

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received **JUL 17 1984**

date entered **AUG 22 1984**

1. Name

historic Batts, Judge Robert Lynn, House

and/or common Okewell

2. Location

street & number 1505 Windsor Road. N/A not for publication

city, town Austin N/A vicinity of

state Texas code 048 county Travis code 453

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Philip Chase Bobbitt

street & number 1505 Windsor Road

city, town Austin N/A vicinity of state Texas 78703

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Travis County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Austin state Texas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin state Texas

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Batts House, Okewell, is a noteworthy and intact example of a large Mediterranean Revival dwelling. Sited at the crest of a hill above Shoal Creek, overlooking downtown Austin, the irregularly shaped Batts House responds unusually well to its location. The loggias, terraces, balconies, textured stucco walls, and ornamental plaques give Okewell a picturesque quality found in few Austin residential structures. The house is located in a neighborhood of contemporaneous houses and newer apartment buildings.

The Batts House is a rambling, two-and-a-half-story residence with rough, hand-troweled stucco exterior. The nucleus of the house is essentially rectangular, but has a projecting wing angling to the southeast and a garage which is linked to the main block at its northwest corner by an open arcade. The house has a concrete-tile roof and a prominent gable towards one end of the north, south, and west elevations. Rafter ends are scalloped beneath the deep, overhanging eaves.

The west facade is now the entrance, and is dominated by a projecting, two-story ell that features a door with large, bracketed porch hood to the north, and a pair of kitchen windows with nine-over-one lights to the south. Three windows with nine-over-nine lights, all with louvered shutters, are found at the second-floor level of this western ell.

At the northwest corner of the main block, a curved and open arcade joins the residence to the old two-car garage with servants' quarters. The garage has been divided into apartments, although its essential external features have been carefully retained. Six paneled garage doors each with nine lights occur at ground level, and are surmounted by a large dormer with triple six-over-six windows. Although modern sliding-glass doors were installed on the northeastern face of the garage in recent years, the structure nonetheless contributes to the historical character of the property.

The south facade, which was originally the main entrance, features a gabled central section, a service wing to the west, and a sun-room wing angled to the southeast. The arched central door with 12-pane sidelights is sheltered by a projecting porte-cochere. The railing along the porte-cochere features an incised bat motif, which is also found on a rooftop weathervane and, originally, in window shutters long since removed. A bay window immediately to the west has nine-over-one windows above. Similar windows occur on each wing. The chimney of the sunroom wing has a majolica Della Robia medallion, one of several ceramic and bronze plaques set into the stucco at ground-floor level on the west, south, and north facades.

The east facade has a central projecting porch with an enclosed sleeping area on its second-floor level. Two bas-relief discs are inbedded in the porch walls, as well as one painted panel. Twenty-light French windows are found toward the facade's north end, while the angled sunroom wing, with expanses of nine-over-nine windows, projects to the southeast. The east end of the library terrace covers an arcaded porch at basement level, below.

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The north facade is dominated by a massive lateral gable and chimney breast. Fenestration is irregular: 12-pane windows are found on the first floor level on each side of the chimney. Grouped six-over-six windows and one twelve-pane window occur on the second-floor level, while round-headed, 13-pane windows are placed on the top floor.

The interior decor of the house has an Early English plan. The L-shaped entrance hall features high wainscoting with some built-in cabinets and plastered walls. The most noteworthy feature in the hall is the two-run staircase with curved landing; its iron railing bears the signature of the noted Weigl Brothers, who were responsible for much of the best ironwork in Austin in the first half of the 20th century. The dining (south-central) room is an irregular octagon with corner cabinets to the north and corner windows to the south. It is noteworthy for its coved ceiling and high wainscoting. The adjoining pantry and kitchen (southwest room) retain some early cabinetry.

