side but couldn't be sure.

It had apparently gone on, ~~for~~ ^{and} we hunted the dense clearcut (all clearcuts are dense and to my notion empty) all the way to the hillside field below with no results. (- moving a grouse well on the left of the ~~road~~ ^{road})

We returned to the Gutierrez land with the new notices well plastered, and we found that all the old log road traces through the flat cover had been bulldozed, for what reason? The effect was a mass of mud that built up our boots to twice-normal size.

We had two pleasures with no more contact with birds. The sunset sky was glorious under the dense overhang of clouds that had moved in, and the near-full January moon - can it be called a Hunter's Moon? - rose in the east and guided us back. December woods are black and gray.

Friday 20 January
cloudy cool 39°
2:40-4:55 / 2 1/4 hrs.

Biteley Place
moved 2 - 2 flushes

Quest 1 prod

We parked at the white oak and hunted the Kelly piece on the lower side of the hill and on the west side of the road up to Biteley's. I wish I were still calling this the Clyde Spikes Place, with the grass that was in here then. This is old fields grown to crabapple thickets, interwoven with deer trails.

It looks good but proves empty.

Ascending the hill on a slant, we came to the Bitley land, large forest with some few piles of branches and old tree-tops on the west slope, mixed with laurel. Kay paralleled me on the left. When she called that she had come to the Bitley road, I joined her and found us were well up the hill.

Quest was doing his usual excellent coverage on both sides of the road, and was on the good margin cover of the old stump-rows above me. We had come to an infestation of gypsey with egg sacs on tree trunks and Kay was destroying them with a stick, when she heard a grouse flush close by but with no view. It ~~was~~ ^{had been} not far from the road on the right side and had let me pass, as usual. Quest appears to cover every bit of land but unfortunately he misses areas by ranging a bit wide. This bird had pitched in the valley to the west and we gave up following. Quest but scent when we swung him to the side of the flush and for a long time was gone out of sight and sound.

Finally we got him back with us and went started a big swing around the field on top, covering the edge where last season we missed the group of three over Quest's point. Today there was nothing but just sociable horses that followed us from their side of the pasture fence. We found it further than we remembered and not as good cover on the north side, where we came out on the ghostly ~~tree~~ ^{trash} dumps, — old cars and the remains of a small plane, one of Bitley's follies.

On top, we decided to cross to the last woods that we remembered as grand cover. It is now grown-out, too large and open. Keeping along the edge, we decided to stop for a bit of food. The good "Acres Woods" is being reduced gradually by clearing on the east side.

Quest was working some distance ahead and suddenly I saw 15/89
him pointing into a dense tangle of greenbrier. I hurried toward him
but the grouse wouldn't wait and I saw Quest make a short dash in the
direction of the flush, my only token of the bird. I almost never get a
chance to see a grouse and this one was too far out to hear. I rather like
to have a dog make this short break as long as he doesn't chase, for it
gives me the direction of the flight and, as in this case, sometimes the only
certain indication there had been a bird.

We took time to eat at a pile of rocks beside the greenbrier tangle.
There are berries on ^{much} ~~many~~ of the greenbrier this year.

That was the extent of our action today, except for a scattering
of grouse droppings Ilay discovered under a white pine on the strip of
terrace where a grouse had roosted. There is good cover here, down over the
sheer drop below the strip level but we had no contacts, although we worked
down the hill on the powerline right-of-way where we remembered seeing a
pair of grouse long years ago. It is interesting how those times stay with you,
coming to mind each time you come to the places where there had been action -
an eternity for those grouse of other years. But I need more. ^{Today} ~~For~~ it is
a matter of carrying the little 28-bore through cover without a chance to
win fire it.

Tuesday 23 January
cloudy, damp, 43°

2:40 - 5:10 / 2 1/2 hrs.

Paul Uphold

missed 1 (not new) - 1

0

Quest

Back to the Paul Place for another try. This time we hunted
it in reverse, starting below the Manor house and hunting around the "basin"

to the hillside road - all mud today - and to the base of the hill.

There, as we stood and watched Quent work it beautifully, we saw him run headlong into a grass lying tight on the steep side of one of the many upheavals of the old stripmine operation. Why he did get the scent in time I don't know, for he will point loyally at other times when there is hot scent and no bird. We followed the flight of the quonk west but with no results, and worked up to the "Hollow Tree" road and back east to the far end impoundment. Near the end, Quent made a good point with no result, and again on the upper level among the glorious tangles of grapevines, very hot and very sincere.

On the way out as came to those quonk roosts we had seen last season. Odd that quonk droppings should last so long through the heavy snow of ~~the~~ early January.

