

Shooting Notes 1996

Tuesday 15 October

Perfect weather 70°

3:45 ~~4:15~~ - 6:35 : 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs

Biteley

mired 2-2
0 shots

Mannton

Bicesse

A new puppy! what an experience, Menton's with, my 72nd season. Yesterday was Columbus Day and Saturday the opener, so we waited until today. Perfect Indian Summer with color at full blaze. This is Bicesse's 5th month birthday.

Sam Sisler had jumped 6 grouse in Biteley Place several weeks ago, so we tried it. Hunted out the lower road, a horror of dried clay and slimy puddles. Mannton was out too far - opening hunt - and Bicesse not yet learned to quarter or what it's all about, but very curious.

I day got a fox of him with a muddy face.

Hunted the lower part of cover below road, new cut for large oaks, and very thick with lower growth. Finding nothing, we come back to the mud road and started hunting up a log road that ~~it~~ wound up.

Suddenly I heard a grouse "quacking" and it took off from a ^{low} point, "quacking"

grazing low up the log road almost over Bicesse who got a good look at it, his first grouse, which fired him up, and he took after it.

There was a time when I would have been quick enough to have tried for it but not now with my shoulders. I day, behind, we heard the flash but didn't see it.

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We followed the road up the hill through good cover but thick, and then branched right steeply toward the top where a big rock had been cut. We should have kept to the other fork which was more gradual but we couldn't be sure it wouldn't go toward the bottom. What ensued, as the novelists put it, shouldn't have happened to anyone. With footing terrible on roots and rocks and getting steeper we climbed higher and steeper in what appeared to be a spring bed, leaning forward to keep from falling backward. Looking up we could see a 45° angle getting progressively steeper. By taking slow steady steps we managed to keep going against odds we should not have tried. Ray finally ~~would~~ crawled on her knees, clinging to tufts of grass. I tried to help by reaching down with the empty 28 lb. AyA. The last incline was what no 90 year old couple should have tried, but we made it very much blown. My back, which has required a back support for the entire year since last ^{October} ~~season~~ when I injured it, was acting up, but we succeeded in topping out to the *Stripinus* terrace at the top. Ray was magnificent; no twenty-year-old could have done it. As we leveled off we had to keep below a high wall and we chose to go left. I was in front and saw Winton come onto a bird in a thick place. He was unaware before it flushed - hot dry scorching conditions.

I heard the flush and could tell its direction by Mantra's actions,
and I think Bicans was near enough to have seen it. May wasn't aware of it.

We paused for lunch sitting on a downed tree, and Bicans, who is
quick, went off with a banana, paper napkin and all and stayed just out of
leaps reach and ate it, complete with skin. Birthday treat!

It was six o'clock but quite sunny with a bright lowering sun,
and we started south to skirt the big stepdown pond. It was a long way
but, like all long ways, it finally had ^{an} end, and we came out on top at the
square of woods where one year we found it grass and off 13.

Pitelys had 3 riding horses - fenced - that intrigued Bicans, who ~~was~~
was timid until the horses took off away from him, where he suddenly became
~~fast~~ bold with a fence between them, and began looking at them. We
finally got him away from them by walking off, and down the road.

Came onto new notices by Deer Fire Club - and finally met a bear
hunter. It's a Krogwood group who have leased Pitelys' place.

It was a long walk down the hill in glorious color, throbbing with
intensity in the last light. At the bottom we were glad to ~~see~~ reach the car
with nice soft seats. It had been a fine day, with Bicans's first contact
with ground and our first time out. My arms don't give promise of long
mounting but I'm hoping.



Thursday 17 October

Paul's Place

Wenton
Bicasse

(2)

4:30-6:30: 2 hrs

Indian Summer 70°

Very hot. Entered the west path thru dense autumn olive - a mistake. Wenton was out of sight most of the time. Needs shock collar. Bicasse doesn't get know what it's about and moores around smelling ground.

We found everything green thick except for two small clearings that were in grass - signs of deer clearings? We took from getting along pine to the far side and down to our old path to the mud road. We decided to take it up to deer hunters camp and passed to eat.

