

# MEMBER LIBRARY

## ALONZO BARTON HEPBURN — Banker, Philanthropist, Sportsman



Theodore J. Holsten  
EMERITUS MEMBER  
Boone and Crockett Club

Alonzo Barton Hepburn was born in upstate New York in 1846, a descendent of Scottish immigrants. Living in the foothills of the Adirondacks, he learned early to love

the outdoors. Boating, fishing, and hunting became second nature to him. At the age of seven, he was the proud owner of a three-and-one-half pound muzzle-loading shotgun. Chipmunks and red squirrels were his targets, soon to be followed by bigger game as he grew older.

Hepburn graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont, and was a professor of mathematics at St. Lawrence University, before practicing law in his hometown of Colton, New York. He became active in politics and was instrumental in developing legislation governing interstate commerce. He became an authority on coinage and currency and was appointed to the national post as comptroller of the currency by President Benjamin Harrison. Active in banking, he went on to

become president and later chairman of Chase National Bank.

Throughout his life, Hepburn found time for big-game hunting in the American West and in Canada. He finally was able to fit an African safari into his busy schedule. In 1913, he and a group of friends took four months for an extensive safari in British East Africa. It is described in his book, *The Story of an Outing*. His outfitter was the highly regarded professional hunter, R.J. Cuninghame.

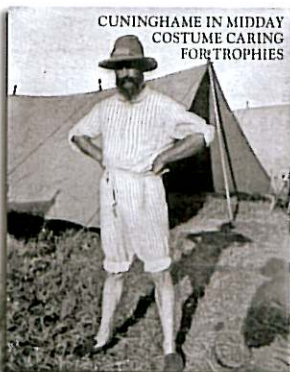
Hepburn and his friends secured a variety of big game in a countryside that was still teeming with wildlife. An interesting note is that his rifle of preference was a Remington Model 8 autoloader in .35 Remington. With it, he secured lions, buffaloes, crocodiles, and other big game. He said: "Personally, for dangerous game, I want an automatic rifle, so that the whole magazine will be at my fingers' end without the delay of working a bolt or lever action."

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One of the most interesting anecdotes in Hepburn's book concerns an experience by one of his companions, hunting lions from a *boma*. The *boma* consists of a circle of thick branches cut from surrounding trees, the center of which is large enough to hold a hunter and his gun-bearer. About 15 feet from the *boma*, a bait (usually a dead zebra) is placed. Shooting is done through a small opening in the *boma*, often in the dark, firing in the direction of the lion. Hepburn's friend, lying down for a rest late at night, rose up to check the opening only to find himself face-to-face with a lioness six inches away. A quick shot, a wait until dawn, and a blood trail to secure a wounded lion followed, for an exciting experience!

Alonzo Hepburn was involved in many posts relating to his expertise in banking and currency. He wrote extensively on these matters. He belonged to many clubs and honorary societies, including Camp Fire Club and Boone and Crockett Club.

He was a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation and an active philanthropist. He donated funds for the construction of a library at St. Lawrence University and at several schools with which he had an interest. Hepburn died in 1922. ■



CUNINGHAME IN MIDDAY COSTUME CARING FOR TROPHIES



HEPBURN (left) HOLDING HIS REMINGTON AUTOLOADING RIFLE



THE KING OF BEASTS



CELEBRATING THE KILLING OF MY LION