Today this event was rich with memories of Bolton.

Wednesday 24 January ^{PDU Nov 95} The McDay Place Quent 1 prod.
cloudy, ~~water mist~~ 46° moved 1 - 1
2:40 - 5:25 / 2 ³/₄ 0

This is a quonk spread of clearcut on the crest of the northern end of the Brierley, one full mile uphill from the car. I never find the magic "clearcuts" magic; there is so little food for quonks in the dense brush.

On top we approached the old McDay place, unfamiliar, but with better cover, with ~~many~~ ^{much} grapevines and many berries. Some tall white pines of varying size, no doubt ~~plants~~ ^{from seed, suggesting} ~~from seed~~ ^{suggested}

17/89

proximity to the house site. Four new-looking empty shells - two
pairs of identical turis, green and black 12-gauge also suggested
a wild blast of four from an auto-loaded filled with alternate shells
of black 8's and possibly green 6's, redolent of a grouse hunter.
Among the pines and rich mountain laurel I found two grouse tail feathers
and one underdown - I hope a close call ^{with} from a predator, not a kill.
There had been two single empty shells from last year on the road on the
way up. Someone likes this place.

The mountaintop levels off up here and the clearing is older, with
more and better greenbrier. We worked a side trail to the ~~left~~ ^{west} and almost
at once I saw Quast point into a big tangle of greenbrier on the left.

At first he stood, erect and solid, but his tail (level, not up) reconsidered
and quivered, then froze once more. There was no way to circle in front
and I moved toward him and stood. Quast was still solid, then I
saw him ~~flinch~~ flinch and hold, and the grouse exploded to the left in
dense brush, giving me only the flash of its underparts but not even
a look at it topping out. No shot, but a wonderful experience to have
the full sequence of the point and a bird there.

The cover about did not look promising and we turned back to explore
the area near the old McKay site. There is no trace of the house - I can't
remember that there ever was - but a large clearing surrounded by a good
stand of mountain laurel and thickets, looked like an old field I don't remember.
We paused to eat, sitting on a pile of rocks with a few small trees in the
center, and Kay took a few pictures.

It was getting late and we hurried on toward the ~~east~~^{north}, but (18)
the road soon pitched and I felt it was nearing the ridge road.

We turned back, hoping to double onto the flight of Quercus groves,
which had flashed on an angle with the road. At exactly the probably place,
Quest pointed into the thick cover on the left. There had been a lower fork of
the log road just behind me, ^{and} I turned and crept in below Quest, who
was still intensely solid. Ray waited until I had reached the opening
below, then walked in but nothing happened. Quest accepted that as final,
and pushed on down ⁱⁿ the thick cover. It had to be where the grove was "put
down," as Art would have said. I saw only groves it had reflected well
ahead of us.

We hunted the dense cover, following a dim deer trail back up the
slope to the main log road on top, which we took out at a good pace, to
beat the failing light. There was no real sunset, but a glorious view
of ultramarine Chestnut Ridge and a streak of light under the overcast,
a strip that gleams pink and then pinker as we dropped down the
mountain.

There is good cover on top - and certainly more than our groves, and
we have notions, and plans, to return via the ridge road from on top,
a shorter walk than the long treke we took today. There have been good
days on the open - poor hunting in terms of groves, but you come to value
our point with our bird by our grand day as something of value.

19/189



Wednesday 31 January The Thomas Q. nest
lovely sunny clear 45° moved 4-4
some snow left. 0
3:25-5:25 / 2 hrs.

We lost Belton a year ago tonight. It seems so long.
Today was the perfect weather sunny clear blue skies, and just perfect
air and temperatures. We drove to the Gleades to try the good looking
patch of woods beyond the cow barn, only to find notes signed Mc Bride
we had overlooked before. Had just parked, a lot uneasy, when a ^{pickup} truck
came along and I stopped it to ask for information about the owner. The driver
of the truck was a pleasant young fellow, Curt Golden who leases and farms
the Genovese land with the empty house and resides of a deep mine.

He told us the land we wanted to hunt on that adjoined "his place" was
Mc Bride's and that he had seen Mc Bride at the ^{new} house on the corner of
the main road. Golden said we could hunt on his land but that there were
only (just about) 5 acres of woods on his land another 5 on Mc Bride's.

We decided to drive back and ask for permission from Mr. Mc Bride,
and found him. He was ^{leg} in his notes, and I of course saw a more extreme

Scott's face of the pudgy type. He listened to me with no trace of humor, and after looking me over carefully - "How many are you?" - said "I would be all right but that there were a few rangers he didn't want shot!"