Just before we reached it, Wenton looked up the 45° hillside to autumn olive on top, seeming to pause to remember the time as a youngster when he took that grade shell-bunt, covered the top, and came back down without stopping.

Today in blistering heat, he went up and hunted the tops out. Bicasse came along, looked up and went up the steep hill. It was thrilling.

Wenton redeemed himself with a truly courageous act, and Bicasse showed good instincts.

I tried to find the log road thru the dense woods on the east, but succeeded only in getting ¹⁰⁰ involved in a tangle and rocks with no sign of the log road. We decided to head for the car and came out on the ^{main} road, where we found a house under construction. Must find who bought the Paul Place. Almost no grapes ^{here} this year, but a lovely overt.



Tuesday 22 October
On the brink of rain 57°
4:00 - 5:00 - 1 hr

Egna Kelly

Menton
Bicane

5/96

This day just wouldn't work. Lingering color, gorgeous with the light drizzle. It started with the discovery that Kelly's green Wellingtons leaked when we forded the little run across the road. Recent rains had everything in flood. Kay, very game, insisted upon going on with wet feet - both of them -

We started down the back road, which was a running brook with the bed of loose rocks - it had evidently been that way in recent years. We'd planned to go down to the bridge and cross down to hunt the south side but gave it up after scrambling on the rocky "stream bed" - taking a grain-over woods road I remember as leading from the woods.

It soon ran out in woods, beautiful in this stage of Indian Summer but a mass of hidden branches underfoot as all our forest cover seems to be after last winter's severe weather.

I find I need a deer trail or path, shocking as it seems. We worked our way up to the Kelly road thru wonderfully fragrant damp smells. Once on terra firma, we hunted west, only to come to cattle, surrounded by electric fence - isn't anything the same? Bicane was fascinated with the bovine wildlife but we called him away as the cows came to meet him, and retraced our steps toward the car. Once more we waded the rushing stream across the road and he called it quits. We hadn't been in the good cover, but it gave the impression that it was a barren quest.

To Old Blumberg and dry feet for Kelly, who called L.L. Bean and arranged to have new boots boots sent special handling to reach us Thursday in time for our trip to northern Pa. God give us some grace up there. (We found the George Bird Evans Papers effective in Menton today)

Winton
T. B. Bass

Monday 28 October

Pine Creek - Beulahland

Partly sunny 55°
2 hrs 45 min 2 3/4 hrs.

Arrived at Cedar Point at 6:25, 5 1/2 hr. trip.
Drove from Old Hamlock yesterday in rain off and on. Arrived at Cedar Point at 6:25, 5 1/2 hr. trip.

Today awoke to fog and drizzle but cleared to partly sunny. David Hall came at noon. I was disappointed to hear tomorrow we'd go to Beulahland. It was blank last trip; it was blank today.

David shot me to an impressive cover, which we refused and hunted out to Beulahland look. Nearly got blown away at gap but got out of sound in the pine cut in trail. Much barberry red with fruit - plantings. Returned thru pine bottom - large white pines - and mist David coming out road and fields. A total loss. The man of God shot a grouse and a woodcock.

Tuesday 29 October

Route 44 from State Run

Winton
T. B. Bass

Sunny 60°
1 1/2 hrs } 2 1/2 hrs.
1 hr. }

to cabin David hunted last week.
Moved 4.4 / one woodcock

Tom today & David Hall
for back in mountain

Long drive across country from State Run to Rt. 44 and

Hunted "clearcut" with ^{springs} beech clumps for 1 1/2 hrs. Winton covered it beautifully. Made one woodcock wild from Winton - sighted by Ray. Nlots walked on more difficult ground - humps and hollows

Returned to cabin where Tom & David awaited us. Hunted last year in a clearcut - more beech sprouts in clumps on top of a punishing hill. I can't take this steep hills. Some grouse go out wild at skyline. Later in dense thicket David moved 3 more - as if which I heard. Winton may have had a point.

Wednesday 30 October

Windy Clearcut

7/96

3:00 - 5:00 - 2 hrs.

