Robert Lynn Batts, retired professor of law and former regent, died on May 19, 1935. He was 70.

Professor Batts was born on November 1, 1864, in Bastrop, Texas. He received a law degree from The University of Texas at Austin in 1886. While studying at the University, he was editor of the institution's first student publication, The Texas University.

After he was admitted to the bar, Professor Batts returned to Bastrop and practiced law. In 1892 he was named assistant attorney general for Texas. As the attorney for the state in *Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railway Company v. Texas*, he recovered 920,000 acres of land for the public school fund.

In 1893 he joined the law school faculty, teaching for eight years before resigning in 1901 to return to private practice. He again represented the state in *Texas v. Waters-Pierce Oil Company*, recouping $1,900,000. In 1914 he was named special assistant attorney general for the United States. In one of his cases, he brought criminal charges against the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad Company. In 1917 President Woodrow Wilson appointed him to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. He served as a judge until 1919, resigning to accept the position as general counsel for Gulf Petroleum Company.

From 1927 to 1933 Professor Batts was a member of the board of regents. He served as chairman for the last three years of his appointment, pushing through plans for the addition of ten new buildings on the campus at a cost of over $5 million.

Professor Batts was the author of *Annotated Revised Civil Statutes of Texas* (1897-1899) and *The Law of Corporations in Texas* (1902).

Batts Hall was named in his honor in April 1953.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

Biographical sketch prepared by Teresa Palomo Acosta and posted on the Faculty Council web site on January 18, 2001. Additional biographical sources can be found in the Barker Texas History Center and the *New Handbook of Texas*, Texas State Historical Association, 1996.