It was nearly 3:30 and we decided to hunt the Thomas and saw Mr. Pinder for another day. Parked at the east end of the Thomas after driving rather horrible road, and hunted the road to the west end with Quest covered the area well. It is still grand cover with grasses along the south edge of the road.

We climbed the slope to the top clearing (now trash deposited) and started into the thick thorns - still good - and down the ~~long~~ road on the west exposure. Almost at once we heard Quest barking ^{my} trees. We alerted but when it came, it came fast and over my head out of sight. Ray saw it but as usual, I had no view of it.

We turned to go back to the top, where the grass had gone and I had taken only a few steps when grass #2 whooshed across the birds of my nose just missing me low. It was gone before I could think of shooting, both birds somewhere toward the road on the south edge.

We topped out at the clearing and then hunted the thick cover on the west, finding nothing but a set of tracks in the snow and more cover than we had been aware of. After a thorough search we returned to the top clearing and hunted the edge where Quest covered the woods. Where the

Two quons had gone remains a puzzle, and the snow didn't tell. 21/89

We worked the Thom flat on the south end and then moving back to the west slope, finding more tracks (no doubt one of our two birds) and soon heard Quert barking trees and more near where I had happened earlier. This time we had no view or sound of the take-off, only Querts leaving the site to tell us the grouse had gone, and again we didn't reflash it, although we hunted the old hillside road to the north end.

Lake Noel is now filled in except on the south end.

We topped out and worked to the good corner on the NE in a return toward the car. Near the turn of road, where I missed, I saw a wild flush but didn't see the grouse. Four grouse in two hours is good these days, and it seemed to revive our faith in the grand old covert, where so many wonderful memories

rest. We stopped for a bite of food, one chicken, 1 egg a caudally cough drop!!

and finally in a cold pink end of day, we followed the dim woods road down over to the station wagon, seeing another set of ^{grouse} tracks to light us up.

All the grouse tracks today were large and on top of frozen snow. I am puzzled as to why Quert gave us no points for he had contacts with three birds. I have no doubts as to his pointing when he gets scent and he has a ground nose, but I think he hunts so impetuously that he is on the birds before he can point. And it may be that loud Nova Scotia call putting them up. But it was good to be moving grouse again. Good old Thomas.

Thursday 1 February
cloudy, mild, rain 45°

Asa Wright
0

Quest

(22)

3:00 - 4:10 / 1 hr 10 min.

Our ~~best~~^{best} would cover this: disappointment. We parked at

the house - no one at home. This looks like an abandoned farm - the house and barn and buildings falling down, all in keeping with the covert itself which is good, as for ground, but which is in an opposite manner, excellent cover.

At ~~the~~ the start Kay took a picture of the great willow on the ~~south~~^{west} side of the house. It was further to the bottom of the hill and the woods road than we remembered with soft snow still covering this ~~south~~^{west} slope. I'd forgotten that the cover was so ideal - about eight to ten years after cutting.

The old woods road was treacherous with slippery soft snow and Kay took a bad fall that shook her up considerably and hurt her shoulder, the first fall this season.

We hunted on the south end and into dense clearcut, turning up the hill instead of going on. This is still perfect cover with grapevines and logs and boulders. At the fence on top, we gave up because rain had started. Crossing into the pasture with cow pads dotting the cover like rocks everywhere and with two herd of cattle watching us but staying mannerly, we made a straight line for the house and car with rain increasing. This old-ground covert has become now. As I said, the one word is disappointment.

Monday 5 February

McBride

Quest: pointed a rabbit. ²³/89

2:55 - 3:40 / $\frac{3}{4}$ hr

3:55 - 5:25 / $1\frac{1}{2}$ hr

} ²⁴ John Spurgeon

A lovely February day — sunshiny, crystal cold air and nothing but blue sky, a day you couldn't stay indoors even if you wanted to. We drove to the lowbarn Glade and the enticing little patch of cover we'd wanted to try. Exactly as before, young Curt Golder drove in to care for his cattle on the Geneva farm.

For three-quarters of an hour we ~~hunted~~ ^{hunted} excellent looking cover and didn't move a feather — not even the ringnecks we heard about. Quest hunted thoroughly, and as usual, ~~wouldn't~~ ^{wouldn't} believe there wasn't game there. We returned to the car and drove on out the appalling road, under the ~~blowing~~ ^{broken} white oak treetops, canted about us as we drove under it with stirrings of vestigial religion, and turned in the black-mud woods road and to the forks of the McKay / John Spurgeon roads and parked.

The old Spurgeon road was running full with what presently is a small brook, and we were forced to take the cover on the left side, only to be turned back farther on. Then time we left the bottom thicket and climbed the hillside field with Quest gaily questing the good edge of grapevines/trees ^{alone} — what a bird dog.

