

SHOOTING 1986-87



S H O O T I N G B O O K

1 9 8 6 ~ 1 9 8 7

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| PHEASANT | <i>Phasianus colchicus</i> |
| RED GROUSE | <i>Lagopus scoticus</i> |
| GREY PARTRIDGE | <i>Perdix perdix</i> |
| REDLEG PARTRIDGE | <i>Alectoris rufa</i> |
| BOBWHITE QUAIL | <i>Colinus virginianus</i> |
| MALLARD | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> |
| SNIPE | <i>Capella gallinago</i> |
| WOODCOCK | <i>Scolopax rusticola</i> |

SIR JOSEPH'S PERSONAL BAG - 1986/87 SEASON

12 July Rothwell Pigeon Flight 10 pigeon Head: 10

12 August Reeth 5 drives 33 grouse with 45 shots

Very pleased to have lived another year and to be on Reeth Moor. I am in the top butt of all, that is the right hand outside butt for the up drive. I have let them all and I am shooting the eighth gun to pay my corner. That is my contribution. The longest line I think I have ever been in - I do not know since when - probably ever. George Graham is loading for me and I have got the 20 bores, 13, 16 and an ounce of number 7 shot. I have got Blaze with me, the labrador who has got a white blaze on her throat.

The weather forecast is very, very slight. It is almost oppressive, no wind. No doubt you heard the shot on the tape - four or five well grown grouse came up the front of the wall. The fellow next door shot and killed the bird I was going to get on to, but he left me one really in range because I was asleep dictating, not wide enough awake. Anyway, I let fly, dropped him hundred yards on the top. Picked him up. That is my first grouse this season.

I have come up to Lady Mary because most of these keepers want to have the best ground on the 12th. I thought our neighbours would not be up on this high ground today and we should not be putting birds on to them shooting. I came on to what is supposed to be, what I believe, is the high ground, which is the worst.

I am expecting, at this first drive, which a lot of it comes off Brownsey over this big wall, Merryfield up. Quite a good drive from what I saw when I was up here.

As George Graham quite rightly says, we shall see what is on each drive because they will not be strong enough with no wind behind them to make two or three flights to keep getting forward.

George has fired off a 'pop pop' at exactly 12 o'clock when Mark Alderson said he would be ready. I told the guns down at Surrender Bridge that the beaters were ready to start at 10 o'clock. We had better move on.

Just gone into my butt three or four minutes before 10 o'clock. We are bang on time to start with. Exactly 10 o'clock.

One of the reasons why I like to go to the high ground when it is as still as it is now is that you do not get so many days - you get fog and you get wind and you get rain, bad weather on that top ground. There are not many days in the year when it is as still as it is today.

10.15 a.m. - a bird or two came to the line. Fifteen minutes after the signal.

Well that drive with the eight guns, 9 brace of grouse picked up, 2½ brace of old and 5½ of young. 46 cartridges accounted for, but a few went missing I suppose. That does not matter very much. Actually there were 49 shots clicked.

Lady Mary up, 11.34, the first grouse we have seen. 13 brace up to Lady Mary of which we have picked up four brace. Looks like 32 brace.

12.25 - first shot on the down drive from Lady Mary. Slain by the Brigadier in good style at short range. He had not seen it coming and like everything else, they have executed him beautifully.

We were in the butts for the first drive after lunch at 2.30 p.m. First shot fired at 3 o'clock.

We are now up for the fifth drive. I am the top gun in the number 8 butt for the down drive on Lady Mary. The last drive was pretty poor.

The fourth drive we had 50 shots altogether, the whole line. The next drive, 69 shots the whole line.

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|------------------------|----------|--------------------|--|
| 13 August | Reeth | 5 drives | 30 grouse with 48 shots |
| 14 August | Reeth | 5 drives | 74 grouse with 103 shots 1 Snipe |
| 15 August | Reeth | 5 drives | 21 grouse with 47 shots |
| 16 August | Reeth | 5 drives | 18 grouse with 37 shots |
| 19 August | Stublick | 4 drives | 31 grouse with 61 shots 1 Snipe |
| Davidsons Moor | | 9 birds, 12 shots | |
| Half Moon Moor | | 8 birds, 21 shots | |
| Chairmans Moor | | 10 birds, 15 shots | |
| Eshells Moor | | 4 birds, 13 shots | |
| 20 August | Stublick | 5 drives | 24 grouse with 48 shots 1 Snipe 1 Hare |
| Churchlands | | 9 birds, 13 shots | |
| Rebel Hill | | 10 birds, 21 shots | |
| Anglie Clough | | 3 birds, 9 shots | |
| Allotments | | 1 snipe, 1 shot | |
| Allotments Return | | 2 birds, 4 shots | |
| 23 August | Stublick | 5 drives | 16 grouse with 33 shots |
| Rosie's Birthday Shoot | | | |
| Glenhills | | 1 bird, 3 shots | |
| Chairmans | | 1 bird, 2 shots | |
| Eshells Moor | | 8 birds, 16 shots | |
| Half Moon | | 3 birds, 9 shots | |
| Upper Eshells | | 3 birds, 3 shots | |

Saturday, August 23rd. Called at 7.15 a.m. Breakfast at 8.00 a.m. Those women put one of my favourite shirts that I shoot in to the wash and I have wasted ten minutes trying to find that thing.

I had a good breakfast. Left Middleton House at 8.45 and arrived spot on at Stublick as planned at 9.45. The Allendale keeper is helping us with some of his under men and he is here himself. He is out on the right flank of the guns for the first drive, normal first drive that we always have here.

We are eight young people, Rosie is number 1, Robert Ropner 2, Jennie II 3, Jamie Berger 4, Paul Carlbom 5, Andy Monell 6, Nick Jopling 7, and JN 8. I have got Coucom loading for me.

We had four Range Rovers and one Land Rover to get in on the way here. We got Mark and Charlie Barron from Reeth. One dog, I have got Sweep with me.

It is an absolutely lovely morning, beautiful morning. Lovely white clouds and blue sky.

10.26 - I have seen the first grouse settle five hundred yards in front of me. Sister Rachel and my niece Elizabeth are pushed out on the flank to my right.

Five drives at Stublick today. A nine hour day. Leaving here at quarter to nine, back here at quarter to six.

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|---------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 25 August | Reeth | 5 drives | 68 grouse with 122 shots |
| Surrender Top | 10 birds, 20 shots | | |
| Surrender Top Down | 20 birds, 40 shots | | |
| Surrender Top | 13 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Barris End Wood | 9 birds, 26 shots | | |
| Barris End Stone Butts | 14 birds, 21 shots | | |

We are up on Surrender Top and Reeth High Moor. We have had the drive down and I have killed 11. No, they only picked ten and the bird was not dead. Brother Sam was in the favourite butt, in number 3. I was one above him. Rosie in the bottom butt, she got 4. Mark Phillips was higher up. We were only numbering four guns plus Brother Sam, plus Rosie and young Jennie. Mark Phillips had nine shots but only got seven grouse, but that is a good start. There should be more now we are waiting for the return. We got just forty brace. 16½ on the first and 23½ on the second. Down wind 23½, side wind really. It is 12 o'clock. Twenty or thirty grouse came back on their own before we got back in the butts. We were still out picking up.

They soon move back on their own ground this time of the year. Out of the 66½ brace in the bag this morning, Mr. Rocco Forte claimed 13 brace, we claimed 22½. That is 25½. Miss Louise has got 6 brace. That is 41½. Captain Phillips has got nine brace. That is 50½. Miss Jenny must have killed 4 brace. That is 54½. That leaves 12 brace for Monell. Of course, sometimes there is a bird picked up by the pickers-up that nobody claims and so on, but that is about how it balances out.

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|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 27 August | Wemmergill | 5 drives | 64 grouse with 103 shots |
| | Guest of Tom Cowie (S & K Day) | | |
| | First day on Wemmergill this year | | |
| First Drive | 9 birds, 14 shots | | |
| Second Drive | 10 birds, 14 shots | | |
| Third Drive | 13 birds, 19 shots | | |
| Fourth Drive | 18 birds, 29 shots | | |
| Fifth Drive | 14 birds, 27 shots | | |

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| 28 August | Reeth | 5 drives | 90 grouse with 181 shots |
| Lady Mary | 17 birds, 31 shots | | |
| Murrayfield | 13 birds, 24 shots | | |
| Slade Head | 26 birds, 41 shots | | |
| Ash Pot | 20 birds, 41 shots | | |
| Pulpit | 14 birds, 44 shots | | |
| 29 August | Holwick | 6 drives | 36 grouse with 65 shots |
| Black Arc | 13 birds, 22 shots | | |
| Nickle Hopple | 4 birds, 8 shots | | |
| Nickle Hopple Return | - - | | |
| Silver Band | 2 birds, 6 shots | | |
| The Laird | 12 birds, 21 shots | | |
| Black Arc North | 5 birds, 8 shots | | |
| 30 August | Wemmergill | 6 drives | 44 grouse with 90 shots |
| Allotments Top | 3 birds, 9 shots | | |
| Allotments East | 3 birds, 9 shots | | |
| Allotments West | 15 birds, 31 shots | | |
| Allotments Top | 5 birds, 13 shots | | |
| Allotments East | 7 birds, 11 shots | | |
| Allotments West | 11 birds, 17 shots | | |
| <p>We have killed 83½ brace on the Allotments. The weather was cool. A good north wind, a north to north west wind and pretty strong. A cool day, a bit of sun, bright and dry. One little shower. Not a lot of birds. He owes me 9 brace of young birds the Keeper does. And then there are two brace for Cowie so that means he will owe me 7 brace on the grouse account.</p> | | | |
| 2 September | Wemmergill | 5 drives | 18 grouse with 30 shots |
| Sledge | - birds, 2 shots | | |
| Top Row | 3 birds, 5 shots | | |
| Top Row | 2 birds, 4 shots | | |
| Shipka Pass | 6 birds, 10 shots | | |
| Shipka Pass | 7 birds, 9 shots | | |
| 3 September | Wemmergill | 6 drives | 78 grouse with 134 shots |
| Standards | 23 birds, 31 shots | | |
| Corbus | 7 birds, 19 shots | | |
| Green Grain | 18 birds, 32 shots | | |
| Wemmergill Head | 8 birds, 14 shots | | |
| Return | 10 birds, 19 shots | | |
| Wemmergill Head | 12 birds, 19 shots | | |