The most remarkable room in the house is the long library, extending the length of the north front. It features built in bookcases, which are centered on the fireplace of the north wall, a beamed ceiling, and floor-to-ceiling wainscoting. Panels above the bookcases have insets reproductions of Renaissance paintings.

The second and third floors of the Batts House contain six bedrooms. Architectural detailing is simple. The basement of the house has plastered concrete block walls. By and large, Okewell has had few alterations over the years and retains its historic integrity.

The grounds are heavily wooded and surrounded by a stone wall, while a system of stone paths crisscrosses the property. A modern swimming pool is located at the southern edge of the property, but is in no way intrusive. A series of terraces run along the edge of the hill on the east side of the house.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below							
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1925

Builder/Architect

Raymond Everett

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Okewell, built in 1925, bears historical significance primarily because of its association with Judge Robert Lynn Batts, a prominent public figure during the first decades of the 20th century in Texas. Raised in Bastrop, Texas, Judge Batts' childhood home is listed on the National Register of Historical Places (Bastrop Multiple Resource Nomination, 1978). Okewell, the only other known Batts' house left standing, was the home Judge and Mrs. Batts designed and had built according to their specifications. While theoretically retired, Judge Batts' residency at Okewell marked some of the most productive years of his life.

Robert Lynn Batts was born in Bastrop on November 1, 1864, to Andrew Jackson and Julia Rice Batts. In 1884 he came to the University of Texas, shortly after it opened, to study law; two years later, after graduation, he was admitted to the State Bar. Batts returned to Bastrop to practice law, married Harriet Fiquet Boak of Austin, served two terms in the state legislature representing Bastrop, and then in 1891 was appointed Assistant Attorney General under Charles A. Culberson.

While serving as Assistant Attorney General of Texas, Batts represented the state in several landmark cases, including his celebrated recovery of 920,000 acres of land for the State of Texas in State v. Galveston, Harrisburg and S.A. Railroad Co., and \$1,900,000 in State v. Waters-Pierce Oil Co.

Batts accepted an offer to teach law at the University of Texas in 1893, the first graduate of the Law School to be appointed to the faculty. He continued teaching until 1901, when he entered private practice with partner Thomas W. Gregory. After the appointment of Gregory as Attorney General in President Wilson's cabinet, in 1912, Batts was appointed Special Assistant Attorney General of the United States to argue criminal charges against the directors of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railway Co., and attained a nationwide reputation as a prosecutor. With Colonel E.E. House, Gregory and Walter Page, Batts was one of the circle of influential Texans around President Wilson.

In March, 1917, President Wilson appointed Batts judge of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Batts served as judge until 1919, when he resigned from the court to become general counsel for the Gulf Petroleum Company. During this time he resided in New York and Pittsburgh. Batts resigned and returned to Austin in 1923.

Upon his return, Batts began plans for the building of Okewell, which was completed in 1925. The design of the Batts House was largely a result of collaboration between Harriet Batts and architect Raymond Everett (1885-1948). Everett was a native

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date entered

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of Englishtown, New Jersey, and a graduate of Harvard University. While trained as an architect, Everett is remembered primarily as an artist and sculptor. He taught at the University of Texas from 1915 until his death, and worked in a large variety of artistic media. His architectural practice was said to have been limited to vacation periods. The consciously picturesque qualities of the Batts House, and the artwork imbedded in exterior and library walls, bespeak Everett's artistic interests. Okewell remains one of the significant examples of the Mediterranean Revival style in Austin and central Texas.

Up to this point, Judge Batts had largely devoted himself to serving his state and country, and had plans to retire in Austin. Judge Batts' "retirement" was to become the crowning years of his already full life, during which he rendered to Texas and its youths a service of great value.

In January of 1927, Judge Batts was appointed to the Board of Regents of the University of Texas. For 15 years prior to this appointment, "Let's go see Batts" had been a standard statement around the university when university administrators found themselves in perplexity. The last 10 years of Judge Batts life, however, was a period when he truly became a champion of U.T. during one of its most tumultuous periods of growth and transition. Batts' neighbor, Governor James Ferguson, while in and out of office, was attempting to thwart all expansion plans for the university. Nevertheless, Judge Batts joined with Will Hogg and others to aid the university's expansion.