We found ourselves on the spine of an old strapping high wall planted to pines — white and Scotch, excellent winter cover when there should have been birds. There weren't. With the flooded old road below, we held to the narrow hog-back of pines until it descended to the bottom, ~~which~~ looking in the

~~To the south~~
~~It could~~

To the south the sentinel white pines and cones of ^{the} cedars of the Spurgeon house showed against the sky, but I had no faith of birds in that direction, so we picked our way across the running back road and ~~skirted~~ ^{skirted} mostly red jelly of ferrous sulphate bogs to the far side, where we found some good rocks to set on for lunch.

It was after five, and time to head back and, after Kay took a photo of Quest eyeing my chicken, we started the return journey.

In the hillside cover, still good dense growth with a trace of log road, I had the curious mental replay of hunting here in the far ago - newly slashed thicket with rocky log roads on the hillside, and grass. It was those grass that was hard to remember.

Quest never stops hunting, and he thoroughly quartered it as we worked east to the bottom edge of hillside field with a series of small wash-out drains coming down to the woods. It was good edge cover and ^{with} thoughts of rumpies in mind I hurried as in the direction of the car. A sudden bolt of surprise lit up my alertness when I saw Quest on point to my left, headed into a brush-choked ravine that would be a perfect spot for a placement. He held handsomely while I worked up the draw in front of him, losing sight of him behind low thicket while I scrambled up a steep wall of ravine, only to see a white bunny tail bobbing up the slope with Quest breaking in pursuit. I couldn't blame him as he raced ~~across~~ ^{on} the hillside field above.

We came to a huge corner of the field with ⁱⁿ traces of the old woods road I was heading for in the ~~middle~~ ^{middle} of this ~~area~~. Turning left,

I followed the woods edge up a gentle slope and with little 25/89
to reveal it, came on the place where the short road opened onto the field.

It was a welcome sight, for a long place with no game other than
a rabbit can ^{be} turned, and we paced it to the little blue Subaru
waiting for us as the sun reached the treetops. There was a blinding
sun in our eyes as we drove west, until finally the ridges hid it
and it became a red-gold streak of sky.

There is no justice in such barren coverts, both of which could
have, should have, held a couple of years. The bitterness of wishing
for a couple of years.

Tuesday 6 February PDU Nov 95
another blue sky day, 50°
clear until late afternoon.

McKay Place

Quest 1 Prod.

2:45 - 5:30 / 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.

scored 1-2 flushes

Second hunt on the McKay, going in this time from the
upper end. The walk in the old road was longer than we remembered - 20 min.
through cover grown too open now, and through a flooded road.

Finally came to the clearing and the steep hill up to the old
home site, no trace of buildings. Quest was reaching a bit wide today but
hunting hard and well. There are numerous old log road traces through
the dense thicket but no food until we reached the top, where the greenbrier
was scattered and with berries.

At the trace of clearing where we think the house had been we turned
right up the gentle rise and came to an area of low greenbrier the deer had
dropped back severely. Quest was out of sight but not far in front and I
heard his bell stop and Kay heard a quest flush. Quest stopped
at flush.

(26)

There was some large white birds scattered at the upper part of the greenbrier and we pushed on to a road above, which we recognized as the road we'd been on the last hunt.

Quest was hunting the good thickets woods above and Kay heard another flash, which I count a reflex of our bird. Kay said Quest's bell had been still and he was sure he had pointed. This was as much as I usually get ~~conceive~~ what with my deafness and Quest's wide range — mere reports of what is going on. As far as getting to shoot, hunting is merely carrying ^{loaded} a gun. It gets pretty dull.

Following the direction of the flash as toward the top we followed and came out on a woods road that dropped off to the north on the Quay Evans side of the ridge. Kay found a child's doll half-buried in the ground litter and laid it on a stump and took a picture of it — how did it get here?

We didn't beat our bird (is that the one single sparrow in this large cove?) and followed a dim deer trail back down to the upper road, which we hunted west to the log road where Quest had his one point the last time. Just to do something, we pushed through the cover in the line of flash on that previous visit and came out on the road where I don't had made an empty last promising point. We tried hunting down a side road — I think many of these may have been drill test roads — but declined to go down into the deep valley and turned back, hunting down the fork to the bottom road at the McKay house site. We had stopped to eat in the large laurel bordered clearing when we had eaten last time. Now we worked up through woods and came out on the Quarry Evans side

good enough cover, though strangely devoid of quoniam

27/89

This time we took the top road back and down a steep hill to the bottom and came out on our main road at the bottom of the McKay ridge.

