

Walter King Stone

March 2, 1875 — June 21, 1949

Walter King Stone, Associate Professor Emeritus of the Fine Arts, died in Ithaca on June 21, 1949. In his death Cornell University suffered the loss of one of her most loved faculty members.

Professor Stone had taught in the Department of the Fine Arts in the College of Architecture for twenty-three years, beginning in 1920, teaching many different courses in drawing, painting, and in the other graphic arts. He was unfailingly loved and respected by all his students, and by his fellows on the faculty who remember him not only for the soundness of the presentation of his subject but as much for the richness of his personality, his generosity, and sympathy, his kindly humor and for his tolerance.

Walter King Stone was born in Barnard, Monroe County, New York, on March 2, 1875, the son of William Talmage and Jenny Filer Stone. He was a descendant of Enos Stone, one of the first settlers of Rochester; his family had been intimately associated with the early history of that city. He attended the public schools of Rochester, received his formal training in art at Rochester's Mechanics' Institute and Athenaeum and then at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn.

Beginning in the early 1900's and until his coming to Cornell in 1920, he was active in the career of independent illustrator, painter and writer. In the first years of the century he won wide-spread recognition for his nature illustrations. His work appeared in Scribner's Magazine, in Century Magazine, in Colliers', Outing, Country Life in America, St. Nicholas, and in the Country Gentleman, as well as in various books. He brought to this work the happy combination of sensitive and imaginative artistry and an unlimited interest in nature and its wild life. His first sketches and studies of the world about him began in his boyhood when he and Charles Livingston Bull were intimate friends.

His favorite medium for his illustrations was flat water color wash combined with charcoal drawing. Later, and in general while at Cornell, he worked principally in oil paints. Two of his paintings are in the Rochester Memorial Museum. Mural paintings are in the homes of Clinton Fish, Rochester; Walter Pritchard Eaton, Sheffield, Massachusetts; Bristow Adams and Liberty Hyde Bailey of Ithaca.

His pictures are in many private collections. Books illustrated by him include the Log of the Sun by William Beebe; Barn Doors and Byways, Green Trails and Upland Pastures, and In Berkshire Fields by Walter Pritchard Eaton.

His intense interest in and love of his fellows led to a profound understanding of their outlooks, their mannerisms,

their codes of life. This, plus his natural instincts as a story teller led to a wide reputation as a humorist and raconteur. He was a member and one-time president of the Savage Club of Ithaca.

Many who cherish their memory of him first came to know him in his "Thursday Nights". Shortly after coming to Cornell he and his wife, Edith Adams Stone, instituted the custom of entertaining guests in their home on those nights. All were welcome, young and old, students or otherwise, strangers as well as friends. Much as the many guests contributed in humor or wisdom, those evenings will be remembered by a host of friends for Stoney's kindly humor which colored and penetrated all conversations.

His teaching method stemmed from his own interests and convictions. He taught not a particular way or means, but the fundamentals which underlie all drawing and composition. He encouraged initiative on the part of his students and drew out from them their own contributions of knowledge and personal reaction. He discovered and respected integrity in their individual approach. Both his students and his confreres recognized his inherent honesty and his devotion to his ideals. The students who sat in his classes came, not only from all departments of the College of Architecture, but from many different fields of interest; from the scientific departments, from liberal arts courses and from engineering. Because of this catholic appeal, his influence was felt widely in the University.

Walter King Stone served Cornell University as Acting Professor of Drawing beginning in 1920, as Assistant Professor beginning in 1922, as Associate Professor in 1942, and as Associate Professor Emeritus from 1943.

He was a member of the Unitarian Church, of Alpha Sigma Phi Fraternity and of the Salmagundi Club.

He is survived by his wife Edith Adams Stone and by his son Alan Stone, Cornell 1926.

His death at the age of seventy-four brings sorrow to all who knew him.

Bristow Adams, E. D. Montillon, K. L. Washburn