David E. Finley Papers

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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress Washington, D.C. 2012

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LC Online Catalog record: http://lccn.loc.gov/mm81057414

Prepared by Grover Batts and Marilyn Tedeschi

Collection Summary

Title: David E. Finley Papers **Span Dates:** 1921-1977 **ID No.:** MSS57414

Creator: Finley, David E. (David Edwards) **Extent:** 31,000 items; 92 containers; 36 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Museum director and lawyer. Correspondence, subject files, financial papers, drafts of speeches and writings, family material, printed matter, and scrapbooks relating chiefly to Finley's duties as special assistant to Secretary of the Treasury, Andrew W. Mellon, his role in the founding and his subsequent service as director of the National Gallery of Art, and his activities with numerous other artistic and cultural organizations.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Beale, Marie Oge, 1880-1956--Correspondence.

Biddle, George, 1885-1973--Correspondence.

Biddle, James, 1929-2005--Correspondence.

Bullock, Helen Duprey, 1904-1995--Correspondence.

Cairns, Huntington, 1904-1985--Correspondence.

Carmichael, Leonard, 1898-1973--Correspondence.

Conger, Clement E.--Correspondence.

Cortissoz, Royal, 1869-1948--Correspondence.

Couzens, James, 1872-1936.

Dale, Chester, 1883-1962--Art collections.

Dale, Chester, 1883-1962--Correspondence.

Douglas, Lewis W. (Lewis Williams), 1894-1974--Correspondence.

Du Pont, Henry Francis, 1880-1969--Correspondence.

Finley family.

Finley, David E. (David Edward)

Fraser, James Earle, 1876-1953--Correspondence.

Garbisch, Edgar William--Correspondence.

Gray, Gordon, 1909-1982--Correspondence.

Green, Theodore Francis, 1867-1966--Correspondence.

Hancock, Walker Kirtland, 1901-1998--Correspondence.

Hoover, Herbert, 1874-1964--Correspondence.

Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963--Correspondence.

Kirstein, Lincoln, 1907-1996--Correspondence.

Kress, Samuel H. (Samuel Henry), 1863-1955--Art collections.

Kress, Samuel H. (Samuel Henry), 1863-1955--Correspondence.

Lewis, W. S. (Wilmarth Sheldon), 1895-1979--Correspondence.

Manship, Paul, 1885-1966--Correspondence.

Mellon, Andrew W. (Andrew William), 1855-1937--Art collections.

Mellon, Andrew W. (Andrew William), 1855-1937--Correspondence.

Mellon, Paul--Correspondence.

Mellon, Richard K. (Richard King), 1899-1970--Correspondence.

Nagel, Charles, 1849-1940--Correspondence.

Onassis, Jacqueline Kennedy, 1929-1994--Correspondence.

Phillips, Duncan, 1886-1966--Correspondence.

Ripley, S. Dillon (Sidney Dillon), 1913-2001--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962--Correspondence.

Rosenwald, Lessing J. (Lessing Julius), 1891-1979--Correspondence.

Stone, Harlan Fiske, 1872-1946--Correspondence.

Taylor, Francis Henry, 1903-1957--Correspondence.

Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972--Correspondence.

Walker, John, 1906-1995--Correspondence.

Widener, Joseph E. (Joseph Early), 1872-1943--Art collections.

Widener, Joseph E. (Joseph Early), 1872-1943--Correspondence.

Wyeth, Andrew, 1917-2009--Correspondence.

Organizations

Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art.

Decatur House (Washington, D.C.)

National Gallery of Art (U.S.)

National Portrait Gallery (Smithsonian Institution)

National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States.

People-to-People (Organization)

Unesco.

United States. Commission of Fine Arts.

United States. Department of the Treasury.

Wayside Inn (Sudbury, Mass.)

White House (Washington, D.C.)

Subjects

Architecture--Washington (D.C.)

Art museums--Washington (D.C.)

Art--Washington (D.C.)

Art.

Arts--United States.

Debts, Public--United States.

Embassy buildings--United States.

Historic preservation--United States.

Taxation--United States.

World War, 1914-1918--Finance.

World War, 1939-1945--Art and the war.

Places

United States--Economic policy--20th century.

Occupations

Lawyers.

Museum directors.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of David E. Finley, museum director and lawyer, were bequeathed to the Library of Congress by Finley in 1977.