On the way back we tramped around the big flooded paddles that were almost pools in the old woods road, with the yellow gibbons ~~moon~~ reflected in the clear water, a sad, ~~very~~ ineffectual last Hunter's Moon.

My comments in this entry have been almost entirely about trivia and not about the action we had hoped to find in this grand old covert.

As we approached the car we had the strange spectacle of finding the rear left door standing wide open! We had locked the car but failed to shut it when we left! Drive home by Quay Evans road, the top section a horror of deep pools but 2 miles shorter than our trip in via Hazelton.

Thursday 8 February

Hartman

Quart 1 prod

Cloudless blue sky, mild 50°

moved 2-2

2:25 - 5:40 / 3 1/4 hrs.

We found the hill road much improved, with the coarse rocks of the past few years disappeared and much mud and deep ruts but preferable. We also found the covert plastered with yellow notices signed Clayton & Paul, Hunting Lease '89.

We hunted up, or tried to, the Old Lemoor Road, now criss-crossed with large blowdowns, necessitating our hunting parallel in the thorns on the right, the ground under many of which was red with fallen leaves. At the upper end where the two roads connect, Quart ran into a grouse on the sunny edge of the clearing. Why? Neither of us more than heard the flush although it was close but from the direction of Quart's short movement, the bird must have seen the Quart.

In the dense crabapple thorns at the upper end beyond the wire ⁽²⁸⁾ fence, Quest gave us an intense "close" point that could have been a 'cock, but proved empty. I am puzzled that he bumps grouse but staunchly points empty scent, though I know he wouldn't deliberately.

Our big circle back to the swamp yielded nothing of our grouse, but I say heard, and I sensed, another flush from about the "lower road" that I am giving Quest as a point, for Kay said he'd been quiet then moved at the flock. She glimpsed the grouse going out high and back north where he had been. We continued south to the miserably "broken ground" and to the car for a breather and food.

After a good rest, we started out again at 4:50, hunting the second powerline right-of-way to the "crossing". How many times I recall that wonderful chance and hit at the large rocks in the right-of-way, and wonder if ever those glorious chances replay themselves. Our "hunting" these days reminds me of the poor little juncos pecking away at the North Porch floorboards after the snow has gone, finding, but trying, nothing but residual chaff from the cracked corn we put out on snowy days. Thank I'll play God and put out more corn regardless in the hope some hard ditty will do the same for us.

We returned by the main mud road - not so bad as usual - at the perfect time of end of day for a bird to be along the road. For one grand ~~two~~ minutes I thought Quest had found it. I saw him work up from the good cover below on the right and point with a lovely high head on the edge of the road. I hurried to him and Kay got pictures while he held, entranced, ~~and so did I~~ ^{reminding me of the road.}



ON THE ROADSIDE "

It looked as good I was torn between eagerness for the shot and
hope it wouldn't happen for fear I'd miss — that dichotomy of
it didn't. giveness

At Beltov's corner we recontacted that grand point and shot, with the
 woodcock falling in the middle of the road, and there, standing in the road, Quercus
 went on point headed into the tangle on the left. He had been up high,
 following his last grand point, racing up the steep wall on the left and
 covering the entire hillside, determined to find his bird. Now, with him
 pointing so convincingly again, I felt the quass could have succeeded here,
 but although I climbed the bank through determined red-stemmed bladderwort
 briars, nothing came of it.

A few yards up the road, I turned us left into the powerline
 clearing to once more go through remembering that glorious moment on
 Feb. 6th, '86 where we shot our last quass. Once more I wondered, if love,
 these wonderful things ^{will} happen again and once more it didn't. We reached the
 station wagon at the old pull-off where we park, and again memories filled in
 the emptiness that is all we seem to find. Where where is the old
Steamboat House?



Tuesday 13 February

lovely warm, sunny 54°
3:10 - 5:25 / 2 1/2 hrs

Jim Smith Place

moved 2-2
0

Quest 2 prod.

30

Early in the season David Nestor^{had} told me he had moved four
grouse in here while bow hunting and I've wanted to try it ever since.
Years ago Art Thomas had taken me here, but the cover today was unlike
anything I could recall — tall oak timber with patches of plantations
Scotch pines on the big flat on top instead of the crabapple and hawthorn
thickets I remembered. And so I'm classifying this as a new covert.

We parked in the dip in the road at the foot of the hill beyond the
Smith house, now an empty shell with some open window holes. We worked
up the small run, holding to the hillside on the left to keep out of dense
white thicket in the bottom. Kay, about me, came to a woods road and I
joined her. Quest was wearing wool and we lost him and his bill
somewhere (aloud) in the big woods. Suddenly there was a flash
toward us and I saw a flash of motion as the grouse pitched into
a ravine above and out of sight. Moving carefully up to the brink
I saw the bird on a log about ten yards away in the dip, standing
alert and very tall.



