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## Bert Popowski Papers

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# Bert Popowski papers

## Finding Aid

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections  
Briggs Library (SBL) Room 241 Box 2114  
1300 North Campus Drive  
Brookings, SD 57007  
Phone: 605-688-5094  
Email: [arcrefs@sdstate.edu](mailto:arcrefs@sdstate.edu)

## Collection Summary

### *Identifier*

MA 5

### *Title*

Bert Popowski papers

### *Creator*

Popowski, Bert, 1904-1982

### *Dates*

1935-1978

### *Extent*

4.32 linear feet -- 8 boxes, photographs, sound recording

### *Language*

English

### *Repository*

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

### *Access note*

This collection is open to researchers without restrictions. The materials in the Archives do not circulate and may be used in-house only.

### *Preferred Citation*

*Name of item.* Bert Popowski papers. MA 5. South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

## *Abstract*

Bert Popowski is noted as an outdoor writer. He wrote books concerning various aspects of outdoor sports such as hunting and fishing. His writings emphasized the important of habitat management. This collection is composed of articles, manuscripts, and materials related to Popowski's career as author and hunter.

## **Biographical Note**

Bert John Popowski was born in Grafton, North Dakota on February 15, 1904. He lived in Grafton throughout his elementary and high school years. He attended South Dakota State College in Brookings, South Dakota and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in printing in 1926. He married Harriet Seymour of Aberdeen, SD in 1930. They had two sons, John Seymour and Jerome Bert.

Throughout his career, Bert lived in various areas of the United States and held several different jobs, ranging from a high school principal to associate editor for Look Magazine. From 1951 to his death in 1982, he worked as a freelance writer, author, and contributing editor for several publications.

During a career that spanned half a century, Bert wrote over 2,300 articles. His first feature story appeared in Outdoor Life in 1931. He served as contributing editor for The American Rifleman writing a column titled "Dope Bag." He also wrote columns for several other magazines, including "Hunting" for The Outdoorsman, "Guns and Ammunition" for Hunting & Fishing, and "The Shot Tower" for Guns and Hunting. He wrote several major books and gained national prominence with his classic Hunting Pronghorn Antelope. Some of his works were translated into Spanish and Japanese. He was also an award-winning photographer, and his photographs illustrated many of his articles and books.

In his earlier years, he was best known as an expert varmint hunter. Several of his books did much to popularize this form of hunting. In 1932, he built a log cabin near the Narrows on French Creek in Custer State Park. There he weathered the Great Depression and did most of his writing. In 1949 he won the National Crow Shooting Championship, using calls of his own design to take first place over 51 other contestants. Bert was always interested in natural history and wildlife management as well as hunting.

In 1979, he donated a collection of his books, original manuscripts, and photographs to his alma mater, South Dakota State University. At the convention of the Outdoor Writers Association of America in Rapid City, the State of South Dakota presented him with a special award as the Dean of South Dakota Outdoor Writers. In the 1980's, Bert contracted cancer and eventually suffered a stroke, which hospitalized him. He died on February 14, 1982

## Arrangement

The Bert Popowski Papers are arranged into eight series:

- Series 1. General
- Series 2. Illustrations
- Series 3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting
- Series 4. Manuscripts
- Series 5: Phonograph Record
- Series 6. Photographs
- Series 7. Published Articles
- Series 8. Research Material

Folders are arranged alphabetically within each series.

## Contents Note

This collection is composed of articles, manuscripts, and materials related to Popowski's career as author and hunter. Included are photographs, illustrations, and many articles. Bulk of collection is copies of articles authored by Popowski on the subject of hunting and wildlife.

The general materials are composed of correspondence from 1942-1956.

The illustrations consist of several loose-leaf illustrations of crows drawn by Gordon Elliott for Popowski's book titled Crow Shooting and include 29 ink drawings. Also included are two folders of photograph proofs (37 pages) for Popowski's book titled Hunting Pronghorn Antelope, 1 mat board drawing of a fireplace in what is suspected to be Popowski's cabin and drawn by C. Greenidge and one phonograph record titled Crow Calling.