Under Judge Batts' direction, the innovative financing of ten new buildings at U.T. and the expansion program at A&M was accomplished, a project which has since been characterized as unique in the history of educational administration. The legislative measure was mostly drafted by Judge Batts, and provided for investment into a Permanent Fund by the Board of Regents.

Batts' affection for the University of Texas was obviously reciprocated by the regents, officials, alumni and students at the University, as evidenced by the dedication of Batts Hall on the U.T. campus in his honor. Yet the high esteem felt for Judge Batts was not limited to University officials, but was acknowledged citywide in 1933 when Judge Batts was acclaimed by his fellow Austinites as its most worthy citizen. During the Batts' tenure at Okewell, numerous distinguished visitors called at the Windsor Road home.

After Judge Batts' death in 1935, his widow lived in the house until her death in 1937. It then passed to Margaret Lynn Batts Tobin of San Antonio, Judge Batts' daughter. Mrs. Tobin, wife of San Antonio businessman Edgar Tobin, was herself a regent of the University of Texas from 1947 to 1955, and a philanthropist and civic leader of note. Her principal residence, however, has remained in San Antonio.

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In 1940, the house was leased to a geophysicist E. DeGolyer whose Dallas home was listed on the National Register in 1977. In World War II, Okewell home was used by a contingent of W.A.C.S. Okewell was then used periodically by the family until 1966, when it was condemned by the City of Austin and slated for demolition for an Enfield expressway. Ten years later, plans for the demolition were forestalled and the house was acquired by University of Texas Professor Philip Bobbitt, a nephew of the late President Lyndon Johnson. As a result of the long period of neglect by the city, much rehabilitation and restoration were necessary to return the house to its original condition. The historic appearance and the role of the Austin landmark in its community have both now been restored.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Raymond Everett, 1885-1948," on file, Everett Papers, Architectural Drawings Collection, University of Texas at Austin.
Webb, Walter Prescott (ed.), *Handbook of Texas*, I, II, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1952.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.47

Quadrangle name Austin West, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

(See continuation sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state		code	county	code
-------	--	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marlise Aimone (w/ Peter Flagg Maxson, THC)

organization _____ date January 1983 (1984)

street & number c/o 1505 Windsor Road telephone _____

city or town Austin state Texas 78703

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marlise Aimone

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 6 July 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

8/22/84

J. B. Groves
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Margaret Lynn Batts Tobin to Peter Flagg Maxson, interview by telephone, 4 May 1984.
Oveta Culp Hobby to Margaret Lynn Batts Tobin, interview, May 1984.

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date entered

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Page 1

Tract of land out of lots 21 through 25, Enfield A, a subdivision in the city of Austin.

Beginning at a steel pin at the southwest corner of the herein described tract of land, same being the intersection of the east line of Windsor Road, same being the west line of said Lots 21 through 25, with the proposed north line of Enfield Road, same being a line 35.32 feet north of and parallel to the present north line of Enfield Road, and from which point of beginning the southwest corner of said Lots 21 through 25 bears South 40.81 feet;

Thence, with said east line of Windsor Road, same being said west line of Lots 21 through 25, North 200.03 feet to a punch hole in a concrete pillar at the northwest corner of said City of Austin tract of land, same being northwest corner of the herein described tract of land;

Thence, with the north line of said City of Austin tract of land, S 86° 00' E 281.30 feet to an "x" on top of a rock wall at the northeast corner of said City of Austin tract of land, same being the northeast corner of the herein described tract of land, same also being a point in the present west line of Harrell Lane;