100/6

end page 95

I stood immobile waiting for Quail to come in, hoping he would set ^{31/89}
a point. He did come moving across several yards this side of it without
getting scent. The grouse watched him, still very erect, while I waited
for it to go up through the big trees. When it flushed it was up and away
before I could mount, feeling the shot was too far out, then watched it turn
left and cross against the skyline toward a stand of pines in silhouette
on top.

I am concerned that I no longer have accurate judgment of distance,
for while I thought the shot too far, I'm convinced now it was ^{at} twenty
or twenty-five yards. I know I'm slow to react and mount because of
the shoulder problem, feeling it won't work. It is all because of the years
I haven't had shots - or taken them, and because of my awareness of the
shoulder limitations. It will be hard to overcome.

We tried to follow the flight of the grouse but came to a fence and
a number of notices along a lane leading to a new house on the flat.
I'm convinced the grouse had gone to the pines. Turning east again, we followed
a trace of woods road along the steep drop-off on the right and finally came
to sight of fields on top with stands of pines. The Smith land on the right
was all big timber. I can't believe all this grew here in the 30 years since
Art and I were in here, but what else?

The patches of pines had a few areas of regrowth hardwoods that looked
possible but weren't. We hunted across this mixed cover and openings and came
out on the East/West Russ Smith road with more notices. It's a far way from
the old days. Turning back at nearly 5:00, we ~~found~~ found a nice rock
and sat there for lunch - with ^{George Bird Evans Papers} ~~check~~ ^{bread and clay} ~~sterning~~ ^{on} ~~rough~~ ^{drops,}
West Virginia and Regional History Center

what she calls "hard candy."

We doubled to make the return trip and again came to the new house with the curl-tailed dog, and started back the tree road west. As he crossed in front, Quest drew on point in the direction we were going, bedding staunchly with his head well up drinking in scent and with his tail at a nice angle. Neither day nor I saw the grouse but Quest broke at flush gave us evidence it had gone, with Kay hearing a slight flock of trees well ahead. These points at a good distance a pretty dog work and shows an excellent nose but give the summer no shot as the bird lifts. However, it is likely the bird would not have held for a closer point.

This was ^{near} ~~short~~ enough to the point to have been the bird we heard earlier but I count it as #2, suggested by a very staunch point on down the road tree, a point that proved empty, but with a hot scent that Quest worked excitedly when I whistled him to mark in. Still, it could have been the bird from the last point near the house, making it all the one grouse in every case. With so little action, I still cling to the frail hope there was two different grouse.

We came in view of the main road and Kay went for the car which Quest and I hunted to the entrance to the house lane where Kay picked us up at sunset. A pleasant day, and I somehow feel better that the one much-used grouse is still there. Or two.

Sunday 18 February
cloudy cool 40s
2 hrs

Deer Lake Game Lands

Quest worked hard

no gun

Hunted the south side extensively, through to pipeline and Kasp (partway) "Round Top." At end of road talked long to couple in car - Pat Lebley of Dunbar with tales of grouse at "Dunbar School"

Tuesday 20 February

The Thorns
0

Quest

33/89

clear, sunny, 38°

2:45 - 4:45 / 2 hrs. Back to hunt the four groups we found here on January 31.

Today was a perfect one, cold, clear, cloudless sky. Packed at east end and hunted exactly as before, except that we covered the south end of Thorns thoroughly. Red haws all over the ground here. Not a feather all two hours.

This undermines my faith in the bird/covert ratio. I can't understand it. This covert is contained on this knob and we and Quest fine-combed it. Ended by moving car to bottom flat and taking a circle there - this is growing to taller cover, no food except some ferns. Disappointing.

On road talked to Laurie Steadman and youngsters, pleasant girl. They hit on corner about the Donald Meyer house.

Wednesday 21 February

Hundershell
0

Quest

perfect, clear, warm mild 50°

Kelly
0

2:30 - 5:15 }
5:15 - 5:30 } 3 hrs

Hunted the big powerline of the old covert, rocky,

rough and with a magnificent view of Chestnut Ridge and everything in between and north; complicated by near cuttings on the edges, making walking impossible in places it was merely possible. Finally took to the shoulder on the east edge and only found more rocks. I don't remember it this way.