The Japanese magazine Modern Hunting is composed of article submitted by Popowski.

The manuscripts are accompanied by correspondence sent to publishers and an information card, which notes to which publications Popowski sent his manuscripts, whether or not they were published and the amount he was paid for these manuscripts.

The phonograph records is composed of a recording of Popowski demonstrating crow calls. The photographs consist of several black and white photographs, mostly of wildlife and hunting, and a few negatives. Some items of note are 22 matted and signed black and white photographs that Popowski entered into a photography contest at the Iowa State Fair. He won first prize for these photographs.

The research material is the largest series is Popowski's collection of articles he had published in various hunting and wildlife publications. These articles cover a wide range of subjects from big game, crow and varmint hunting to safety and conservation issues. Included also is an autographed copy of The Outdoorsman (June 1947) in which Popowski wrote an article titled "Off-Season" Duck Hunting.

## **Bibliography**

Calling All Game

Harrisburg, Pa., Stackpole Co., 1952.

Call number: SD Collection: SK33.P6ca

Calling All Varmints

Harrisburg, Pa., Stackpole Co., 1952.

Call number: SD Collection: SK33.P6c

Crow Shooting

New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1946.

Call number: SD Collection: SK325.C7 P6

Hunting Pronghorn Antelope

Harrisburg, Pa., Stackpole Co., 1959.

Call number: SD Collection: SK305.A6 P6h

Hunting Small Game

New York: Macmillian Co., 1948.

Call number: SD Collection: SK36.P63

Manual dil Cazador de Alimanas y Grajos (The varmint and crow hunter's bible. Spanish)

Barcelona: Editorial Sintes, 1964, c 1962.

Call number: SD Collection: SK33.P58718

Olt's Hunting Handbook

Omaha? c1948.

Call number: SD Collection: SK313.P6

South Dakota Brags

Custer, S.D.: The Author, 1953.

Call number: SD Collection: F651.5.P6

The Hunter's Book of the Pronghorn Antelope

Tulsa, Okla., Winchester Press, c1982.

Call number: SD Collection: SK305.P76 P66 1982

The Redbook of Big Game Hunting  
Skokie, Ill., Publishers Development Corp., 1961  
Call number: SD Collection: SK33.P588

The Varmint and Crow Hunter's Bible  
Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, 1962.  
Call number: SD Collection: SK33.P587

Varmint Hunting  
Paterson, N. J., Athletic Activities Pub. Co., 1971.  
Call number: SD Collection: SK336.P66

## **Key Words**

Big game hunting  
Elliott, Gordon  
Fowling  
Hunting  
Popowski, Bert, 1904-1982 -- Archives

## **Administrative Information**

### *Conditions Governing Access*

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Researchers conducting extensive research are asked to make an advance appointment to access archival material. Please call or e-mail prior to visiting the collection and indicate as much detail as possible about a particular topic and intended use.

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*Arranged and Described by*

Crystal J. Gamradt, 1998 March 1.

*Processing note*

This collection was received prior to 1997, when the South Dakota State University Archives was established. The acting archivist created a preliminary inventory of materials received. Final arrangement and description was completed by Crystal J. Gamradt on 31 March 1998.

## Container List

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
1. General	1	1	Correspondence	1942-1951
1. General	1	2	Correspondence	1952
1. General	1	3	Correspondence	1953-1956
1. General	1	4	Miscellaneous	undated
2. Illustrations	8		Drawings: 29 ink drawings	undated
2. Illustrations	8		Drawings: 1 matted drawing of a fireplace drawn by C. Greenidge	undated
2. Illustrations	8		Proofs: Crow shooting illustrations (33 p.)	undated
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	1	Translation of article titles	1968-1970
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	2	[No Articles Found]	1968
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	3	Crow Shooting; p. 30-38	1969
3. Japanese Magazine:	7	4	Crow Shooting (Last - Decoy); p. 56-64	1969