Thence, with said present west line of Harrell Lane same being the east line of said City of Austin tract of land, S 00° 24' E 134.83 feet to the point of curvature of a curve having an angle of intersection of 30° 47', a radius of 183.15 feet and a tangent distance of 50.42 feet;

Thence, continuing with the present west line of Harrell Lane along said curve to the right an arc distance of 15.74 feet, the chord of which arc bears S 02°03'30"W 15.74 feet to the point of compound curvature between the aforementioned curve and another curve to the right having an angle of intersection of 65° 00', a radius of 20.00 feet and a tangent distance of 12.74 feet, and which point is in the proposed west line of Harrell Lane;

Thence, with the proposed west line of Harrell Lane along said curve to the right an arc distance of 22.69 feet, the long chord of which arc bears S37° 01' W 21.49 feet to the point of reverse curvature, between the aforementioned curve and another curve to the left having an angle of intersection of 249° 55', a radius of 40.00 feet and a tangent distance of infinity;

Thence, continuing with the proposed west line of Harrell Lane along said curve to the left an arc distance of 63.46 feet, the long chord of which arc bears S 24° 04' W 57.01 feet to the southeast corner of the herein described tract of land, same being a point in the proposed north line of West 15th Street;

Thence, with said proposed north line of West 15th Street, S 78° 47' W 134.03 feet to a steel pin at the most southerly corner of the herein described tract of land, same being a point in the aforesaid proposed north line of Enfield Road;

Thence, with said proposed north line of Enfield Road, N 59° 57' W 130.78 feet to the point of beginning.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Batts, Judge Robert Lynn, House
Travis County
TEXAS