Processing History

The Finley Papers were processed in 1982. The finding aid was revised in 2012.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Maps have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. Photographs and other pictorial material have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the David E. Finley Papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of David E. Finley is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of David E. Finley are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, David E. Finley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date Date	Event
1890, Sept. 13	Born, York, S.C.
1910	A.B., University of South Carolina. Columbia, S.C.
1913	LL.B., George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.
1915-1917	Practiced law, Philadelphia. Pa.
1917-1918	Served in United States Army
1921-1922	Assistant counsel, War Finance Corp.
1922-1927	Member, War Loan Staff, United States Treasury
1927-1932	Special assistant to Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon
1931	Married Margaret Morton Eustis
1932-1933	Honorary counselor for the American embassy in England
1933-1937	Assisted Andrew W. Mellon in formulating plans for the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
1938-1956	Director, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
1950-1962	Chairman, National Trust for Historic Preservation
1950-1963	Chairman, United States Commission of Fine Art
1977, Feb. 1	Died, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of David Edward Finley (1890-1977) span the years 1921-1977 and consist of general correspondence, subject material, writings, and miscellaneous papers. The collection is organized into four series: <u>Correspondence</u>; <u>Subject File</u>; Speech, Article, and Book File; and Miscellany.

Although there is a small group of Finley's personal correspondence for the years 1928-1972, which includes letters exchanged with Chester Dale, Paul Mellon, and Richard King Mellon, the bulk of his correspondence is contained in subject files that encompass his career with the United States Treasury Department (1922-1932), the National Gallery of Art (1938-1956), and his activities with numerous artistic and cultural organizations.

It might be noted here that a figure, other than Finley, also pervades these papers, namely, the American financier Andrew W. Mellon. In 1922 Finley joined the War Loan staff of the United States Treasury Department where he soon came to the attention of Secretary of the Treasury Mellon. He served as Mellon's special assistant at the Treasury Department from 1927 until 1932, accompanied him to England when Mellon was named ambassador to that country, and from 1934 until Mellon's death in 1937, Finley assisted in the acquisition of art works for Mellon's collection.

One of the two most notable subject files contains papers relating to the United States Treasury for the period when Finley served as Secretary Mellon's special assistant. The treasury papers are made up mainly of letters sent and received by Andrew W. Mellon; however, the bulk of Mellon's replies were written by Finley for Mellon's signature. Much of the correspondence reflects Mellon's views on tax reduction and government debts resulting from World War I. There are also papers relating to the controversy between Mellon and Senator James Couzens over the secretary's tax reduction plans. The file also contains speeches and articles by Mellon.

The second major subject file contains papers relating to the National Gallery of Art. Finley was associated with the national gallery from its inception, and the collection depicts in detail his involvement with plans for the construction of the building, the installation of Mellon's art collection, and the acquisition of other collections, such as those of Chester Dale, Samuel H. Kress, and Joseph E. Widener. There are papers concerning the design and lighting of the various galleries and the myriad details involved in the day-to-day operation of the gallery. Other papers relate to activities of the gallery during World War II, such as the distribution of art reproductions to armed services hospitals and special programs and dinners for servicemen at the gallery. Of particular interest in the correspondence are letters to Finley from John Walker, who succeeded Finley as director of the national gallery. The letters were written from England and Europe over the years 1946-1947 when Walker was involved in consultations about the national gallery's participation in the art program of Unesco and the acquisition of European paintings for the gallery. Among the prominent correspondents in these papers are Huntington Cairns, Royal Cortissoz, Chester Dale, Samuel H. Kress, Richard King Mellon, Duncan Phillips, Lessing J. Rosenwald, Harlan Fiske Stone, and Francis Henry Taylor.

Another outstanding subject file is that of the Commission of Fine Arts. Finley was appointed to the commission by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1943. The papers relate to the architectural development of the city of Washington, D.C., to the selection of furniture and objects of art for the White House, and to various fine arts projects with which the federal government was concerned. Correspondents within this group include George Biddle, Clement E. Conger, Henry Francis Du Pont, James Earle Fraser, Walker Hancock, Herbert Hoover, Lady Kirkland Bird Johnson, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, President John F. Kennedy, Lincoln Kirstein, W. S. Lewis, Paul Manship, Eleanor Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and Andrew Wyeth.

Included in the collection are papers pertaining to the People-to-People Program, a program to improve international relations through personal contacts by independent private groups and institutions. Finley was chairman of the fine arts committee, and his papers concern the distribution of color slides, photographs, and other color reproductions of American works of art to foreign countries. The committee also initiated a program for the donation of American paintings, sculpture, and prints to American embassies. Among Finley's correspondents are Leonard Carmichael, Lessing J. Rosenwald, and John Walker.