Edwin Bailey, Ian Yates, Diana Yates,
Tom Cowie, Eugenie Nickerson,
Gracie Ryan, Tristan Bailey, JN
(Kneeling) Melissa and Annabel Yates



Sam and Connie Nickerson, Louise Nickerson,
Rosie Nickerson, Eugenie Nickerson, JN,
Rocco and Aliai Forte, Andy Monell,
Eugenie Nickerson II, Mark Phillips

August 1986





Garry and Claire Stephenson, Lady King,
Lord King, Jessie and Bill Thomson,
Eugenie Nickerson and JN



Dick Walgate, Robert Nickerson, David
Nickerson, Harry and Clarice Key, Jane Key,
Ruth Nickerson, Eugenie Nickerson, Audrey
and Ben Nickerson, JN, Robert Key,
Edward Nickerson

September 1986



Fred and Jane Hamilton, Bill Flowers,
Eugenie Nickerson, Dudley Hughes,
Eugenie Nickerson II, Maury Flowers,
"Chips" Keswick and JN

Wednesday, 3rd September 1986. Cloudy, very black clouds in some places. The sun breaking through. 20-25 miles an hour strong wind from north west. Just right for the Standards drive.

I was in the fourth butt from the bottom - had a butt empty on either side of me. Had a right and left on the first covey and the second covey. On the third covey I got 3 aduats and I carried on shooting, I thought not badly. Claimed 23. Mikie claimed 11 - that is 34. Fergie 10 - 44. Senator Flowers - he was at the top - 48. Chips Keswick 11. That is 59 claimed. 5 guns. A lovely drive. Got some speed on.

I am now in Corbus, the third butt from the right. Butt numbering No. 1. The two right hand butts are empty. There was no doubt on that cross wind on the Standards you can leave half the butts empty and each gun can cover two butts really, except for the top end where they go straight through.

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|--------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 4 September | Wemmergill | 6 drives | 50 grouse with 117 shots |
| Standards | - birds, 2 shots | | |
| Corbus | 8 birds, 17 shots | | |
| Green Grain | 5 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Allotment Wall | 19 birds, 43 shots | | |
| Allotment East | 7 birds, 9 shots | | |
| Allotment West | 11 birds, 31 shots | | |
| 8 September | Reeth | 5 drives | 48 grouse with 79 shots |
| Surrender Top Down | 7 birds, 13 shots | | |
| Surrender Top Back | 19 birds, 28 shots | | |
| Surrender Top Down | 8 birds, 13 shots | | |
| Wood Butts | 7 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Surrender Bridge | 7 birds, 10 shots | | |
| 9 September | Reeth | 5 drives | 74 grouse with 149 shots |
| Lady Mary | 23 birds, 39 shots | | |
| Lady Mary Return | 7 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Slade Head | 13 birds, 28 shots | | |
| Ashpots | 16 birds, 42 shots | | |
| Pulpit | 15 birds, 25 shots | | |
| 13 September | Reeth | 5 drives | 76 grouse with 135 shots |
| Lady Mary Uphill | 17 birds, 32 shots | | |
| Lady Mary Back | 25 birds, 34 shots | | |
| Wood Butts | 6 birds, 14 shots | | |
| Stone Butts | 16 birds, 40 shots | | |
| Wall Blades | 12 birds, 15 shots | | |

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|-----------------|---------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| 15 September | Stublick North Moor | 4 drives | 24 grouse with 39 shots |
| Rebel Hill | 4 birds, 4 shots | | |
| Rebel Hill Down | 5 birds, 11 shots | | |
| Glenhills | 10 birds, 14 shots | | |
| Anstys Clough | 5 birds, 10 shots | | |
| 16 September | Steane | 3 drives | 12 grouse with 22 shots |
| New Meugheur | 2 birds, 4 shots | | |
| Moss Drive | 5 birds, 7 shots | | |
| Peat Drive | 5 birds, 11 shots | | |
| 17 September | Stublick South End | 4 drives | 27 grouse with 50 shots |
| Glenhills | 3 birds, 10 shots | | |
| Half Moon | 9 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Chairmans | 5 birds, 10 shots | | |
| Fouth Drive | 10 birds, 15 shots | | |
| 19 September | Reeth | 5 drives | 33 grouse with 89 shots |
| First | 10 birds, 20 shots | | |
| Second | 5 birds, 20 shots | | |
| Third | 6 birds, 14 shots | | |
| Fourth | 6 birds, 19 shots | | |
| Fifth | 6 birds, 16 shots | | |
| 20 September | Reeth | 5 drives | 37 grouse with 75 shots |
| Murrayhead | 5 birds, 9 shots | | |
| Murrayhead Back | 7 birds, 21 shots | | |
| Ashpots | 10 birds, 23 shots | | |
| Pulpit | 2 birds, 13 shots | | |
| Fifth | 13 birds, 29 shots | | |



Elizabeth Willson, Rosie Nickerson, Louise Nickerson, Rachel Willson, Camilla Carlbom, JN, Jamie Berger, Paul Carlbom, Rob Ropner, Joanna Ropner, Nicholas Jopling, Eugenie Nickerson II, Andy Monell.
(Behind) Mary-Anne Nickerson, Eugenie Nickerson



Ian Yates, Tony Carlbom, John Harbert III, Diana Yates, Gunilla Carlbom, Eugenie Nickerson, JN, Wita Harbert, Marcus Edmundson



Patrick Dean, Peter Dennis, Eugenie Nickerson, JN, Susie Dean



Gilles Leclercq, Pierre-Yves Masson,
Francois Cambier, JN, Michael Summers,
Victor Desprez, J.S. Denton, Lady Nickerson



Guy and Irene Moreton, Connie Nickerson,
David Wigan, Eugenie Nickerson,
Sam Nickerson, JN, Lord Buxton,
Charles Smith-Ryland



Paddy Shillington, William Wilkinson, JN



Edward Nickerson, JN, Robert Nickerson

1986

22 September

Reads Island

Mallard 1
Teal 18
Golden Plover 2

Head: 21

I am on Reads Island, it's now a quarter past five. We've been up at the west end for two hours. It's a fresh wind, a good wind it is, a very nice wind, but very little stuff moving, an odd teal. I shot at one widgeon wide and there have been about half a dozen mallard over the south channel and five or six more mallard, odd mallard. A little flight of golden plover - I shot at two birds, one barrel each, five minutes behind the hour, killed them through the head and I am happy about that, they were lovely shots although I say it.

We picked up six teal now and we have three teal that we haven't been able to pick up. Coucom is loading for me and we have got Sweep with us, and John Hewson is away with Skip and Bess.

We came down this morning from Middleton House, there was a lot of traffic so we cut across just north of Wetherby and on the A64 part of the way, skirted York to the south and then we turned right-handed and through Market Weighton and North and South Cave. We left Middleton at 8 o'clock in the Range Rover and got to the boat at quarter past eleven, a very big tide. I stopped at the south pond near the creek, it was too late though but there had been a few duck about there, there's no doubt. I killed three teal and picked two of them up, I picked the right and left up which I was glad about.

The deer looked well and the new man Burbidge, the first time I have been on since he has been here, seems to have got on quite well from what I've seen, I think he has done some work.

I missed two chances in about an hour, that's all. It's been the slowest we've had on here for some time. A packet of pink feet geese went over which was quite exciting - I didn't count them but there were 25 or 30. I always have said that there are geese in the Humber on the 17th September, and I never remember a year when there weren't pink feet on the Humber on the 17th September, and that's going back over 50 years.

23 September

Black Springs

Evening flight

Mallard 25

Head: 25

We counted the ducks in last night. It's Tuesday the 23rd September. I came down from the Moor to the Island yesterday. Got down to Black Springs, in position at seven o'clock. A single mallard came just about seven as we got into the hide, cleaned him up. Almost immediately afterwards a pair of mallard came, and although I say it it was a very quick right and left. I can see them in front of me on the pond as I am dictating now, so, so far so good.

Eight cartridges fired at ducks, eight mallard. That's a single bird, a right and left out of a pair, another right and left out of a pair, another right and left out of a pair, and winged a further one with the same shot, and I had a double at the first one, so it's eight cartridges and eight mallard, and I have had a couple of shots on the water. Two more rights and lefts - I've had twelve shots and twelve mallard down. I've had nine rights and lefts, one single bird and killed it, and once I only killed one. Nine rights and lefts as far as I know.