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
Modern Hunting				
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	5	Decoying Ducks; p. 54-61	1969
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	6	Detail Survey of Deer Hunting By Calling (Part 1); p. 30-35 and Calling for Ducks; p. 98-101	1969
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	7	Detail Survey of Deer Hunting By Calling (Part 2); p. 30-37	1969
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	8	Aim of Elk Hunting; p. 38-43	1970
3. Japanese Magazine: Modern Hunting	7	9	Decoying The Divers; p. 17-24	1970
4. Manuscripts	2	1	Alaska	1967, 1973-1974
4. Manuscripts	2	2	Big Game	1957-1970
4. Manuscripts	2	3	Big Game: Antelope	1957-1975
4. Manuscripts	2	4	Big Game: Bear	1955-1957
4. Manuscripts	2	5	Big Game: Bison	1957-1958, 1969
4. Manuscripts	2	6	Big Game: Deer	1955-1976
4. Manuscripts	2	7	Big Game : Elk	undated
4. Manuscripts	2	8	Big Game: Moose	undated
4. Manuscripts	2	9	Big Game: Sheep	1975-1976
4. Manuscripts	2	10	Big Game: Turkey	1958-1977



<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
4. Manuscripts	2	11	Binoculars and Scopes	1973, undated
4. Manuscripts	2	12	Book: Calling All Crows	undated
4. Manuscripts	2	13	Book: Call of the Wild	undated
4. Manuscripts	2	14	Book: Hunting Pronghorn Antelope	1959
4. Manuscripts	3	1	Camping	1959, undated
4. Manuscripts	3	2	Conservation	1960- 1976
4. Manuscripts	3	3	Cookery	1973- 1978
4. Manuscripts	3	4	Dogs	1974- 1975
4. Manuscripts	3	5	Firearms	1955- 1978
4. Manuscripts	3	6	Fishing	1947- 1957
4. Manuscripts	3	7	Game Birds	1953, 1966- 1975
4. Manuscripts	3	8	Game Birds: Grouse	1958, 1974- 1975
4. Manuscripts	3	9	Game Birds: Pheasant	1964- 1974
4. Manuscripts	3	10	Game Birds: Prairie Chicken	1965- 1968
4. Manuscripts	3	11	Game Birds: Quail	undated
4. Manuscripts	3	12	Game Preparation	1964- 1970
4. Manuscripts	3	13	Hunters	1973- 1975
4. Manuscripts	3	14	Hunting	undated
4. Manuscripts	3	15	Hunting and Game Laws	1968- 1973
4. Manuscripts	3	16	Hunting Gear	1964- 1970
4. Manuscripts	4	1	Hunting Techniques	1956- 1975
4. Manuscripts	4	2	Miscellaneous	1966, 1972- 1973

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
4. Manuscripts	4	3	Safety	1973-1976
4. Manuscripts	4	4	Small Game	1975-1978
4. Manuscripts	4	5	Small Game: Crow	1952-1977
4. Manuscripts	4	6	Small Game: Dove	1973-1974
4. Manuscripts	4	7	Small Game: Bobcat	1955-1957
4. Manuscripts	4	8	Small Game: Coyote	1946-1970
4. Manuscripts	4	9	Small Game: Fox	undated
4. Manuscripts	4	10	Small Game: Magpie	1952
4. Manuscripts	4	11	Small Game: Mink	1956
4. Manuscripts	4	12	Small Game: Porcupine	undated
4. Manuscripts	4	13	Small Game: Prairie Dog	1958
4. Manuscripts	4	14	Small Game: Rabbit	1956-1973
4. Manuscripts	4	15	Small Game: Rat	1952
4. Manuscripts	4	16	Small Game: Squirrel	1967-1975
4. Manuscripts	4	17	Small Game: Woodchuck	1977
4. Manuscripts	4	18	Waterfowl: Duck	1947-1973
4. Manuscripts	5	1	Waterfowl: Goose	1955-1957
4. Manuscripts	5	2	Weather	1970
4. Manuscripts	5	3	Wildlife	1954-1973
5. Phonograph record	8		Photograph record titled Crow Calling (78 rpm)	undated
6. Photographs	7	10	Award-winning photographs	1939
6. Photographs	7	11	Hunting and fishing	undated
6. Photographs	7	12	Hunting techniques	undated
6. Photographs	7	13	Miscellaneous	1937-1938, undated
6. Photographs	7	14	Portraits	1949, undated
6. Photographs	7	15	Proofs-Hunting Pronghorn Antelope: Final set	undated

