Finley

March 29, 1962

Chairman and Fellow Members
Izaak Walton League Awards Committee
Glen View, Illinois

Fellow Waltonians:

The Portland Chapter is very proud to nominate its most illustrious member, now deceased, for the Hall of Fame of the Izaak Walton League of America.

You have for your inspection a collection of letters written on the occasion of his seventieth birthday anniversary, a banquet sponsored by the Portland Chapter. These letters from all of the conservation leaders of that day truly reflect a record of outstanding accomplishment and national recognition. Letters were sent from Tom Wallace, Ken Reid, Ding Darling, Thornton Burgess, and other national leaders in the conservation field. Their perennal regard for our nominee is clearly shown.

Revered in his home state of Oregon as both a keen naturalist and crusading conservationist, he attained national stature early in his life. Travelling by horse and buggy in 1905, through the great lake basins of Southeastern Oregon our nominee and a young photographer friend, Herman T. Bohlman, photographed for the first time and described in Bird Lore Magazine, later Audobon Magazine, the teeming waterfowl spectacle on Malheur, Tule and Klamath Lakes.

The Portland Chapter will be honored to show an exhibit at the 1962 convention of many precious documents and photographs concerning him and his work. Many of these now are so valuable that they are kept in a safe for protection.

Their vivid accounts of the havoc wrought by plume and market hunters as well as their descriptions of the waterfowl paradise to be found there, brought the areas to the attention of President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1908 he established the Tule Lake-Lower Klamath and Malheur Bird Reservations, now key federal migratory bird refuges and the center of controversy of the present Senate Bill 1988, now in the Senate.

His calling from here on was that of lecturer, writer, and photographer. He devoted himself to educating young and old to an appreciation of wildlife, love of the outdoors and conservation of natural resources and essential for healthful citizenship.

From his typewriter flowed more than 100 illustrated articles appearing in such magazines as Colliers, Atlantic Monthly, Nature Magazine and National Geographic. He accumulated 60,000 still-life pictures of birds and animals, and 200,000 feet of movie film with which he lectured across the nation.

He authored books which live on to this day, including "American Birds" and "American Wild Pets." Five of his movies were sent on national theater circuits. He was a personal friend of President Theodore Roosevelt, who referred to him as a "practical fieldnaturalist." The great naturalist John Burroughs was another of his associates.

As State Fish and Game Protector for Oregon and State Biologist between 1911 and 1917, he popularized the protection of wildlife--where before, game laws had been lightly regarded. He was one of the early members of the Izaak Walton League, and served for many years as a national vice-president, until honored at a testimonial banquet upon his retirement from office in 1946. He also served as a member of the advisory board to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Beginning in the early '30s our nominee turned his attention more to stream pollution and the heedless damming of Northwest streams. He raised the first bond issue in Portland, Oregon to provide adequate sewage treatment.

An Oregon Journal editorial summed his career thus: "To him a high dam is a challenge, stream pollution an abomination, and industrialization that destroys wildlife is inexcusable. They don't come too big or tough for him to tackle. Wasteful hunters and anglers, heedless dorporations, cities and states...have tried in vain to explain away his barbed words.

"He was the friend of all living things..."

In the office of the Executive Secretary of the Izaak Walton League is a photograph of a bronze plaque that the Oregon Division has erected at Malheur Refuge.

The Portland Chapter believes that our most illustrious member, William Finley fulfills the qualifications for membership in the Hall of Fame of the League, and submits his name for consideration by your committee.

Very sincerely,

A. J. Kreft, M. D.
Past-President, Portland Chapter,
I.W.L.A.

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OREGON DIVISION

Izaak Walton League Of America, Inc.

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LEGISLATION

ALFRED J. KREFT, M.D.
PORTLAND MEDICAL CENTER BLDG.
PORTLAND 5, OREGON

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