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|------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 30 September | Reeth | 5 drives | 42 grouse with 106 shots |
| Lady Mary | 12 birds, 26 shots | | |
| Murrayfield | 6 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Murrayfield Back | 10 birds, 22 shots | | |
| Stone Butts | 5 birds, 22 shots | | |
| Wood Butts | 9 birds, 21 shots | | |
| 2 October | Muggleswick | 5 drives | 39 grouse with 80 shots |
| West End | | | |
| Transmitter | 5 birds, 15 shots | | |
| South End | 3 birds, 5 shots | | |
| Feldon Dene | 12 birds, 21 shots | | |
| Stone Butts | 13 birds, 21 shots | | |
| Hyshope | 6 birds, 18 shots | | |
| 3 October | Muggleswick | 5 drives | 35 grouse with 80 shots |
| Castle Butts | 14 birds, 27 shots | | |
| Smiddy Shaw | 11 birds, 15 shots | | |
| Gold Hill | 6 birds, 21 shots | | |
| Hare Hope | 2 birds, 6 shots | | |
| Hare Hope Back | 2 birds, 11 shots | | |
| 4 October | Reeth | 5 drives | 30 grouse with 64 shots |
| Murrayfield | 2 birds, 2 shots | | |
| Slade Head | 2 birds, 8 shots | | |
| Ashpot | 14 birds, 26 shots | | |
| Wall | 4 birds, 14 shots | | |
| JN Drive | 8 birds, 14 shots | | |
| 7 October | Reeth | 5 drives | 34 grouse with 103 shots |
| Healough Brow | 5 birds, 11 shots | | |
| Marks Drive | 5 birds, 28 shots | | |
| Charlie's Drive | 5 birds, 21 shots | | |
| Brownsey | 14 birds, 28 shots | | |
| The Wall | 5 birds, 15 shots | | |

Tuesday, 7th October. Had a very nice day at Reeth with my eldest son Robert. Just two guns. Coucom loading for me and George Graham loading for Robert.

It was a bit misty and a bit damp when we started out. There was a strong wind from the west and south west but the day brightened up after the first drive.





1986

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|------------|---------------------------------|---------------|--|-----------|
| 11 October | North Ormsby | 8 drives | 69 Partridges 4 Hares | 122 shots |
| 13 October | Ram Pond | | 22 Mallard 3 Teal | |
| 15 October | North Ormsby | | 59 Partridges 11 Mallard 5 Hares | |
| 15 October | Black Springs Evening Flight | | 6 Mallard | |
| 16 October | Rothwell | 8 drives | 29 Pheasant 15 Partridge 1 Pigeon | |
| 17 October | Rothwell | 3 drives only | 14 Pheasant 41 Mallard | |
| 18 October | Mere | | 64 Partridge | 126 shots |
| 20 October | Reads Island | | 50 Teal 5 Widgeon 1 Mallard 1 Snipe | |

20 October 1986. We crossed at 10.10 and I must say they have got the boat very well maintained and beautifully clean. There is a large post and rail they have put on to help get on board. Also the landing stage has been improved. I just walked on at dead level, at the right tide, but an hour after high water, absolutely right. Just walked on and no climbing about on the island side, no effort and it was absolutely lovely. It was perfect.

Mr. & Mrs. Burbidge were on the boat. All in apple pie order. We dropped in near the creek on the little pond there, on the south side. I saw a couple of teal on the way to the house and then I had an hour's sleep and a jolly good joint of silver side that had been roasted in a bag and it was absolutely fantastic - an excellent lunch and off we went.

I was in position at 2 o'clock at the West End. It is now bright sunshine and a wonderful cloud scape. I shot for five hours without moving in that hide. It was enormously cold. It was really cold and there was a gale wind. Of course, we did have some shelter from the bank, but a gale wind and it was very, very cold. The wind was from the north and the north east.

2.30 - we have now been here half an hour. I shot at 4 teal and knocked 3 down. In fact that is all we have shot at and all that we have seen anywhere near us really. Teal came in using the wind. I did not get the right allowance and clean missed him. Another single teal came between the sun and I could not get a lone on him so I did not fire at all, so that is 6 single teal that have interest in us in the first forty minutes - 4 in the bag, one we have missed and one we did not shoot at. That was the same as being missed because it was in range. Single teal, got him with the second barrel. 5 teal killed in the first hour.

Now 3 o'clock - a lovely right and left at teal, one on the right and one on the left. Another right and left at teal seven or eight minutes later, lovely! I think I have had four rights or lefts, anyway I have shot well, although I say it. I missed one easy teal and I just missed a pair, otherwise they are the only two, what I call "misses", that we have had. I have just shot another. 22 teal and 1 mallard in two hours on the West End bank this afternoon. The wind has now got strong, as the forecast said it would. West, north west is correct and cold, but tremendous sport. There has been continuous sunshine since 2.30, I would say. Wonderful clouds and it is now 4.25. 27 ducks, 26 teal and 1 widgeon down in two and a half hours.

It is now 5 o'clock. I have been here three hours and I have knocked down 33 birds. 31 of them are teal and I am very pleased. In the last hour really it has got a bit calm but it is very exciting. 33 duck since 2 o'clock, that is 11 per hour. I would say I have shot very well indeed in parts. Missed practically nothing, about 4 birds really that were bad misses or ordinary misses.

It is 5.30 - I have shot 3 in the last half hour as far as I know. 36 anyway now.

It is 5.40 - I have still got 37 ducks.

6.05 - it has gone very quiet. I am 39 birds, I think that is 6 killed in the last hour. Mind you, I missed a widgeon and I missed a teal. Almost standing still they were in the gale. A strong wind, but I have not had much shooting really for an hour. 39 I am on for the afternoon. 4 hours I have been in this hide. 6.40 - I am still shooting. We have got 50 on the clock.

At 7 o'clock we have loaded up on to the sledge. 55 from this round. 55 birds in 5 hours. It is a long time in one hide. I will certainly have a typescript of the tapes about Reads Island and about the general shooting and any entries that I have put on.

Back in the house at 7.15. I was pleased to have a little drop of whisky and two cups of tea, I tell you! The dogs worked well and we picked up at this time 44 teal, 5 widgeon, 1 mallard and 1 snipe - 51 head. We have actually lost 6 teal but that is not bad. No doubt I will have a look and see what I can get tomorrow. This is the first rain since Hurricane Charlie 7 weeks ago.

There is no doubt about it, you miss these teal in front. Every year exactly the same thing. If you can remember to check your swing you can get them good enough, but they came in just like butterflies against this gale. Up and down and sideways and it was tremendous skill needed. I think I luckily had, I think, five or six right and left side, a good right and left at a mallard and teal in the dark. That pleased me very much, a lovely right and left. I had another right and left later on at teal coming in head high.

REPORT FROM HEAD KEEPER SANTOS, NOMBELA, SPAIN

22nd AUGUST 1986

Partridge Count

Over a distance of 80 kms they counted 3,820 partridges. As they always reckon there are more unseen than seen, Santos estimates there should be 8,000 or more birds this year. (TMG advised a count of 3,316 partridges on 19th and 20th August last year). Santos definitely feels they have seen more birds this year.

However, Santos also reported that a few birds (about 100 counted), have died - of the virus you made enquiries about a few years ago. The weather is not so hot now and he thinks the other birds are not in danger of catching anything now.

Santos presently estimates that there will be 6,000 birds to shoot this year, leaving about 3,000 for breeding.

INSTITUTO NACIONAL PARA LA CONSERVACION DE LA NATURALEZA

LICENCIA DE CAZA

CLASE A - 5 8.250 Ptas.

Nuevo Importe Ptas.

7080

N.º provincial

003869 A

Titular

SIR JOSEPH NICHERSON

Edad 12

Población

ROTHWELL

Calle

Rothwell House n.º

PROVINCIA DE RESIDENCIA

LINCOLNSHIRE

Toledo 2 de Octubre de 19 86

EL EXPEDIDOR.

J. Lopez

N.º del D.N.I. o pasaporte

P 370654 E

FOTOGRAFIA

Sólo para menores de 16 años

NOTA.—La identidad del titular deberá acreditarse mediante D. N. I. o Pasaporte.

1987

1986

1985

1984

1983

En. Fb. Mr. Ab. My. Jn. Jl. Ag. Sp. O. Nv. Dic.





There was a lot of room round them in that gale and a lot of people would not have had such a heavy bag, I tell you. Just to spend a lifetime at it. Maybe we can go on a few more years but at this age it is not a tempting promise that the providence will be able to go wildfowling to this extent.

One of the fallow deer got into the barn at the top of the hay and in the headlights of the tractor, as we were coming through the yard, this fallow deer jumped right out, over the top of the gates into the yard, out of the barn. A tremendous sight seen in the headlights. There was a big curlew flight from west to east. There was one sort of cavier golden plover which came from east to west. I did not get a shot at them. I saw two or three redshanks but that is all. There were a lot of gulls. I saw three herons and there was a feed of pheasants, about 80 pheasants I should think in that West End. The widgeon are trying to get in over that main cross bank at the West End and they are feeding out there. I think a hide about 120 yards over that bank would be a good place.