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
6. Photographs	7	16	Proofs-Hunting Pronghorn Antelope: Rough draft	undated
6. Photographs	7	17	Tomahawks	undated
6. Photographs	7	18	Wildlife	undated
7. Published Articles	5	4	Ammunition	1938-1964
7. Published Articles	5	5	Big Game	1948-1962
7. Published Articles	5	6	Big Game: Antelope	1948-1962
7. Published Articles	5	7	Big Game: Bear	1951-1962
7. Published Articles	5	8	Big Game: Bison	1959
7. Published Articles	5	9	Big Game: Deer	1941-1963
7. Published Articles	5	10	Big Game: Elk	1952-1962
7. Published Articles	5	11	Big Game: Moose	1962
7. Published Articles	5	12	Big Game: Mountain Goat	1950
7. Published Articles	5	13	Big Game: Mountain Lion	1958
7. Published Articles	5	14	Big Game: Turkey	1960
7. Published Articles	5	15	Cabins	1935-1941
7. Published Articles	5	16	Conservation	1948
7. Published Articles	5	17	Cookery	undated
7. Published Articles	5	18	Dogs	1952-1959
7. Published Articles	5	19	Firearms	1939-1963
7. Published Articles	5	20	Fishing	1938-1962
7. Published Articles	5	21	Game Birds	1939
7. Published Articles	5	22	Game Birds: Grouse	1958-1961

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
7. Published Articles	5	23	Game Birds: partridge	1960
7. Published Articles	5	24	Game Birds: Pheasant	1937-1963
7. Published Articles	5	25	Game Preparation	1960
7. Published Articles	5	26	Hunters	1945-1958
7. Published Articles	6	1	Hunting	1947-1962
7. Published Articles	6	2	Hunting Gear	1951
7. Published Articles	6	3	Hunting Guides	1950-1963
7. Published Articles	6	4	Hunting Techniques	1942-1962
7. Published Articles	6	5	Miscellaneous	1935-1938
7. Published Articles	6	6	Photography	1945
7. Published Articles	6	7	Small Game	1942-1962
7. Published Articles	6	8	Small Game: Bobcat	1952-1961
7. Published Articles	6	9	Small Game: Coyote	1953-1959
7. Published Articles	6	10	Small Game: Crow	1938-1963
7. Published Articles	6	11	Small Game: Fox	1941-1943
7. Published Articles	6	12	Small Game: Magpie	1961
7. Published Articles	6	13	Small Game: Owl	1948, 1959-1960
7. Published Articles	6	14	Small Game: Prairie Dog	1941-1962
7. Published Articles	6	15	Small Game: Rabbit	1942-1959
7. Published Articles	6	16	Small Game: Raccoon	1960
7. Published Articles	6	17	Small Game: Snake	1943

<b>Series</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
7. Published Articles	6	18	Small Game: Squirrel	1940-1943
7. Published Articles	6	19	Small Game: Woodchuck	1939-1961
7. Published Articles	6	20	Waterfowl: Duck	1940-1962
7. Published Articles	6	21	Waterfowl: Goose	1942-1963
7. Published Articles	6	22	Weather	1944
7. Published Articles	6	23	Wildlife	1945
8. Research material	1	5	Magazine Articles	1946-1973
8. Research material	1	6	Magazines	1949-1971
8. Research material	1	7	Newspaper clippings	1952-1957
8. Research material	1	8	Statistics	1938-1958