We hunted over the rocks and tangles with no rewards and after a breather, we tackled the climb up, coming out on the settling pond of the strip operation above. Climb, climb, and more climbing brought us upon top to a wasteland of what would be mud in wet weather, certainly a mile of it and nearly as wide. Found four lanters (100 gal) of Ammonia or other chemical piped to some more settling ponds east and others; also a fine or six-wire high fence that looked ~~amazingly~~ like a trap line.

together with strange white square-section posts with no wires - must inquire. A queer world of barrenness, but with the enormous view extended even farther north. We plodded across to the west end and into excellent rough cover that was the most promising of the day.

Nothing.

at the car at 5:15, we moved on to the big autumn-olive area on the Kelly place where we saw a grouse along the road the last time here. Kay let me out to hunt it parallel to the road which she brought the car to pick me up. It was a perfect hour ^{with} conditions right but there was nothing. Nothing occurred the order of the day this year.

Quest puzzled me by running the entire timer here with his nose to the ground as though on turkey scent, but it seems unlikely they would have been all over it. Why? Kay, who defends our dogs from my criticism, said, for Quest, "Why not? The other way wasn't working." And she was right.

Wednesday 28 February Paul Uphold

Quest: tried so hard.

partly sunny to cloudy 35°
cold

3:15 - 5:45 / 2 3/4

A third time for this grand covert, with a typical pattern J5-3.4.0/J23-(1).1.0/F28.0, a downhill

curve for the season that reflects the curve of the past twenty years. Paul's place looked especially bleak with Paul no longer there: convalescing at "Marthies" after heart bypass surgery in October.

As we prepared to leave the station wagon Kay discovered she had not changed from Wellingtons to boots, or actually had changed into them from shoes. She insisted upon hunting anyway though I was concerned her feet would be cold in the thick snow of snow that remained. It proved surprisingly comfortable for her as to warmth,

but uncomfortable walking on rocky surfaces.

35/89

We hunted the top "corner" cover, good preparations in the far edge with some grapes still silent on ground. Working through to the mud road, we climbed back to the top and tried hunting the crest of pines above it, something I've wanted to do. It proved not bad, working through the autumn olive plantings grown large and tangled to the point of land where on our first visit Quest found the group of three, an enchanted place where a wonderful thing happened - but only once.

Returning to the mud road we went to the bottom of the hill where on the last hunt (#2) we moved the outcrops. Today, none.

It was ^{only} getting on toward five o'clock and we decided to make the big circle around to the "Kelly dikes" and Glenn's and back to the car.

Starting down the Kelly woods road we planned to take pictures of Quest and each other at the "Gallows Tree," a big maple with an L-shaped huge branch.

Quest had given us a beautiful point on the lower edge of the road just before we reached the tree. I expected action and Kay got a picture but, as so often happens, it proved empty. We had a second grand point as we came out of the woods into the big flat of olive bushes with Quest on the brink of a deep ^{hazard} to a dangerous looking pond with thin-looking ice. I worked my way around his right side to the crest, a shaky position high above the pond and I resolved not to try a shot if a bird flushed out over. I needn't have worried.

We found a good roadside boulder covered with rubus vine and all lunch, I say chicken breast. Kay her hand could cough drop. There is something wrong there!

Time was getting on and we pushed and crawled through the tangle of shrubs, finally reaching more open land and the big pines. We

a third point on the brink of an old spoil bank. all these have been
in similar situations on drop-offs. This season the points have mostly been
empty but intense and fierce unless I whistle Quest on and I am puzzled
as to what the scent has been. Turkeys? But the birds are never there,

In the powerful mist of way further on Quest gave us a
fourth point in a clump of alders in the middle of the right-of-way, convincing
as truth, colorful as fiction. Certain it was an early woodcock we got a
photo, then Kay walked in to flush what wasn't there. Again, what? Quest
can't be blamed, he tries so hard to find birds, never letting up.

At the road, Kay walked to get the car - it surprised me by being
a good half mile - while I took ~~the~~ Quest and hunted an old strip terrace
along which used to be the corner house with the "rotten door." It was poor cover,
locusts and a trash heap. (These junk piles are often the locals). I finally
turned back and got down over and waited for Kay at the road corner,
when she saw me, blinking her lights on and off to let me know and
poked us up. The last three coverts have had zero birds. (4, counting Penna ^{ground} _{lands})

The last day - Last Day - of a season that was less than good. How
long is it going to last? Don't plan; don't dream.



Wednesday 7 March
sunny, warm 44°

3:30-5:00 / 1½ hrs.