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|------------|--------------|----------|------------------------|
| 21 October | North Ormsby | 8 drives | 67 Partridge 1 Hare |
|------------|--------------|----------|------------------------|

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|------------|---------|--|----------------------|
| 22 October | The Ram | | 16 Mallard 3 Teal |
|------------|---------|--|----------------------|

Anyway, in position at 6.15 at the Ram with a pair of 28 bores, numbers 9 and 10, over and under. Remington cartridges. American size 7 yard shot. You can hardly hear yourself with all the pheasants making such a noise. I do not know whether you will hear them recorded on here. It has suddenly turned very black and the first duck came in at 6.15 - knocked him down, a nice shot, first barrel. It came very dark indeed as we got there at 6.15 - very dark. Oh, I have enjoyed myself, my 28 bores. Shot jolly well, although I say it myself.

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|--|------------|
| 23 October | The Rookery | | 41 Mallard |
|------------|-------------|--|------------|

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|----------------------|--|----------|--|
| 27 October | Nombela | 5 drives | 110 Partridge 200 shots 3 Magpie 1 Azure Winged Magpie |
| M. J.P. Guerlain | Area: La Parilla | | |
| Mme. C. Guerlain | Gaspar | | |
| Lady Nickerson | Valde Prados | | |
| Mr. R.J. Nickerson | La Parrilla | | Warm and sunny |
| Sir Joseph Nickerson | Jardinillos - not to have again because of sun Jarena | | |

| | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|
| 28 October | Nombela | 5 drives | 92 Partridge 195 shots 3 Magpie |
| M. J.P. Guerlain | Area: Los Trozos | | |
| Mme. C. Guerlain | Cerro Pendon | | Warm and sunny |
| Lady Nickerson | Arteson | | |
| Mr. R.J. Nickerson | Los Trozos | | |
| Sir Joseph Nickerson | Rentilla Casa Vidal | | |

An excellent day's sport. First class difficult birds.

| | | | |
|---|---|----------|---|
| 30 October | Nombela | 5 drives | 84 Partridge 187 shots 3 Magpie 1 Jay |
| Lady Nickerson Robert Nickerson Sir Joseph Nickerson | Area: La Rana Don Pedro El Pleito Navarro Valdecarrascosso Viana | | Warm and sunny |
| 1 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 117 Partridge 229 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Senor Manuel Fraga Senor Jose-Antonio Torrontegui Sir Joseph Nickerson | Area: La Heredad Los Banos Las Moreras Pililla Las Casas Cerro El Guarda | | Super weather |
| 2 November | Nombela (Mountains) | 5 drives | 87 Partridge 197 shots 1 Magpie |
| Lady Nickerson Sir Joseph Nickerson | Cantera Trochas Prados Los Riscos Los Riscos II | | Very sunny. Light breeze at times. |

Comment by JN : Not bad going - 44 brace in the morning - only two guns. Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Vittoria, who own the Casa Blanca, came to lunch in the mountains.

3rd November 1986. I jumped out of bed at a quarter to eight. It's surprising how the time went. Will Jacob and Paul Watkins, the new man, gave me massage for forty minutes. I dealt with Dummer and the post and a few shooting invitations, the diaries, and that sort of thing. Lady Nickerson packed up for lunch and we set forth our caravan, set forth at ten past eleven. Sorecos, 1985 Range Rover driven by Will Jacob. Lady Nickerson in the back. I've got three blow up cushions, one round my neck and one on each hip. I've got my darkest spectacles on and my American big peaked cap with a green lining, together with a bush shirt and some lightweight trousers and a pair of not much more than slippers, very comfortable.

Spain is making great strides obviously. A wonderful new road we are on towards Talavera. It cuts across, there is no need to go to Maqueda, it cuts across country and it's a beautiful road. The improvements in the village of Nombela are fantastic. It seems to me that Spain is getting quite a lot of benefit out of the Common Market from the social economic conditions and if we could only get their agricultural surpluses organised more on a national basis there would be more money in the European fund to help these poor countries. They are going to make great strides - I think Spain is going to make great strides in any case.

N O M B E L A K E E P E R S

PEDRO GONZALEZ GARCIA (SANTOS)
Born 13 May 1931 in Nombela

Head Keeper

SEBASTIAN MORON GUTIERREZ (PABLO)
Born 20 January 1927

FRANCISCO BARATAS CABANAS (PACO)
Born 10 October 1931

FLORENTINO MORON GUTIERREZ (TINO)
Born 14 March 1929

JESUS ALONSO GARRIDO
Born 7 November 1945

JOSÉ DELGADO
Born 30 January 1948



Paco, Jesus, Pablo, Tino and Santos

We have come out on the route 5, 7 kilometres south of Maqueda and Talavera is signposted 36 kilometres. We are at a place called Santa Olalla. It's a beautiful morning, really hot, and tremendously bright sunshine. We have left Paul behind to clear up all the kit, clothes and so-on. Manolo is following us in his new Citroen 25 diesel van of which he is very proud. We are not taking his little dogs, he's got a lot of the luggage and we have a journey of 225 miles ahead of us.

There's not much traffic this morning, it's great, it's a Monday morning. I have been coming to shoot here 20 seasons at least. I've never seen the countryside so green. They've had a tremendous lot of rain. There's a hugh new building, a laying battery house for eggs, pig houses and chicken houses are going up here - a lot of capital going in.

They still take these very large flocks of sheep and goats out on the stubbles to clean out anything that's green. I don't know how they are owned, but I think they are owned by various members in the village. They employ shepherds or a shepherd, like in the days of the Bible. There are no hedges and he takes them out and they get what they can and he brings them back into the village at night.

I would describe the traffic to Talavera as heavy, a lot of trucks, quite heavy traffic. Anyway we have cleared the town by 12 noon, that's 50 minutes from departure, 34 miles. The next signpost in front of us is Alapasa, 30 kilometres. First hour, ten past twelve, 43 miles on the clock. Just passing a great big truck of transportation of pigs - they are all those brown pigs, they look a very nice conformation, they look as if they've got ham and a bit of good bacon on them, they are the kind of shape that I like a pig to be. I don't know what they are, or whether they are at all profitable, but they are like a Tamworth but much longer - they are quite a long pig, and they have the money about on some of the farms, they are half wild.

We were shooting in the mountains yesterday, just Lady Nickerson and I, and the first drive on the mountain proper, that's the Holden Wall. I didn't see any magpies on that Holden Wall drive at all and neither did Will. Then we went to the Ram Rock and I shot a very high magpie there with the 50-50, and Lady Nickerson shot a good magpie - there might have been two more. And then the afternoon shoot from the west down on the east, I didn't see any magpie on either of those two drives. I have always thought, I had a suspicion that Jesus was a very good Keeper there and he always wanted to get on the mountains. I congratulated him because I think he is worth encouragement.

There were $8\frac{1}{2}$ of old and $11\frac{1}{2}$ of young on the Ram Rock, the third drive in the morning, $11\frac{1}{2}$ young and $8\frac{1}{2}$ old picked up, so that was very good. There were some young birds reared there, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 ratio is not very good but in that kind of country where there's everything after them it's something, but you haven't a very heavy shootable surplus at $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 1. On the lower ground the majority of the partridges shot looked to be old birds. I think we'll have them sorted and have a quick run through. You can see the young ones without picking them up, it makes you think. They probably lost the first hatch and they nested again and these young ones that are there, you can reckon very probably that a lot of these birds are second broods.

We are passing the Oropesa castle on our left, it really looks lovely against the sky. Still en route aiming for Trujillo, it's 105 kilometres further south. We are getting clear of the traffic now, it's a lovely road surface but it's only two lane. My theory is that they have done better on the higher and drier ground than they have done near the river on the better land.

Well, we have been journeying two hours, we are climbing up the high mountains, we are passing the atomic plants at the river at the bottom near the victory road where we went to see the colonies of vultures. That includes one stop which we had for convenience. We have done very well, virtually 90 miles and we have 125 miles to travel.

1.55 - five minutes to two. We are just leaving our lovely lunch place at the top of the most wonderful view in Spain, probably. A tremendous expanse of country, a tremendous height, and lovely mountain fresh air. You open the windows and it feels lovely and we had a little walk round after lunch, and at five minutes to two we are on the track again.

A wonderful black vulture gave us a splendid solo performance over our heads as we were having our lunch at the top of the mountain. Ten minutes past two - three hours since we started and we've covered 104 miles with only one convenience stop and another stop for lunch. I don't know if it's siesta time or what it is, but 238 kilometres south of Madrid just after ten past two, but there's not so much traffic.

Ten minutes past three, four hours since the wheels moved out of the Castilla Hotel. 162 miles have been covered, a splendid piece of driving - 5 hours, 40 miles an hour, a long lunch and one convenience stop - well done Will! That means we have 63 miles to go.

Ten minutes past four - 212 miles we have covered in five hours exactly, so it's 42 miles an hour including I think the lunch - average 42 miles an hour, excellent!

The left turn off the road on to road C437 - Usagre - he's actually at a garage, very quickly signposted 437 - 17 kilometres from Usagre. You see the Usagre river which is quite jumpable on a fair horse. It's not a big river at all but it says Usagre river a mile before you get there - that prepares you for it - turn left on the 437 actually at the garage.