Substantive Review

Working No. JUL 17 1984

Fed. Reg. Date: 2.5.85

Date Due: 8/16/84 - 8/31/84

Action: ACCEPT 8-22-84

RETURN

REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria Accept - B,C

Reviewer Graves

Discipline Historian

Date 8/22/84

see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

1001 T 1 JUL

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

Statewide Inventory Report Form
Teller County
THURS

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



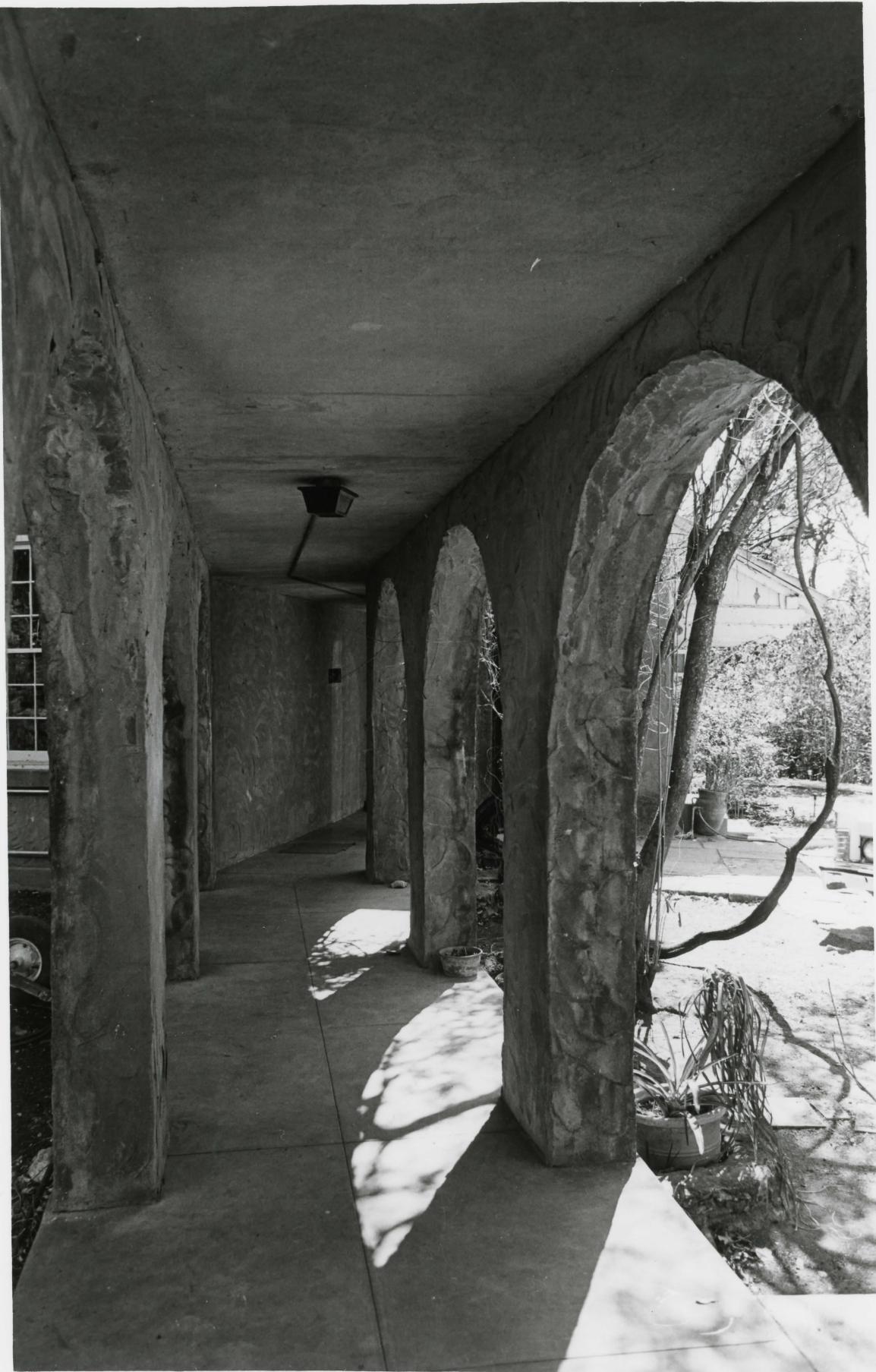
Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo taken 1935; copy print with Philip Bobbit
at 1505 Windsor, Austin.
South facade, looking Northwest
Photo 1 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo taken 1935; copy print with Philip Bobbit
at 1505 Windsor, Austin.
South facade, looking North
Photo 2 of 11