Overcast, near-Tornado wind,
50° with wind chill.

Drove a long way to court beyond Section, where Ross Steinhilber and Paul Whaley left us with directions how to hunt a large clearcut.

It was comprised of dense beech thickets and 10- to 20 foot aspens, bare with brown leaf pack. Ross suggested hunting ^{south} just inside large woods bordering the clearcut on the chance that grouse usually flush from the open cover toward the

tall trees...

We elected to hunt in the clearcut because of the high wind that might fall branches on us. The going was tedious but not unpleasant. There was thalery, the only food I saw, but no grouse.

Cutting thru the thicket we missed the log road we wanted to find at southern border, so headed west to find the wide log road. That would take us back north to the car. We never found it, so went by compass thru semi-thick cover to the north.

We came on a faint log road running in right direction and at last came out on the wide north-south road as I'd been looking for. It was nearly five o'clock and getting dark when we saw Paul coming down looking for us. We were just on time, and still blowing. It was another empty day - what I'm

coming to think of as a Pine Creek day but had been nice even and I enjoyed it. No one could expect birds on a day like this. Mountain worked like a dream. Bitter still doesn't know what to expect.

Thursday 31 October

Pine Creek - 25 Mile Creek

Winton
Bease

(8)

Sunny, cold, 40°

3:10 - 5:00 - 2 hrs.

0

A long monotonous drive thru monotonous woodland, some of it high above Pine Creek Gorge.

Finally stopped, then climbed, mildly, and out about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to a clearcut. We were put in an aspen cover where we would find woodcock and grouse. Nothing. Winton worked it hard and we had hard footing over many fallen branches. The log road we were to parallel up to a knob went down, so we hunted the thicket, at last turning back and trying an empty cover, took the log road back to main log road. Went for Ross and Paul, then got up and trekked back down to the cars, arriving about 5:00. The stars came about 15 min. later. Ross had shot one grouse out of six flushed. Ross and Paul had shot one each in a.m.. We have hunted 4 days and haven't had a look at a grouse. What is the answer?

Ross wanted to drive back to a great meadow tomorrow. I declined. The long drive back was in the dark. Saw two porcupines and glad the dogs didn't find any.

1 November Friday

Pine Road

Winton
Bease

Sunny, cold, 40°

1-1-0

One last clearcut. Ross and Whaley had shot 2 each in morning, so Ross hunted without gun with us in afternoon. I was glad to have him along to see what empty covers I've been treated to. It was beech and aspen regrowth, almost no trails, simply stunted. We covered it with no results, which wasn't Winton's fault. He hunted beautifully. Finally

at end of day we took the broad logging road uphill toward the 9/96
car and flushed my grouse. Maunter was surprised and didn't
get the scent. We got only the sound of the flush, altho' the grouse was
just below the edge of the road.

That evening Decker stopped in at the house to announce that he
and two other men were moving in with us the next day. We left at noon,
I am through with Pine Creek. Three traps have given me one shot.

It is beautiful wild country but requires too much driving, and most
of the birds are in other people's hands.

16 November - Saturday Wilkinson Maunter
3:30 - 6:00 1 1/2 hrs. moved 1.1 flush or 2 (from tree) P. B. Case

Cold but sunny, Beautiful, after a week of bad weather and snow.

We started down back road and found it so possible to drive,
and I suggested that she could go back for car and drive down, while
I hunted it. It was a grand idea, especially at end of day.

We weren't out of good cover all the time we hunted.

We heard distant shoot all afternoon and realized we were hearing deer
rifles being sighted-in.

The dense cover I encountered at the bottom looked exactly like it did
when we were last here just or more years ago - perfect. We hunted up the
hollow on the log road - much mud - then perfect cover that Maunter hunted
like a dog possessed. We heard a faint flush in the distance - far from
Maunter.

There was a lot of cover in here and I would like time to handle it well, but the
sun was getting down and, after a pause for food, turned back. On the way
down an upper trail, we heard Maunter barking at a probable tree grouse.
This could have been a second bird or might have been the first flush we heard.