At Usagre there are some very fine looking pigs running out there, but they are black pigs, totally black, slightly grey but not jet black, but you would call them black pigs.

You arrive at a signpost Llerena Castuera and you take the Castuera, don't go through the village - it's 228 miles on the speedometer of the Range Rover and we are just approaching a grain silo at Valencia de las Tores and our favourite garage man. It's 4.35 p.m., 229 miles in total from the place.

They've now got 17,000 acres here and they rent another five or ten thousand acres just with the shooting and the sheep. They have 6000 lambs in a sheep shed at a time and they have got 10,000 ewes, they look like hybrids, French and Merino, the big parents from what I can make out. Six or seven weeks after they lamb they usually return to service and they get 2.4 lambs per ewe per annum. They are trying to get three crossed in two years. They have the lambs all inside and they take the ewes outside - the ewes run out and when they are first born they run back for an hour's suckling in the morning and an hour's suckling in the evening. I saw the whole performance taking place - the ewes rush in from their trough food supplement, and rush in like an electric train coming in, and the lambs all rush towards the ewes to find their mothers to get their food - it's an extraordinary performance. You can get the equivalent of £55 sterling for these lambs and he's having a good do. He says this land is worth about £300 an acre for sheep and partridges, but of course partridges are worth £50 a brace getting on now and I think they are getting a bird to the acre. They rear 15,000 partridges but that's off about 25,000 acres, including the let land. They are not allowed to kill magpies now.

Alfredo Gomez-Torres thinks by having a short gun he can shoot more quickly and shows his index finger for all to see, bruised to bits. Alfredo Gomez-Torres - 32 grammes of lead, that's 64 grammes at every bird. I know when we have been sorting the game out with these shots somewhere else.

13,000 ewes here now.

They've picked 54 out of 58 claimed. Their handling of the dogs is abominable, two of their dogs were killed when the others sat on them a few weeks ago. They have to throw a stone into a thick bush to try to persuade the dog, or even an ordinary bush with very little cover at all, even the thick grass. They have to throw a stone in to get any of the dogs to go in, and Alfredo couldn't get a dog to retrieve a partridge to him at all. The dog work is disgraceful, there's no other word for it. The whole thing is what it is, it's a different country, it's a different system and if you don't like what happens you have no need to come.

Twelve miles from Torrijos, 12 kilometres from Torrijos to Santa Olalla, and it's 7 kilometres from Olalla to Maqueda, so anything by which it's more than 5 kilometres from Maqueda to Torrijos you gain by cutting across if you are going south. It's 12 miles from Maqueda to Torrijos so you save 7 kilometres by cutting across. The road is equally good, I would say fractionally better.

It's twelve minutes past two as we arrive at the Hotel Castilla, our base in Torrijos on Friday afternoon where we should find Mr. & Mrs. Dummer.

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|----------------------|-------------|----------|----------------|-----------|
| 8 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 100 Partridges | 178 shots |
| | | | 4 Magpie | |
| | | | 1 Starling | |
| Lady Nickerson | Cantera | | | |
| John Denton | Olivos | | | |
| Sir Joseph Nickerson | Casa Blanca | | | |
| | Carcabosso | | | |
| | Gorrional | | | |
| | | | Warm and sunny | |

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|----------------------|-----------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| 9 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 119 Partridges | 221 shots |
| Lady Nickerson | Area: Heredad | | | Warm and sunny |
| John Denton | Santos Finca | | | |
| Sir Joseph Nickerson | Ladera | | | |
| | Huerta El Gacho | | | |
| | Las Moreras | | | |
| | La Pillilla | | | |

Comment by JN on number of partridges - "If I had more birds I would have to invite more guests".

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|----------------------|------------------------|----------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 11 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 123 Partridges | 242 shots |
| Lady Nickerson | Area: Barranco La Nava | | | Cloudy and cooler. |
| Lord Forte | | | | Little rain in afternoon |
| Hon. Rocco Forte | Huerta Jarena | | | |
| Ian Yates | Fuente Alosete | | | |
| Sir Joseph Nickerson | Prado Los Montones | | | |
| | Tomates | | | |
| | Los Regueros | | | |

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|--|--|----------|-----------------------------|--|
| 12 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 134 Partridges 2 Jays | 254 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Lord Forte Hon. Rocco Forte Ian Yates Sir Joseph Nickerson | Area: Arroyo La Parra Rentilla Casa Vidal Finca Carlos Valde Menares Granja Sucia | | | Cloudy start to day but sunny later |
| 3 drives before lunch. The Forte party left after lunch. JN, IRY and Lady Nickerson continued for 5th drive. | | | | |
| 14 November | Nombela | 4 drives | 53 Partridges | 134 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Mr. W. Gubelmann Mrs. W. Gubelmann Ian Yates Sir Joseph Nickerson | Area: Parilla El Bajaroso La Parilla La Cabana Cerro El Guarda Regueros Lecheros | | | Cloudy and dry in morning. Rained heavily in afternoon. |
| 15 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 120 Partridges 12 Magpie | 217 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Mr. W. Gubelmann Mrs. W. Gubelmann Ian Yates Sir Joseph Nickerson | Cerro Pendon Arteson Los Trozos El Pino Caleros | | | |
| 16 November | Camarena | 5 drives | 87 Partridges | 165 shots |
| Fernando Tapia Alfonso De Hohenlohe Luis De Rojas Principe Adan Sir Joseph Nickerson Lady Nickerson Juan Mojardi Jose M. Arburua D. Alfonso Juan C. Fierro Jaime Ibarra Sicre | | | | |

JN Comment: This shoot of 5000 hectares - they shoot 10 days and get 6000 partridges per season. They used to shoot 10,000 partridges. They have 5 Keepers.

1986

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|--|---|----------|--|-----------|
| 19 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 123 Partridges 4 Magpie | 238 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Sir Joseph Nickerson | Area: Rana El Pleito Navarro Valde Carrascoso Valdeprados Gaspar | | Cloudy, dry, but cooler | |
| 20 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 129 Partridges 8 Jays 8 Magpie 1 Pigeon | 253 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Sir Joseph Nickerson | Cerro Elguarda Valdeaguila Regueros Lecheros Tomate | | Dry and sunny | |
| 22 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 146 Partridges 1 Magpie 2 Athene Noctua | 275 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Sir Joseph Nickerson | Huerto El Gacho Ladera Casa Blanca Granja Sucia Valde Menares | | Strong wind | |
| 23 November | Nombela | 5 drives | 110 Partridges 3 Magpie | 224 shots |
| Lady Nickerson Sir Joseph Nickerson | Los Riscos Olivos Trochas El Pino Caleros | | Dry, sunny, a little cooler | |

Comment by JN on 24th November 1986 : What we are apt to forget is that the Guardas in Spain really are guards. They really spend a lot of time guarding the shoot. They can't be judged by Rothwell standards.

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|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| 26 November | Hambleton | 5 drives | 61 Pheasant | 121 shots |
| The pegs were set out far enough apart - excellent. | | | | |
| 27 November | Ram Pond | Evening flight | 3 Teal 27 Mallard | |
| 28 November | Reads Island | Evening flight | 2 Teal 1 Golden Plover | |
| 29 November | Tealby/Rothwell | 6 drives | 153 Pheasant | 216 shots |
| | 3 drives Tealby 3 drives Rothwell | | | |
| 29 November | Black Springs | Evening flight | 3 Mallard | |
| 1 December | South Pickenham | 4 drives | 49 Pheasant 2 Woodcock | 78 shots |

We left Pickenham at 2.10 p.m. Just make a note of how long it takes to get to London. I did not shoot in the afternoon. George Graham was very well. I slept a lot of the way. We got on to the north end of Baker Street at 4.19, that is two hours and 9 minutes. We have been in Baker Street 7 minutes now and are just coming out to Marks & Spencers.

I used my 28 bores this morning, a good effect. I killed 49 pheasants. There were 7 guns, including David Wigan, Kenneth Keith, Edward Trafford. We had 270 at lunch. He put 3000 red posts down, sometimes he puts 4, but this year he has put 3. Luckily there was a good wind. They were not bad. I killed 20 pheasants the first drive. I was pleased about that - about 34 shots.

There were a lot of woodcock in the hazel. They were difficult to shoot at. I killed one stone dead, very well behind me. I waited for it to get safe over the top of an oak tree. There must have been 9 or 10 woodcock in there. I saw a "Montjack Deer" - that is the furthest away from Bedford that I have seen one I reckon..

There really were very low pheasant down in the hazel and Guy said to me afterwards how well they had flown. He is wonderful really, nobody likes him - extraordinary! But of course, my pheasants at Tugdale, even though he had been shooting well 10 years ago, he would pretend not to see them and he would put his gun up.

I've now been to Los Quintos since they first started. They started the place in 1975 and they got it operational for shooting in 1976 when we came, so we have been for eleven consecutive seasons, 76/86. That's a very long time. We've spent one per cent of our lives in there during the last eleven years, an average of 3½ days a year, is 1%. It really is a wonderful place for all kinds of eagles and harriers, buzzards and vultures, plus hawks and falcons - everything you can possibly imagine - cranes, big herons flying over.

There is some triticale which they grazed two or three times with the sheep, they irrigate that then they take a fodder crop from it for the sheep, but generally speaking the sheep are just ranging about all over the place. If it's dry like it is now they will have to buy a lot of imported food.

