

Ty Pelfrey

Book Review

Hunting With the Bow and Arrow *by Saxton Pope*

On a crisp winter evening take the time to warm your archery soul by reading Saxton Pope's *Hunting with the Bow and Arrow*. Then recommend the book to a friend.

Pope's book, first published in 1923, takes the reader into the romantic world of early twentieth century archery from the front cover to the very last page. You'll find yourself savoring the seventeen chapters and wanting more. Pope's engaging stories pull you right into the sport of archery. The book was the literary platform that brought archery back into vogue during the early 1900s. Pope goes afield with handmade longbow and wood arrows in quest of adventure and a fair chase hunt. But, he goes beyond the chase and introduces the reader to proper equipment, form, and materials for archery equipment manufacture.

He begins his book with the history of the Yana and hunting tricks from Ishi, the last Yana. There are a dozen or more adventures recounted by Pope that culminate in a hair raising grizzly bear hunt in Yellowstone National Park with Art Young. You can almost feel the homemade broadheads drawn to full draw pricking the finger of your bowhand before they are loosed as Pope wields words to share his passion for archery.

The book is liberally illustrated with over 48 drawings and photographs. Remington Schuyler captured the very essence of the book with his hand drawn cover which was inked in exchange for a

good yew bow and a dozen shafts. Even the book's dedication reaches into the breast of every person who has let loose an arrow: "Dedicated to Robin Hood, a spirit that at





This is the Saxton Pope-inspired quiver I made from deerskin, even though I am not what you might call "handy."

some time dwells in the heart of every youth."

I sequestered myself pressed in my leather chair surrounded by deer mounts and coyote skins reading one chapter each night, savoring the adventures and holding at bay the conclusion of the book. Only when I had finished the book did I realize the power of Pope's writing. I found myself reviewing the illustrations and wanting something more than the written word. The necessary archery equipment drawings on page 98 and Pope's great explanations of archery equipment led to my considering making a quiver made of deerskin. I'm not accomplished using my hands, but Pope made almost anything related to archery sound possible, so I manufactured a deer skin quiver in the Pope style - with a little coyote fur added. Then, I started shooting a longbow. Oh, what

fun!

Saxton Pope's book is a great diversion from the world of today's modern archery equipment and replenishes the soul with wood, feathers, and simplicity. The book brought back a little of my youth and the sights and sounds of shooting a wood arrow. Pope brings back that feeling of watching an arrow leap from the bow, spin through the air, and in a long arc hit its mark. Pope definitely hit his mark with this text. My only regret is I didn't read it twenty years ago! Pick up a copy of *Hunting with the Bow and Arrow* today and remind yourself of our sport's humble modern beginning.

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