

# Donald Lord Finlayson

*September 20, 1897— July 24, 1960*

Donald Lord Finlayson, Professor of Fine Arts in the College of Architecture, died July 24, 1960, at his summer home in Kennebunk, Maine. Serious illness for several months preceding his death had so restricted his activities that he had retired from the faculty July 1 and had been made Professor Emeritus. He had served on the faculty for thirty-two years.

Professor Finlayson was born at Rye, New Hampshire, on September 20, 1897, the son of Archibald and Elizabeth Lord Finlayson. After his early education in the public schools at Rye and Portsmouth, New Hampshire, he entered Dartmouth College in 1915 and was graduated as Bachelor of Arts in 1919. Although majoring in geology, he had acquired a lasting interest in the fine arts, apparently the result of some inspiring teaching in that area. This led him to Brown University in 1921, from which he received the Master of Arts in fine arts in 1923. Also while studying at Brown he worked as a museum assistant in the Rhode Island School of Design. The following year was spent doing graduate work at Harvard, and the next at Princeton as a Proctor Fellow studying under Professor Frank Jewett Mather. In the fall of 1925 he started his teaching career as Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at Wells College, and during the next year or two he occasionally appeared at Cornell as a visiting lecturer. In 1928 he was appointed Assistant Professor in the College of Architecture at Cornell and was raised to full professorial rank in 1935. Since many of his students were from the College of Arts and Sciences, he was a member of that faculty also.

Professor Finlayson's specific field was the history of painting and sculpture and to this he made his main contributions, including the publication in 1935 of *Michelangelo the Man*, as well as occasional reviews and articles for professional journals. For about ten years he served as visiting lecturer on fine arts at Elmira College. Beginning in 1926 and continuing for twenty-odd years thereafter he spent his summers abroad as a lecturer for the Bureau of University Travel, thus becoming thoroughly acquainted with the galleries and art centers of western Europe.

For many years Professor Finlayson had been interested in the history and development of early American arts and crafts, quite understandable in view of his New England heritage. As a hobby he had gathered together a substantial collection of tools, utensils, and other implements, with illustrative books, prints, and photographs. He established and gave a course called "The Arts in America" for several years before he retired.

His courses in the history of the fine arts were popular and, though primarily for students in architecture and fine arts, they attracted many from elsewhere on the campus. He enjoyed his contacts with students, both academic

and social, and gave freely of his time to their affairs. For many years he served as faculty adviser for various groups such as the student organization of the College of Architecture, the Cornell swimming teams, and Alpha Phi Delta fraternity, and he was always involved in affairs at the Heller House and in the annual Festival of Contemporary Arts. During World War II he served as a member of the selective service board in Ithaca.

Professor Finlayson was a member of several professional societies, among which were the Archaeological Institute of America, of which he was a past local president, the College Art Association, and the Society of Architectural Historians; he was also a member of the student societies Gargoyle, L'Ogive, and Kefti.

*H. E. Baxter, A. H. Detweiler, J. A. Hartell*