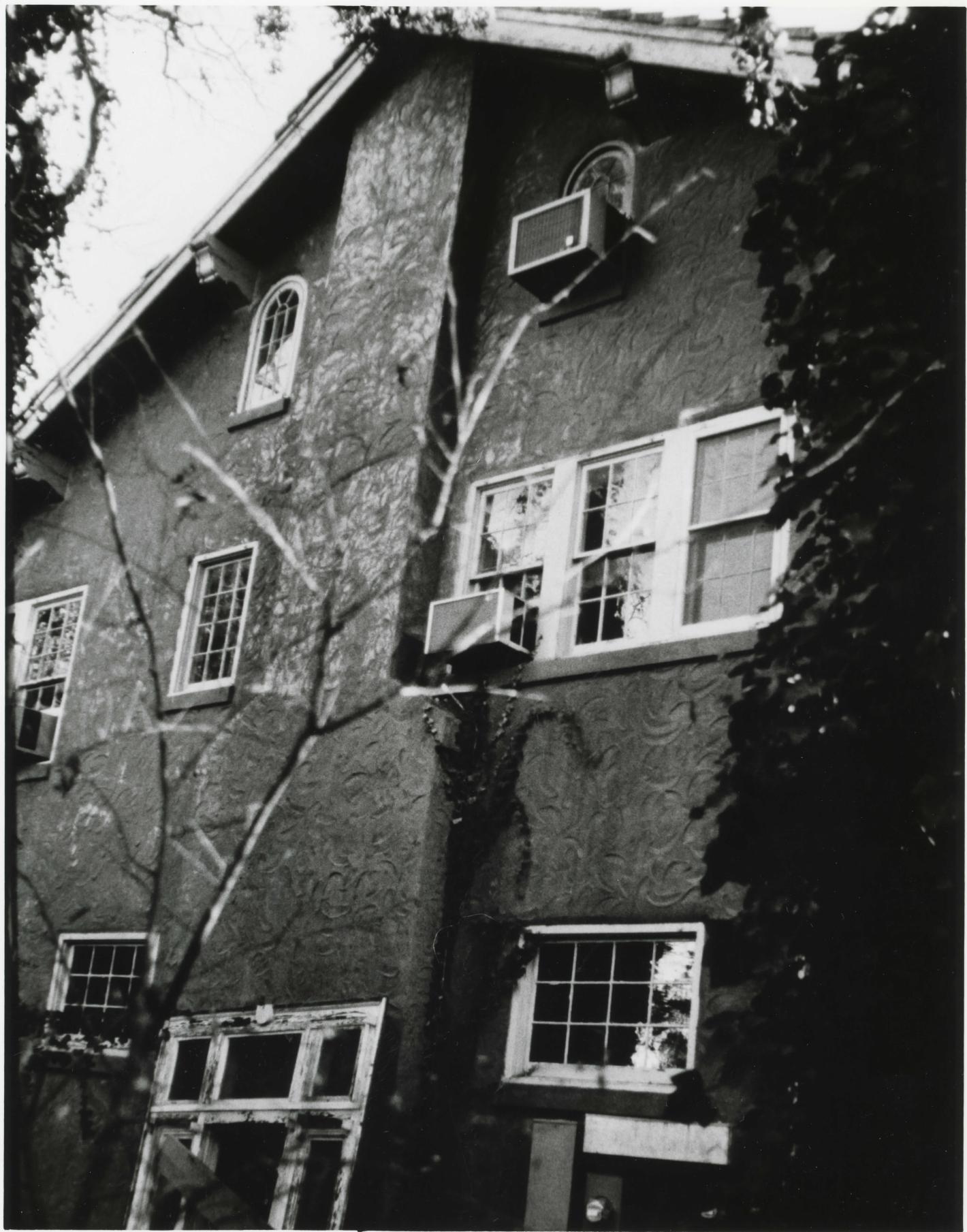
Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
West facade and garage, looking Southeast
Photo 3 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
View of open arcade connecting main house and
garage; looking South
Photo 4 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts HOUse
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
West facade; camera looking East.
Photo 5 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
North elevation, looking Southeast
Photo 6 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
East facade, looking Northwest
Photo 7 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
East porch medallion, looking North
Photo 8 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo: date unknown, original photo with Philip
Bobbit at 1505 Windsor, Austin
Library, looking East
Photo 9 of 11



Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
Detail of west wall, library; looking West
Photo 10 of 11



