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CONSERVATION WORK OF THE FINLEYS

by

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One of the important factors in the conservation of wildlife is for principals and teachers to build up an educational program for children from the first grade on up, a program that will last through the years and form a bulwark of protection, not only for our wild birds and animals, but for all of our natural resources. Schools, churches, and civic organizations should back up such a program for the safety and decent living of our country. This is all the more essential as an aftermath of a great war, which is a destroyer of all of the amenities of life.

In talking with the Finleys, they said: "One of the simplest and most vivid methods of education is good books on natural history subjects, written by field experts, a great need in the schools today. More impressive and lasting are 'picture books', life histories of wild creatures that come to life before the eyes of children, and are never forgotten. These make the children and wild creatures akin, and are a benefit to both. And outdoor life will mean the better health and happiness of children."

William L. and Irene Finley have been taking pictures of wild folks for forty years. They have traveled the country from top to bottom, and from East to West, camera hunting the haunts of big and little birds, beasts, insects, everything outdoors that came to hand. For many years they brought home motion pictures and used them to show and lecture to children. Eighteen of these 35 mm. reels have been reduced to 16 mm. reels, and the American Nature Association is using them for schools in all parts of the country. Many schools have purchased outright sets of these nature reels for their educational work.

Have had a letter from Prof. Theodore D. A. Cockrell of the

Desert Museum, Palm Springs, California, who has been showing these movies to goodly to goodly crowds of people, including many servicemen. He said: "A great element of our success has been the Finley pictures, which have been constantly shown. Many people may not know how much good these pictures are doing. A year ago we sent our copies of these films to England and they are being shown to children throughout the country. The Desert Museum has been going very well and since we took up on October 16th, we have had I think about 9000 visitors."

For the past four years the Finleys have been taking kodachromes or colored pictures which show the birds and mammals in their true colors, with beautiful backgrounds of northern forests and lakes or the vivid colors of the desert cacti. They are shown with a projector, and many are published in magazines.

Mr. F. E. Olleman of the Color^{craft} Studios is presenting eighty of the 2 x 2' Finley kodachrome slides for schools and lectures at a very reasonable price. But the most recent and beautiful series of Finley kodachromes of birds is being published as cover pages of the California Monthly of the University of California at Berkeley. They will also be used as portfolios in the schools.

Dr. Walter P. Taylor, well known biologist now in Texas, published the following: "I much appreciate the series of birds on the front cover of the California Monthly; also the articles by William L. and Irene Finley, '03. These are splendid and do enormous credit to the Monthly and to the Alumni Association. I regard Bill Finley as one of the most valuable members of the Association and I think he is doing a splendid work for it."

Robert Sibley, Editor of the California Monthly and classmate of the Finleys, wrote the following editorial: "The two Finleys, William and Irene, the naturalist-artists contributing the pictures, are perhaps America's most famous photographers of wildlife. They were classmates at the University of California, graduating together in 1903, and married in

1906. They have gathered these photographs from a life-long career in photographing wild things of the mountains, the valleys, and streams of this great State. Much of their work has from time to time appeared in Nature Magazine, Audubon Magazine, and National Geographic, also many other magazines of similar scope. They have been acclaimed far and wide, particularly in the Audubon Societies, for their skill in photography and for their efforts in protecting the wildlife of America."

"We feel their workmanship on the front covers of CALIFORNIA MONTHLY will add much to the pleasure of our alumni. At the same time there cannot help but be felt by our more than 16,000 alumni in the armed services, as they become aware of this beautiful series of natural life of their home state, that the country they are fighting for is well worth while and that there awaits their return the beauty and enchantment and inspiration of a home land - the best in the world."