I would like to consider renting Blanc's shoot at Guedea. He's advertising it and I would like to find out what the form is - remind me.

At the house at Los Quintos, 19 miles from the house, C437 just through the Usagre. This is the absolute truth, as is everything else that I record. Just before we got to Los Quintos I said to Will Jacob, the lowest that they will get away with, with offering me a chance to shoot and me actually shooting, will be as many days as a driver year.

We are now on the 432 after 30 minutes from N432, 30 minutes from Los Quintos.

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|------------|-------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| 4 November | Los Quintos | 3 drives | 173 Partridges 1 Rabbit | 309 shots |
| 5 November | Los Quintos | 3 drives | 136 Partridges | 242 shots |
| 6 November | Los Quintos | Morning flight | 58 Mallard | |

6th November. Got up at twenty to six. I just had comfortable time. Had my breakfast brought up the night before, laid it in my bedroom. Left the house at 6.30 with Will Jacob and Manolo, down to the favourite place that I like so much that Alfredo pinched from me last year.

We are in the dark and there were swarms of duck dived in - I've never seen anything like it, bees round a honeypot, whatever you like to describe it as, huge quantity of mallard coming in. I had a few shots but it was too dark and it wasn't until thirteen minutes past seven that I was able to connect with the first duck. I think we've rather too many decoys out, we must have 50 I should think and they are 50 yards from one end to the other approximately and I think that's too far. Anyway the eagles are flying about.

It's now 7.45 and I've killed 21 mallard - I got three out of one lot, I had two rights and lefts, but I was not shooting as well as I should like to, I just had a very bad miss. I think I must have been in front of them. I have definitely been in front of them. I just shot three here with a change of guns, a very difficult rifle with the last two shots, and I think I have been in front of them, in fact I'm sure I have.

You can see the sun shining on the clouds higher up where there is a very steep ravine on one side and we are not in the sun at all, but the sun's on the lovely cloud - there's no prettier sight of these ducks coming over the top of that cliff and diving there in the water.

Two minutes to eight and killed 26 duck. There's been about ten minutes when I sent Manolo out of the hide, 100 yards or so down the water to flush everything off that has settled at that end. So far he's worked alright, he's got one drake off, and a big packet he put up between us and only got one out of them.

Ten past eight, we've got 29 ducks. For 35 minutes there's almost been nothing happening. 40 ducks at 8.30. We started to let them come in, 4 threes altogether now. Just got a pair, pop pop - missed, and changed guns and got one, so I got both of them - 42 duck on the counter now at twenty to nine. Still only 45 ducks and we haven't got another shot. At six minutes to nine, that's very good for a morning drive but not for this place, the worst since I have been coming.

Twenty past nine - 52 ducks, and the sun isn't on the hide yet, just coming over the top of the cliff. Ten past ten and Will Jacob has just set off to get the Range Rover. We had a Keeper on a horse come to look at us a few minutes ago, so that's three hours since the first shot, virtually nothing has happened for a long time. 5 green plover flying over. We've had buzzards, eagles, all kinds of things have flown over us this morning. Quite a flight of wood pigeons across the top of the cliff the other side of the river from us.

Twenty past ten, the sun is over the top of the cliff and how bright it is! It's been quite cold and I have been glad to put on my Spanish green coat. Took off my English green thin cotton coat and put on this thick Spanish green coat. I am very pleased with it. The difference between Cashmere jerseys and ordinary lambswool, you can tell when you haven't got them. It's been quite cold this morning despite the fact that I've got my goose on.

Crossing the river Usagre 30 minutes after leaving Los Quintos. I guessed I should kill 365 head the number of days on the way there, in the event I killed 309 partridges, 58 ducks and one rabbit, so I was 3 out.

We made the Zafra hotel in 40 minutes on the N630. We've been travelling two hours on our return journey from Los Quintos. A convenience stop for about three minutes. We've covered 101 miles in two hours so that's absolutely excellent. 144, twelve dozen miles from the Los Quintos house to the eagle and vulture view where we have just had lunch. We arrived at five to twelve and we are leaving at twelve twenty. We have seen a black vulture and we have seen five eagles, and we have had lunch in twenty five minutes, and it's a beautiful view. Now we are going on.

We have just crossed the river Tajo which flows from Toledo to Lisbon - a lovely river. We crossed at a point where colonies of vultures nest.

We are approaching Talavera about seven or eight miles away. We've done 200 miles from Los Quintos and altogether it's five and a half hours since we left Los Quintos - nearly five and a half, we stopped half an hour one way and another, that's five hours. That's four hours travelling, 200 miles, an average of 50 miles an hour while the wheels have been moving and this is marvellous.

There was hardly a magpie at Los Quintos but I think that's because they don't live in that part of Spain; apart from the good keeping I don't think they have ever lived there in quantity. There are no rooks, jackdaws or crows hardly there, there are not so many of those in what I have seen of Spain.

I've never known ducks so keen to get in to a place in the dark, it was really dark. They were coming in the air and there must have been hundreds trying to get in there but it was too dark to shoot at them. I kept having a try but I didn't get one until thirteen minutes past seven. They were really swarming in which was exceptional in my whole life really. I think we ought to put that in the book, and all these things want typing out and eventually getting among the papers for my book file.





1986

Well, it is 4.30 - 2 hours and 20 minutes. We are just going past the Brazilian Embassy in Green Street. We are just coming into the tube cars at the Dorchester at 4.33. George has driven very well and I slept a lot of the way.

I saw a red squirrel at the first drive at Pickenham. A long time since I saw one, many, many years.

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|-------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 3 December | Hairs Pond | Evening flight | 10 Teal 6 Mallard |
| 4 December | Stainton-le-Vale | 7 drives | 52 Pheasant 96 shots 1 Partridge 2 Pigeon |
| 5 December | Ram Pond | Evening flight | 20 Mallard 2 Teal |
| 6 December | Rothwell | 5 drives | 267 Pheasant 1 Pigeon |
| 8 December | Tealby | 6 drives | 92 Pheasant 1 Moorhen |
| 9 December | Rothwell | 4 drives | 210 Pheasant |
| 10 December | Otby/Normanby Single gun | 4 drives Otby 2 drives Normanby | 29 Pheasant 1 Mallard 2 Moorhen 2 Hares |
| 11 December | Cuxwold | 7 drives | 18 Pheasant |

Well, it seems very cold this morning and very wet. We have managed to kill 10 head. Very difficult birds. There is an absolute gale and pheasants are going everywhere.

1986/87

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|-------------|-----------------|----------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 13 December | Gatcombe Park | 8 drives | 12 Pheasant 1 Jay 1 Rook | 24 shots |
| 15 December | Charlton Abbots | 5 drives | 33 Pheasant 3 Mallard 1 Moorhen | |
| 16 December | Charlton Abbots | 5 drives | 84 Pheasant 1 Woodcock 1 Pigeon | |

We left Westwood, Gloucestershire, at 4 o'clock precisely. We stopped for petrol with Will Jacob with a Land Rover. Anyway, the Bentley, driven by George - 181 miles in 3 hours. We are just getting on to the M18, including the stop - fantastic! 60 miles an hour.

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|-------------|--|---|---|-----------|
| 17 December | Rothwell | 5 drives | 213 Pheasant 1 Rabbit 1 Pigeon | |
| 18 December | Rothwell | 2 drives Half day only | 270 Pheasant | 419 shots |
| 20 December | Rothwell | 5 drives Half day only JN and Rosie | 87 Pheasant | |
| 27 December | Rothwell | 5 drives | 89 Pheasant 1 Woodcock 2 Pigeon 1 Magpie | |
| 29 December | Tealby/Rothwell Morning Tealby Afternoon Roman Holes | 6 drives | 109 Pheasant 3 Woodcock 2 Rabbit | |

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|--|-----------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 31 December | Tealby | 6 drives | 84 Pheasant | |
| 2 January | Somersby | 5 drives | 36 Pheasant 2 Woodcock 1 Pigeon | |
| 3 January | Rothwell | 6 drives | 188 Pheasant 2 Pigeon 1 Collared Dove 1 Moorhen | |
| 5 January | Rothwell | 4 drives Half day only | 88 Pheasant | |
| 10 January | Rothwell | 5 drives Half day only | 151 Pheasant 1 Pigeon 1 Woodcock | 262 shots |
| 12 January | Rothwell | 3 drives Half day only | 112 Pheasant | |
| 17 January | Rothwell | 5 drives | 250 Pheasant 2 Pigeon | |
| 19 January | Tealby/Rothwell | 3 drives Tealby 2 drives Rothwell | 122 Pheasant | 151 shots |
| On Monday, 19th January, I killed 120 pheasants - 150 shots with 28 bore. Felt quite pleased with myself. I picked out the good birds. | | | | |
| 20 January | Rothwell | 5 drives | 146 Pheasant 1 Pigeon 1 Moorhen | 226 shots |

1987

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| 23 January | Rothwell | 5 drives | 301 Pheasant | 410 shots |
| 24 January | Rothwell | 7 drives | 131 Pheasant 1 Moorhen | |
| 26 January | Tealby | 6 drives | 70 Pheasant 2 Moorhen | |
| 27 January | Rothwell | 6 drives | 214 Pheasant | |
| 29 January | Rothwell | 6 drives | 113 Pheasant 1 Mallard | |
| 31 January | Tealby/Rothwell | 5 drives Tealby 2 drives Roman Holes | 102 Pheasant 3 Woodcock 2 Moorhen 1 Pigeon | |