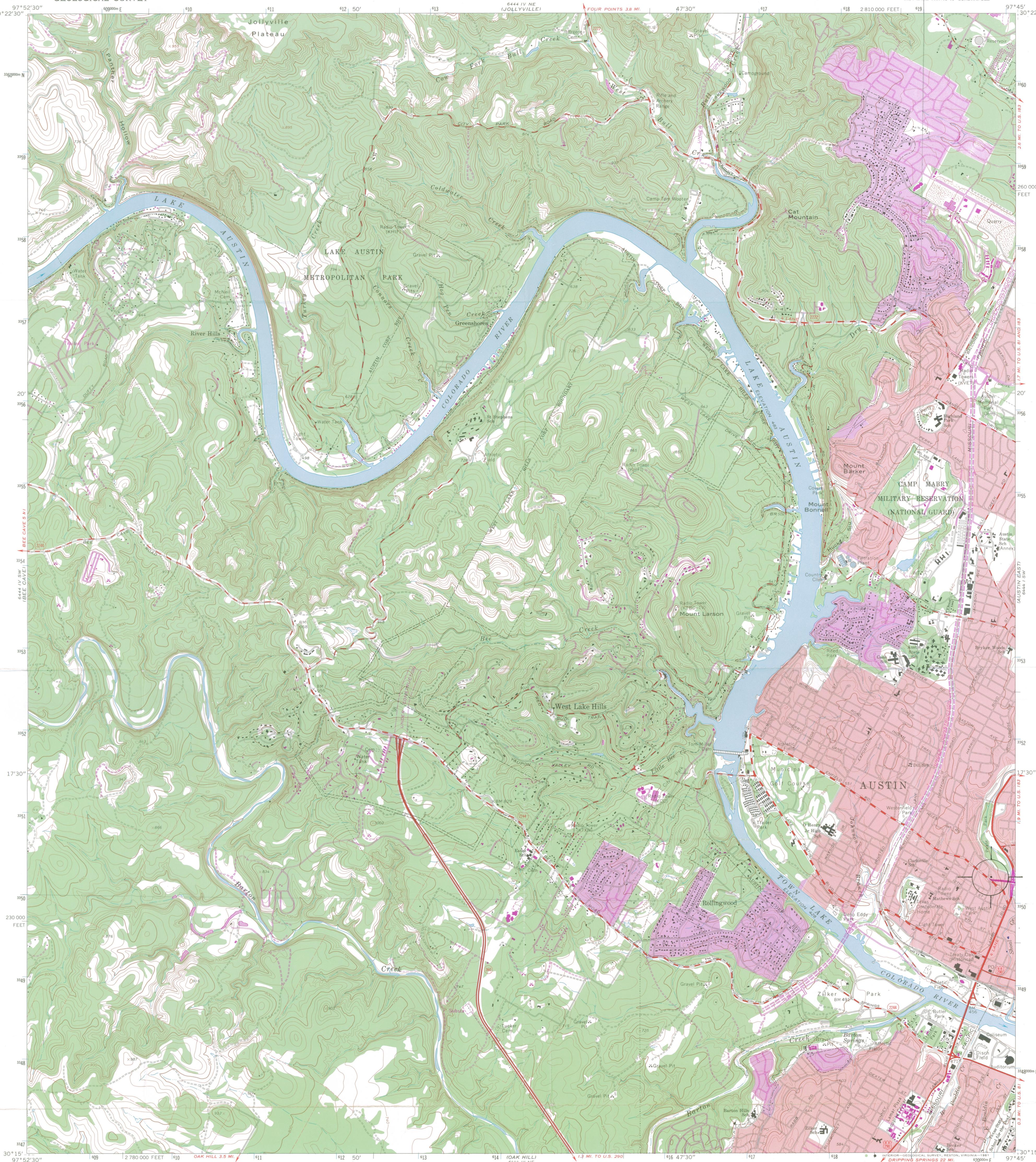
Judge Robert Lynn Batts House
1505 Windsor, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photo by Peter Flagg Maxson, February 1984;
Neg. with Texas Historical Commission, Austin
Principal staircase, looking West
Photo 11 of 11

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

CITY OF AUSTIN

AUSTIN WEST QUADRANGLE
TEXAS—TRAVIS CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE/4 LAKE TRAVIS 15' QUADRANGLE

JUDGE ROBERT LYNN BATTES HOUSE
1505 WINDSOR ROAD
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 14/619920/33503330



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, central zone

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

SCALE 1:24,000

1 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

1 0 1 5 0 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET

NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

1 0 1 5 0 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET

NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface

Secondary highway, hard surface

Unimproved road

Interstate Route

U.S. Route

State Route

AUSTIN WEST, TEX.
SE/4 LAKE TRAVIS 15' QUADRANGLE
N3015—W9745/75

1966
PHOTOREVISED 1973

DMA 6444 IV SE-SERIES V882

3097-231