

# William Albert Finch

— *March 31, 1912*

Professor William Albert Finch, a member of the Faculty of Cornell University for a period of over twenty years, died on March 31st, 1912. At its first meeting after his death, this Faculty desires to inscribe upon its records an acknowledgement of the great loss which the University has sustained by the death of Professor Finch.

Professor Finch was graduated from this University in 1880 with the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and was the same year admitted to the bar, having been engaged in the study of the law during his undergraduate days in the office of Francis M. Finch. He immediately took up the practice of law in Ithaca, becoming a member of the firm of Halliday and Finch. Appointed in 1891 to an assistant professorship in law, Professor Finch was the first graduate of Cornell University to return as a member of the Faculty of the College of Law. He was promoted the following year to an associate professorship, and in 1895 to the full professorship which he held until his death. During the years 1896-1901 he acted as secretary of the Faculty of the College of Law, having full charge of the administrative work of the College during that time.

Specializing in the law of real property—a branch of the law requiring the closest application for that comprehensive mastery which was his—his presentation of it in classroom and through his writings was clear and illuminating. Yet he was no narrow specialist; it is an indication of the breadth of his scholarly interests and sympathies that he was accustomed to refresh and recreate his mind by constant studies in science and the classics.

Never robust, and suffering from ill health during the larger part of his life, especially during the last years, he nevertheless entered into his daily task with a spirit serene but enthusiastic, a self-sacrifice brave but unostentatious, that brought friendly cheer and inspiration to his students and his colleagues.

*Frank Irvine, Chairman, C. T. Stagg, Ernest Merritt*

*Source: Records, p. 546, April 19, 1912*