LINCOLNSHIRE VERMIN KILL - 1986

| SPECIES | JAN | FEB | MAR | APL | MAY | JNE | JULY | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | TOTAL FOR 1986 |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|
| Crow | 1 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 58 |
| Hedgehog | - | - | 1 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 23 | 20 | 13 | 2 | - | 82 |
| Mole | 7 | - | 48 | 40 | 8 | 17 | 3 | 1 | 21 | 29 | - | 8 | 182 |
| Rat | 34 | 20 | 58 | 41 | 25 | 13 | 17 | 38 | 45 | 78 | 71 | 41 | 481 |
| Rook | 1 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 7 | - | 7 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 60 |
| Stoat | 6 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 14 | 13 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 87 |
| Squirrell | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 20 |
| Tab | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 31 |
| Toby | 1 | - | 4 | 7 | 14 | - | 8 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 5 | - | 55 |
| Weasel | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 70 |
| Moorhen | 17 | 52 | 11 | 9 | 14 | 2 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 12 | 18 | 162 |
| Feral Pgn | 121 | 606 | 7 | 15 | 9 | 6 | 5 | - | 1 | - | 3 | 13 | 786 |
| Coot | 2 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 4 | - | 8 | 3 | - | - | 3 | 43 |
| Jay | - | 1 | - | - | 3 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| BB Gull | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 16 | 6 | - | 2 | 1 | 3 | 31 |
| Jackdaw | - | 8 | 2 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 4 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 35 |
| Magpie | - | - | 4 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 37 |
| Brock | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 5 |
| TOTALS | 194 | 712 | 163 | 159 | 134 | 76 | 108 | 131 | 142 | 168 | 131 | 116 | 2234 |

LINCOLNSHIRE VERMIN KILL - 1986

| KEEPERS | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUNE | JLY | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | TOTAL |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Frankish | 30 | 53 | 26 | 44 | 57 | 22 | 11 | 20 | 18 | 36 | 28 | 36 | 381 |
| Hewson | 13 | 54 | 27 | 34 | 25 | 9 | 12 | 6 | 26 | 17 | 14 | 19 | 256 |
| Clay | 10 | 30 | 30 | 29 | 22 | 27 | 30 | 35 | 34 | 43 | 26 | 12 | 328 |
| Martin | 141 | 575 | 80 | 52 | 30 | 18 | 22 | 40 | 23 | 41 | 43 | 31 | 1096 |
| Wolsey | - | - | - | - | - | - | 33 | 30 | 41 | 31 | 20 | 18 | 173 |
| TOTALS | 194 | 712 | 163 | 159 | 134 | 76 | 108 | 131 | 142 | 168 | 131 | 116 | 2234 |

TOTAL HEAD FOR 1986 : 2234

1986

NOMBELA VERMIN KILL - 1986

| SPECIES | JAN | FEB | MARCH | APL | MAY | JUNE | JLY | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | TOTAL FOR 1986 |
|----------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|
| FOX | 6 | 3 | 3 | 14 | - | 6 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 58 |
| CAT | 6 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 15 | 11 | 1 | 7 | 12 | 6 | 2 | 83 |
| WILD CAT | 2 | 5 | 3 | - | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 19 |
| BADGER | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| WEASEL | 3 | 14 | 48 | 29 | 14 | 3 | 3 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 116 |
| HEDGEHOG | 1 | 2 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 24 | 7 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 68 |
| MAGPIE | 112 | 126 | 158 | 156 | 45 | 135 | 207 | 110 | 81 | 184 | 176 | 106 | 1596 |
| CROW | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 9 |
| LIZARD | - | - | 22 | 39 | 124 | 141 | 53 | 14 | 1 | 3 | 2 | - | 399 |
| RAT | 55 | 206 | 564 | 446 | 168 | 44 | 41 | 22 | 45 | 18 | 16 | 31 | 1656 |
| SNAKE | 3 | 8 | 38 | 45 | 98 | 100 | 56 | 27 | 25 | 22 | 16 | 3 | 441 |
| TOTALS | 189 | 368 | 850 | 744 | 471 | 470 | 395 | 178 | 165 | 243 | 220 | 152 | 4445 |

| SIR JOSEPH NICKERSON - PERSONAL BAG | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---|---|---|---|---|--------|
| SPECIES | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | | | | | | TOTAL |
| RED GROUSE | 3,012 | 1,866 | 1,437 | 2,677 | 1,382 | | | | | | 10,374 |
| PHEASANT | 4,621 | 6,206 | 5,422 | 4,744 | 3,979 | | | | | | 24,972 |
| PARTRIDGE | 3,140 | 2,273 | 947 | 2,741 | 2,318 | | | | | | 11,419 |
| SHIPE | 35 | 20 | 10 | 9 | 4 | | | | | | 78 |
| WOODCOCK | 43 | 45 | 31 | 10 | 13 | | | | | | 142 |
| CURLEW | 7 | | | | | | | | | | 7 |
| WATERHEN | 17 | 18 | 21 | 8 | 11 | | | | | | 75 |
| MALLARD | 636 | 444 | 348 | 331 | 398 | | | | | | 2,157 |
| TEAL | 258 | 847 | 221 | 191 | 160 | | | | | | 1,677 |
| MISC. WEBBED FOOT | 37 | 183 | 45 | 18 | 33 | | | | | | 316 |
| MAGPIE | 20 | 35 | 6 | 53 | 46 | | | | | | 160 |
| JAY | 17 | 16 | 4 | 9 | 12 | | | | | | 58 |
| WOODPIGEON | 131 | 66 | 110 | 139 | 27 | | | | | | 473 |
| GOLDEN PLOVER | 3 | 6 | 1 | | 3 | | | | | | 13 |
| BLACK GAME | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| QUAIL (U.S.A.) | | 5 | 16 | 39 | | | | | | | 60 |
| VARIOUS | 8 | 12 | 10 | 17 | 5 | | | | | | 52 |
| HARE | 29 | 9 | 12 | 7 | 13 | | | | | | 70 |
| RABBIT | 7 | 12 | 15 | 14 | 4 | | | | | | 52 |
| WILD BOAR | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| TURTLE DOVE (MOROCCO) | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| TOTAL | 12,022 | 12,063 | 8,656 | 11,007 | 8,408 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 52,156 |

| SIR JOSEPH NICKERSON - PERSONAL BAG - SUMMARY | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---------|
| SPECIES | 1942/51 | 1952/61 | 1962/71 | 1972/81 | 1982/86 | | | | | | TOTAL |
| RED GROUSE | 982 | 4,282 | 8,625 | 13,938 | 10,374 | | | | | | 38,201 |
| PHEASANT | 5,482 | 21,455 | 33,007 | 35,984 | 24,972 | | | | | | 120,900 |
| PARTRIDGE | 7,099 | 12,505 | 9,148 | 16,110 | 11,419 | | | | | | 56,281 |
| SHIPE | 86 | 113 | 196 | 104 | 78 | | | | | | 577 |
| WOODCOCK | 179 | 322 | 312 | 315 | 142 | | | | | | 1,270 |
| CURLEW | 88 | 118 | 7 | 59 | 7 | | | | | | 279 |
| WATERHEN | 219 | 425 | 308 | 130 | 75 | | | | | | 1,157 |
| MALLARD | 521 | 1,894 | 2,945 | 3,877 | 2,157 | | | | | | 11,394 |
| TEAL | 244 | 808 | 160 | 662 | 1,677 | | | | | | 3,551 |
| MISC. WEBBED FOOT | 400 | 522 | 107 | 276 | 316 | | | | | | 1,621 |
| MAGPIE | 7 | 0 | 26 | 191 | 160 | | | | | | 384 |
| JAY | 21 | 20 | 75 | 95 | 58 | | | | | | 269 |
| WOODPIGEON | 524 | 2,900 | 2,092 | 1,144 | 473 | | | | | | 7,133 |
| GOLDEN PLOVER | 111 | 86 | 19 | 14 | 13 | | | | | | 243 |
| BLACK GAME | 3 | 11 | 7 | 20 | 1 | | | | | | 42 |
| QUAIL (U.S.A.) | 0 | 4 | 8 | 610 | 60 | | | | | | 682 |
| VARIOUS | 1,060 | 242 | 176 | 152 | 52 | | | | | | 1,682 |
| HARE | 2,272 | 3,607 | 1,026 | 508 | 70 | | | | | | 7,483 |
| RABBIT | 3,150 | 1,195 | 399 | 249 | 52 | | | | | | 5,045 |
| WILD BOAR | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 0 | | | | | | 35 |
| TURTLE DOVE (MOROCCO) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 530 | 0 | | | | | | 530 |
| TOTAL | 22,448 | 50,509 | 58,643 | 75,003 | 52,156 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 258,759 |

