

MEMBER LIBRARY

ARTHUR C. POPHAM – Attorney, Hunter, Conservationist



Theodore J. Holsten
EMERITUS MEMBER
Boone and Crockett Club

“I saw a line of six rams moving to our right along the opposite canyon wall. They were heading for a notch in the rim close ahead of them. Quickly, I slipped my arm through the gun sling and dropped

prone. ...The sheep took alarm. They started running, raced through the cleft and disappeared. Just as I started to my feet in chagrin, a magnificent ram, evidently the leader, ran up onto a skyline crag across the canyon. There on that rocky turret he poised, quartering toward us, curling horns lifted high, as he searched for the danger. . . . Automatically, then, the crosshairs settled on the top of his shoulder, the finger squeezed. At the rifle’s crash, the ram collapsed and pitched off the cliff dead, struck down by a one-hundred-fifty-grain thunderbolt.”

This excerpt was taken from Art Popham’s story of his first sheep hunt in August 1935. He titled it “A Ram from Inferno.” It was a hunting trip made with his friend, Jack O’Connor, who was also his professor at the University of Arizona. The

hunt took place in the blazing Mexican heat because both of them had to return to school for the fall semester.

Art Popham’s association with Jack O’Connor was more than coincidental. After his freshman year at the New Mexico Military Institute, he transferred to the University of Arizona, mainly because he wanted to study journalism under an English professor named Jack O’Connor! Jack soon had cause to be proud of his student, when Art had an article published in *Field and Stream*.

Sharing their mutual interest in guns and hunting, Popham and O’Connor made many hunting trips together in Arizona and Mexico where they hunted Coues’ deer, elk, and other big game. Jack’s wife Eleanor frequently accompanied them, and Art enjoyed a lifelong friendship with the O’Connors.

A successful Kansas City attorney, Art Popham hunted worldwide during his long lifetime. He was especially proud of his grand slam of mountain sheep. He was a major benefactor of the Kansas City Museum of History and Science where the natural history wing was named after him. He provided animals for dioramas at the museum that included groups of sheep, bison, Alaska brown bears, and one featuring a rare Kermode bear, a pure white subspecies

BOOK BY ARTHUR C. POPHAM

Stalking Big Game from Desert to Tundra
(1985)

of the black bear. Art also collected specimens for the museum from Africa and Persia.

A long-time member of the Boone and Crockett Club and many other conservation organizations, Art Popham frequently showed his motion pictures and slides in presentations and lectures on wildlife to numerous clubs, groups, and schools. He was especially proud that his dioramas at the museum were available to help young people appreciate our wildlife heritage. After a long illness, he passed away in September 2009 at the age of 94. ■

Theodore J. Holsten Jr.



ABOVE: Group of sheep at the Kansas City Museum. **RIGHT:** Art Popham’s son, then 7, in Daniel Boone garb, looks at his dad’s re-creation of “The Three Bears” in 1957, in this Kansas City Museum diorama. **FAR RIGHT TOP:** Cape Buffalo. **MIDDLE:** First lion, found to have been killed instantly, was so perfectly camouflaged that it took 45 minutes of tense searching in only knee-high grass to find dead. **BOTTOM:** Sable, Tanzania, 1957.