Hunting Hills

Quest 4 PROD

37/89

made 3 Chukars 3 Muscivores
3 shots - 0

To the preserves to give Quest action and me some shooting to test the 28-bore AYA. Quest's first point in sorghum patch was uncertain at first, then solid. ^{They took photos.} It was a Chukar in deep dead grass I had to push out, ~~at first~~ a bird that started to run then flushed, circling to right low, and I had to shoot through intervening brush. I got the gun up clumsily and tried to swing through at 25 yards and missed, watching the chukar top the far woods and go out of sight - a poor way to start a day. Quest chased and I made no effort to stop him.

For the first time Hunting Hills is releasing birds on the hillside beyond the deep ravine to the south. They have installed a Sporting clays course that is somewhat distracting with the latticework crates the shooting must stand in. We went up the steep road to the hillside and out, covering clumps of brush and briars. Quest had his 2nd point at far end, a good interest on and I walked in with no bird. Circling, I did it again, and finally sent Quest with the 2-blank whistle. He moved in fast and froze again, his nose almost to the ground. A chukar struggled free of the dead tufts and fluttered and Quest had it, dispatching it promptly. After the first sloppy shot I had made, it seemed logical that this could be a cripple, at least to Quest.

We predicted the partridge - in ^{my} ~~the~~ nest on key - and circled back below. Suddenly there was a pheasant coming over us from above and ^{from} the direction of Quest - a high shot but not one I could try. The bird must have been not far below where we had worked out the ridge.

We crossed over to the other hill and the main field, passing a stand for shooting Clays - high overhead, with a great fall of orange targets, many unhit.

On the crest of the rise we had a grand point, with his right paw raised, leaded into the patch of briars where we've had other points. Just at that time the attendant, Jim Buzzard, arrived on a tractor (I couldn't get away from him) and I approached the point under full scrutiny, all I needed. The bird was a beautiful big cock pheasant (all cockbirds here) that ran out to the left, then flushed and came back high and over me to the left, a set-up. I tried to mount, the right arm ~~stumbled~~ spasmed, and I shot with the butt on my lower hips and of course missed, great for the confidence.

No more action until well out the big field, a good point, a good flush, and a good chance. This time I got the gun mounted and fired going thru the bird and watched it go out of my ken. I felt I should have had that one. All I know is that I am not swinging them fast enough, perhaps perhaps with not enough acceleration as I go ahead.

Quest found, and missed, a third cock pheasant far ahead of us, and that was it. Probably failed to find the other 2 Chukars released because we didn't hunt out the far west stretch. It was a little disappointment, missing and having poor mounting with the gun, after all the long dry mounting practice I'd been doing. I hope it doesn't reflect inadequacy with the 28-bore, but I think it is the mounting problem. And I'll work on. Not quite my style of shooting. But it was good for Quest. Quest at least bagged one ~~chukar~~ chukar out of \$60 worth.

LOCAL 1989

14 COVERTS / 16 GROUSE
60

BIRD/COVERT: 1.14

LITTLE SANDY N: Oct 16-0/
 MARSHALL SHAFER / BISHOP J3-0
 PAUL UPHOLD / J5-3.4.0 / J23.(1).1.0 / F28.0
 CHARLES KELLY J5-0.
 RAY GUTHRIE J9-2-2-0
 BITELY J20-2.2.0
 McKAY J24.1.1.0 / F6.(1).2.0
 THE THORNS J31.4.4.0 / F20.0
 ASA WRIGHT F1-0.0.0
McBRIDE F5-0
 JOHN SPURGEON F5-0
 HARTMAN F8 2.2.0
JIM SMITH F13.2.3.0
 HOUDERSHELL F21.0

5 COVERTS / 3 B/C: 1.6
PENNSYLVANIA NO GUN

BURNSWORTH N20-1.1
 NEWMACOLIN FIVE FORKS N22-0
 MRS. BURKE N25-0
 HENCKEL J7-2.2
 DEER LAKE F18.0
 HUNTING HILLS

1.14
 14
 16
 1.14
 14
 16
 1.14

$$\begin{array}{r} 1.14 \\ 14 \overline{) 16.000} \\ \underline{14} \\ 20 \\ \underline{14} \\ 60 \\ \underline{56} \\ 40 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} .6 \\ 5 \overline{) 3.0} \\ \underline{30} \\ 00 \end{array}$$

1989

bird count: 1.14
WV COVERTS 14/16 GROUSE

GEORGE: 15 DAYS / 37 1/4 hrs. / 14 COVERTS (WV)

16 grouse / 20 flurries

not one shot

Missed the woodcock season

QUEST 5 1/2 years (6th season)

15 DAYS GROUSE 7 PROD

LIFETIME '84-'89

152 DAYS

31 PROD

5 ~~BACKS~~ BACKS

1 KILL

1 RET

48 PROD

14 BACKS

4 KILLS

1 RET