ICC
24/3/87

1986

SUMMARY OF SIR JOSEPH'S PERSONAL BAG AT NOMBELA, LOS QUINTOS AND CAMARENA
AND GRAND TOTAL BAG FOR SPAIN 1986

| Date | Part | Cum Total | Pgn | Jay | Magpie | Mallard | Rabbit | Other | Total | Cum Total | Shots | Cum Total |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|--------|---------|--------|-------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|
| 27 Oct | 110 | 110 | | | 3 | | | 1 | 114 | 114 | 200 | 200 |
| 28 Oct | 92 | 202 | | | 3 | | | | 95 | 209 | 195 | 395 |
| 30 Oct | 84 | 286 | | 1 | 3 | | | | 88 | 297 | 187 | 582 |
| 1 Nov | 117 | 403 | | | | | | | 117 | 414 | 229 | 811 |
| 2 Nov | 87 | 490 | | | 1 | | | | 88 | 502 | 197 | 1008 |
| 4 Nov | 173 Los Quintos | 663 Los Quintos | | | | | 1 | | 174 | 676 | 309 | 1317 |
| 5 Nov | 136 Los Quintos | 799 Los Quintos | | | | | | | 136 | 812 | 242 | 1559 |
| 6 Nov | Los Quintos | Los Quintos | | | | 58 | | | 58 | 870 | | |
| 8 Nov | 100 | 899 | | | 4 | | | 1 | 105 | 975 | 178 | 1737 |
| 9 Nov | 119 | 1018 | | | | | | | 119 | 1094 | 221 | 1958 |
| 11 Nov | 123 | 1141 | | | | | | | 123 | 1217 | 242 | 2200 |
| 12 Nov | 134 | 1275 | | 2 | | | | | 136 | 1353 | 254 | 2454 |
| 14 Nov | 53 | 1328 | | | | | | | 53 | 1406 | 134 | 2588 |
| 15 Nov | 120 | 1448 | | | 12 | | | | 132 | 1538 | 217 | 2805 |
| 16 Nov | 87 Camarena | 1535 Camarena | | | | | | | 87 | 1625 | 165 | 2970 |
| 19 Nov | 123 | 1658 | | | 4 | | | | 127 | 1752 | 238 | 3208 |
| 20 Nov | 129 | 1787 | 1 | 8 | 8 | | | | 146 | 1898 | 253 | 3461 |
| 22 Nov | 146 | 1933 | | | 1 | | | 2 | 149 | 2047 | 275 | 3736 |
| 23 Nov | 110 | 2043 | | | 3 | | | | 113 | 2160 | 224 | 3960 |
| TOTALS 19 days | 2043 | | 1 | 11 | 42 | 58 | 1 | 4 | 2160 | | 3960 | |
| GRAND TOTAL | 2043 | | 1 | 11 | 42 | 58 | 1 | 4 | 2160 | | | |

1986

SUMMARY OF SIR JOSEPH'S SHOOTING IN SPAIN - 1986 SEASON

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------|------------|
| 15 days at Nombela | Partridge | 1647 | 3244 shots |
| | Magpie | 42 | |
| | Jay | 11 | |
| | Starling | 1 | |
| | Azure Winged Magpie | 1 | |
| | Pigeon | 1 | |
| | Athene Noctua | 2 | |
| | | — | |
| | 1705 | — | |
| 3 days at Los Quintos | Partridge | 309 | 551 shots |
| | Rabbit | 1 | |
| | Mallard | 58 | |
| | | — | |
| | 368 | — | |
| 1 day at Camarena | Partridge | 87 | 165 shots |
| | | — | |
| | 87 | — | |

GROUSE BAG - SPLIT BETWEEN THE MOORS

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Reeth | 884 |
| Stublick | 122 |
| Wemmergill | 254 |
| Holwick | 36 |
| Stean | 12 |
| Muggleswick | 74 |

Partridges UK

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Rothwell | 15 |
| North Ormsby | 195 |
| As Guest | 65 |

Pheasants UK

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Rothwell/Tealby | 3605 |
| As Guest | 374 |

Partridges Spain

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Nombela | 1647 |
| Los Quintos | 309 |
| Camarena | 87 |



SIR JOSEPH'S PERSONAL BAG - 1st FEBRUARY 1986 TO 1st FEBRUARY 1987

UNITED KINGDOM

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Grouse | 1382 |
| Partridge | 275 |
| Pheasant | 3979 |
| Snipe | 4 |
| Woodcock | 13 |
| Golden Plover | 3 |
| Moorhen | 11 |
| Mallard | 340 |
| Teal | 160 |
| Widgeon | 31 |
| Tufted Duck | 2 |
| Pigeon | 26 |
| Collared Dove | 1 |
| Jay | 1 |
| Rook | 1 |
| Magpie | 3 |
| Hare | 13 |
| Rabbit | 3 |
| <u>Total Bag</u> | <u>6248</u> |

SPAIN

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Partridge | 2043 |
| Mallard | 58 |
| Athene Noctua | 2 |
| Magpie | 42 |
| Jay | 11 |
| Pigeon | 1 |
| Azure Winged Magpie | 1 |
| Starling | 1 |
| Rabbit | 1 |
| <u>Total Bag</u> | <u>2160</u> |

GRAND TOTAL BAG : 8408

SIR JOSEPH'S PERSONAL BAG - 1986 SEASONROTHWELL PIGEON SHOOT

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Pigeon | 10 |
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 10 |

READS ISLAND

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Mallard | 2 |
| Teal | 70 |
| Widgeon | 5 |
| Golden Plover | 3 |
| Snipe | 1 |
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 81 |

THE ROOKERY

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Mallard | 41 |
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 41 |

TEALBY LAKE

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Mallard | 16 |
| Teal | 4 |
| Tufted Duck | 2 |
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 22 |

HAIRS POND

| | |
|---------|----|
| Mallard | 33 |
| Teal | 28 |
| Magpie | 2 |

| | |
|------------------|----|
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 63 |
|------------------|----|

BLACK SPRINGS

| | |
|---------|----|
| Mallard | 34 |
|---------|----|

| | |
|------------------|----|
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 34 |
|------------------|----|

RAM POND

| | |
|---------|-----|
| Mallard | 107 |
| Teal | 15 |

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| <u>Total Bag</u> | 122 |
|------------------|-----|

Science report

Wintering birds lost in Sahel drought

By a Special Correspondent

Many British birds wintering in Africa have been lost because of the drought in the Sahel zone which has caused such horrific human suffering.

Two ornithologists, Chris Mead and Bob Hudson, summarizing the data in *Ringing and Migration*, show that four species, Sedge Warbler, Whitethroat, Turtle Dove and Yellow Wagtail, which all spend the winter in the drought-stricken area, were ringed in far fewer numbers in 1984 than usual, between 22 and 36 per cent down.

The number of Spotted Flycatchers, which use the region as a refuelling stop en route from South Africa to Europe, was 20 per cent below normal. Other species such as the Willow Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and Tree Pipit which winter outside the area were ringed in numbers similar to previous years or a little higher.

The Sand Martin is particularly affected by Sahel droughts and has been decreasing since the early seventies. It was done again and the

population in Britain and Ireland is now only 5 per cent of that of the mid-sixties.

A species on the up in the list of ringing totals is the Siskin, a small finch. More than 8,000 were ringed in 1984 compared with 4,000 in 1983 and 3,000 in 1982. The increase is said to be because the species has become attracted to peanuts hung up in net-bags — especially red ones.

Its usual food is the seeds of alder and birch. But as these run low later in the winter, large numbers now come in to gardens, attracted by the nouvelle cuisine, where they are easily caught by licensed bird ringers.

The vast majority of the Siskins are caught in the South of Britain from January to March. By the summer they are back in their main breeding grounds in the north of Britain and in north and east Europe.

A bird ringed near Virginia Water on April 4 was found in Finland on April 30, 1,735 kilometres north-east. Another caught at Kabli, Estonia, in

September 1983 was retrapped by a ringer in Dorking the following March, 1760 kilometres to the south-west.

During 1984 the one millionth Blackbird was ringed under the British Trust for Ornithology's ringing scheme, only the second species to reach this mark after the Blue Tit. More than 40,000 blackbirds have been recovered after ringing, a rate of 3.76 per cent. The highest recovery rate is for the Mute Swan with more than 1 in 3 found subsequently and the lowest, 1 in 400, for the Willow Warbler.

Long-distance movements are detailed for many birds, including two Manx Shearwaters ringed on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, and shot by a biologist 35 miles off the coast of North Carolina while on their way down the Gulf Stream to winter in the South Atlantic. They were at least 18 and 20 years old when "collected" for research.

A White-Tailed Eagle ringed in Germany was shot in

Norfolk despite being a specially protected species; a Grey Plover went from Norfolk to the Canary Islands and a Snipe ringed as a chick on a Hebridean island was shot in the Azores the following November, 2560 kilometres south.

The first British ringed House Martin ever found south of the Sahara was reported from Nigeria in 1984 but the post office there misread London for Louzon and it took five months to reach the British Museum by way of Manila.

Eleven species have now been found to live for more than 20 years and a Razorbill and an Eider Duck, each 25 years old, were reported in the year. Another longevity record was claimed by a Blue Tit which was ringed as an adult bird in 1972 (therefore hatched in 1970 or earlier) and found again in July 1984, so becoming the oldest Blue Tit yet discovered amongst the 1,280,784 ringed to date.

Source: *Ringing and Migration*, Vol 6, pp 125 to 172.

In my gallery &

Book material

THE TIMES. JUNE 1986