Papers pertaining to the National Portrait Gallery include correspondence with Senator Theodore Francis Green regarding legislation to establish and maintain the gallery. Other files concern the development of rules for the selection of portraits for the permanent collection. In addition to Green, correspondents include Leonard Carmichael, W. S. Lewis, Charles Nagel, and Sidney Dillon Ripley.

There is an extensive file for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, an organization chartered by Congress in 1949 to preserve historic American sites, buildings, objects, and antiquities of national significance. The papers show Finley's role in the formation of the trust and his direction of the organization as its first chairman. In addition to correspondence for the years 1946-1976, there are papers relating to the board of trustees and various committees, as well as files for individual historic properties such as the Cooper Union, Decatur House, and the Wayside Inn, Sudbury, Massachusetts.

Correspondents include Marie Oge Beale, James Biddle, Helen Claire Duprey Bullock, Lewis W. Douglas, Edgar William Garbisch, and Gordon Gray.

Finley's papers also include a file of his speeches and articles and his book, *History of the National Trust for Historic Preservation*, 1947-1963.

A small group of miscellaneous papers contains bills and receipts, biographical material, family papers, scrapbooks, and printed matter.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in four series:

- Correspondence, 1928-1972
- <u>Subject File, 1921-1977</u>
- Speech, Article, and Book File, 1925-1974
- Miscellany, 1929-1969

Description of Series

Container Series

BOX 1 Correspondence, 1928-1972

Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically.

Subject File, 1921-1977

Correspondence, financial statements, minutes of meetings, and press releases.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

BOX 84-87 Speech, Article, and Book File, 1925-1974

Handwritten and typewritten drafts and printed copies of speeches, articles, and a book.

Arranged by type of material.

BOX 87-92 <u>Miscellany</u>, 1929-1969

Bills and receipts, biographical papers, family papers, printed matter, and scrapbooks.

Arranged by type of material.

Container List

BOX 1 Correspondence, 1928-1972 Letters sent and received. Arranged chronologically. BOX 1 1928-1972, undated (7 folders) BOX 1-83 Subject File, 1921-1977 Correspondence, financial statements, minutes of meetings, and press releases. Arranged alphabetically by subject. Accokeck Foundation 1957-1965 (3 folders) BOX 2 1966-1969 Related papers American Association of Museums 1945-1954 (4 folders) Related papers Printed matter American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Europe Correspondence, 1943-1945, 1948 Related papers, 1943-1946, undated (2 folders) American Institute of France American Museum of Immigration Association of Art Museum Directors Correspondence, 1947-1964 Related papers Blair House, Washington, D.C. Ceccato Study Club Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, S.C., 1949-1966 (2 folders) BOX 5 Commission of Fine Arts Correspondence 1942-1953 (7 folders)	Container	Contents
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BOX 5 Commission of Fine Arts Correspondence 1942-1953		
1942-1953	BOX 5	
1942-1953		
(7 folders)		
		(7 folders)

Container	Contents
вох 6	1954-1962
	(7 folders)
вох 7	1963-1976
	American Battle Monuments Commission
	Anton Refregier murals
	Benjamin Rush statue
	Committee on Government and Art
	1948-1950
	1951
	JanApr.
вох 8	May-Dec.
	(2 folders)
	1952-1956, July
	(6 folders)
вох 9	Related papers
	Committee on National Capital Museums
	Federal Advisory Commission on the Arts
	History and Technology Building, Smithsonian Institution
	Meeting announcements
	Minutes of meetings, 1962-1963
	"Old Georgetown," Washington, D.C.
	Portraits of five United States senators for the Senate Reception Room
	Postage stamp designs
	Press releases
	Reports to the president by the commission
	1953
BOX 10	1961-1963
	Shipstead-Luce Act
	Theodore Roosevelt Island Bridge, Washington, D.C.
	(2 folders)
	War Art Museum
	(3 folders)
вох 11	(1 folder)
	War memorials
	White House furnishings and gifts
	1941-1950
	(4 folders)
BOX 12	1951-1962
	(2 folders)
	Miscellany
	Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
	Correspondence
	1946-1964
	(2 folders)
вох 13	1965-1972
	(5 folders)
	Deleted manage