We made the ~~small~~ crossing of the small run in the remaining light (10) (11) and across the muddy field that clung to our boots and to the car - a delight at this time of day and with the steep climb facing us, if I hadn't had his inspired idea. We made it up in 4WD and a little slippery going.

It was a lovely day, wonderful air and good to be out after our inactive week of snowy weather. Today the only snow we saw was at Old Hemlock, whose trees hold it longer than anywhere. Good to be in home counts.

Friday 29 November

Tab Run Tributary

Martin
Beasse

Sunny, cold, snow on ground 400 0

3:00 - 4:30 1 1/2 hrs.

This was the special covert I had to try - perfect on the top maps, ideal terrain. Parked at foot of hill and were getting set up when two older men stopped to chat - Jack Martin (lives on Rt 40) very friendly when I said I'd bet he knew A. J. McMulken - and "Millie".

Got started in edge of road cover and immediately found ourselves in Mountain Laurel with no path, no ^{deer} trail. Determined to see it through, we kept pushing - slow progress - in general direction downstream, which we could hear but couldn't see.

Getting nowhere, we gradually worked up hill, feeling sure there would be a top edge to the laurel. I didn't realize we had entered mountains of laurel, and it was a little frightening. We could have retraced our tracks but it seemed a chance to find birds in snow in here. About this time I took a spill - slow and not violent, but flat on my back with my feet slightly elevated, making it nearly impossible to roll off my back.

I handed ^{her} my load, gun, which she is capable of handling, and I set about trying to right myself. I was shocked to see ^{her} holding my gun and crying, for I take it all as a joke. W. Beasse was solicitous, but no help but at last I got up on my feet, no more in the snow. ^{been lying on}

The only way to progress was to pick a way thru the icy stems, 11/96
which we did, working higher to what had to be the end. It wasn't.

The tops culminated in a ledge of high rocks, seeming impassable.
We finally found a pass between the boulders and by climbing up and into crevices,
we found the far side with, thank God, no more laurel.

The tops was a hardwood flat with oak leaf covering. I had my compass
bearings, and we were headed toward the old Davey Elkins road, which I knew led to
be there. The sun goes down early at this season, and it had reached the treeline now.
Finally we came to a deer trail going our direction, and in no time we stepped
out on the Davey Elkins road - glorious sight.

At the far end, we took the left fork shortcut to the county road, and
down the icy hill to the Subura at the bottom. All afternoon there had been rumors
of deer rifles being sighted - in - the fellows fire more cartridges at targets than at
deer. It was a lovely cold winter's end of day. We had to make - do with getting

than the cover for contact with game, but it was exciting, but I had lost my sense
dream of a hidden grouse covert. Ce la vie.

Pneumonia Dec 1st

LOCAL 1996

BITELY 15 OCT. 2-2-0
PAUL'S PLACE 11 OCT 0
EZRA KELLY 22 OCT 0
WILKINSON 17 NOV 2-2-0

Pluma.

Pine Creek

BEULAHLAND OCT. 28-0

RT. 44 .4-4 OCT 29. 4-4-0

WINDY CLEARCUT OCT 30-0

25 MILE COVERT OCT 31-0

RIM ROAD NOV 1- 1-1-0

TUB RUN TRIBUTARY NOV 29-0

Statistics

No shots all season

4 local coverts

5 Pine Creek coverts

1 Power covert (Tub Run)

Mention: nothing to print.

DATA 1994

25 COVERTS / ~~10~~ grouse ~~10~~ head forest
20 WV coverts ⁽²²⁾ 12/12 " ^(.88) 6 " "
5 PA " 10 " / 12 2.0 " "

GEORGE 70th SEASON

27 DAYS / 56 1/4 hrs.

22 GROUSE / 24 FLUSHES

2 SHOTS / 0

9 WOODCOCK / 12 FLUSHES

2 SHOTS / 1 HIT

MANTON 3 YEARS 4th SEASON

27 DAYS

5 PROD

1 BACK

7 PROD

1 KILL

LIFETIME '91-'94

10 PROD

3 BACKS

8 PROD

1 KILL