Related papers

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1961-1967
BOX 14
                              1968-1975
                         Fogg Art Museum, Boston, Mass.
                         George T. Hunter Gallery of Art, Chattanooga, Tenn.
                         Hampton National Historic Site, Towson, Md.
                            Correspondence, 1945-1956
                              (2 folders)
                            Related papers
                         International Council of Museums
                            Correspondence
                              1946-1949
                                (2 folders)
BOX 15
                              1950-1965
                                (2 folders)
                            Related papers
                            Printed matter
                         Jamestown-Williamsburg-Yorktown, Va.
                            National Celebration Commission
                            Correspondence
                              1954-1955
                                (2 folders)
BOX 16
                              1956-1959
                            Related papers
                            Printed matter
                         John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.
                         Mellon, Andrew W.
                            Correspondence
                              1921-1930
                                (3 folders)
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                            Related papers
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                              Correspondence, 1955, Feb.-1956, Jan.
                                 (2 folders)
                              Related papers
                            Memorial fountain
                              Correspondence
                                1947-1950
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                                1951-1952, June
                                   (2 folders)
                              Authorization
                              Blueprints
                              Dedication
                                (3 folders)
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                            Correspondence
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                               1972-1977
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                            Correspondence
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                                 (2 folders)
                               1941
                                 Jan.-June
                                    (2 folders)
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                                 July-Dec.
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                               1942
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                              Related papers
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                                   (8 folders)
                              Resolutions
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                            Bylaws
                            Chester Dale Collection
                              Correspondence, 1940, June-1944, Aug.
                                 (4 folders)
                              Related papers
                            Chester Dale luncheon, 31 Mar. 1956
                            Clapp resolution concerning German art works
                            Committees
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                                   1940-1946
                                      (2 folders)
BOX 26
                                   1947-1956
                                 Minutes of meetings
                                 Policies
                              Building
                                 Correspondence, 1939-1943
                                 Minutes of meetings
                                 Related papers
                              Executive
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                            Construction and maintenance
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                                 (2 folders)
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                            Decoration of American embassies, 1947-1967
                               (4 folders)
                            Entertainment budget, 1945-1956
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                            Gallery opening, 1941
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                              Related papers
                            Joseph E. Widener Collection
                              Correspondence, 1939-1953
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                              Related papers
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вох 35	Tenth anniversary celebration, 1951
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	Belin-Dale dinner, 17 Mar.
	Finley dinner, 17 Mar.
	Garrett dinner, 17 Mar.
	Miscellany
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	National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.
	Correspondence
	1938-1966
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	Minutes of the National Portrait Gallery Commission
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BOX 40	1964-1975, Sept.
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BOX 41	1975, Oct1976, undated
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David E. Finley Papers

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	Casa Amesti, Monterey, Calif.
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	Decatur House, Washington, D.C.
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	Baker, Bryant
	Bank of the United States
	Beach, Chester
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Beck, James M.

Bemis, Samuel Flagg

Beveridge, Albert Jeremiah

Blair, Francis P.

Blair, Gist

Bliss, Robert Woods

Bloom, Sol

Boardman, Mabel T.

Bond, Henry Herrick

Borah, William Edgar

Brett, George P.

Brisbane, Arthur

Brown, Walter F.

Bruce, David K. E.

Bruce, William Cabell

Burton, Theodore E.

Butcher, Harry C.

Butler, Nicholas Murray

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Capper, Arthur

Caraway, Thaddeus H.

Carr, Wilbur J.

Chandor, Douglas

Chenery, William L.

Chloride Cliff and Hawkeye Mining interests

Church, Samuel H.

"The City of Washington," motion picture film

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Coolidge, Calvin

Cooper, Kent

Copeland, Royal S.

Corcoran, George Eustis

Cortelyou, George B.

Cotton

Couzens, James

Couzens-Mellon controversy

Curtis, Charles

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Davis, James J.

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	Garner, John Nance
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	Gibson, Hugh
	Gifford, Walter S.
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Hibben, John Grier Hines, Frank T. Holland, Thomas H.

Hoover, Grace S. Hoover, Herbert Hoover, J. Edgar Howard, Roy W.

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"Three Eras in Banking"
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"Tax Publicity"

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"The Value to the Country of the Extension of the Federal Reserve Bank Charters"

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New York Evening Post

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McAdoo, William G.

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McMillan, Thomas S.

"N" miscellaneous

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Sinclair, John F.

Smoot, Reed

Steffani, Alberto de

Stimson, Henry L.

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	Widener, Joseph E.
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                             "An Art Boom in Wartime"
                            "Art in America"
                            "The Case for a Permanent Art Collection"
                            "The Dawes Plan"
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                            "National Gallery of Art"
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                            "Notes on the History of the National Gallery of Art and the Growth of Its Collections"
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                               1950, 20 Feb.
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