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## Letters

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**Correcting the record**

To the Editor:

Not often do I find error in the *Law Quadrangle Notes*, but history has a way of being lost, and the splendid story in the last issue concerning the naming of Professor Joseph Sax as Distinguished University Professor contained a slight error. The story asserted that only one other Law School professor had been so honored—Professor William Bishop. In fact, an earlier appointment was given to the late Professor Lewis M. Simes.

The creation of Distinguished University Professorships was approved by the Regents in 1947, and they authorized nine such appointments. Professor Simes was one of the original group chosen from the University faculty, and his distinction is part of Michigan's heritage. My personal association is of long standing, and I am so far in his debt that I want to correct the record. It so happens that he was the chairman of my doctoral committee when I was a graduate student at Michigan in 1940, and I can attest to both his demanding standards of scholarship, and his warm encouragement of newcomers to the field. Later, in the 1950s, I had the privilege of working with him as co-author of a treatise on the law of Future Interests. Those who are familiar with the subsequent efforts of both of us will properly conclude that the hand of Simes was the guiding hand of the manuscript, and the mind of Simes was the creator of the project.

Professor Simes was one of the last of the great legal scholars who sought to encompass an entire subject in their writings. Williston, Powell, McCormick, Corbin, Scott, and more recently George Palmer, are illustrative



*Lewis M. Simes (inset photo) was named the Floyd Russell Mechem University Professor of Law by the Regents in 1947. A 1959 faculty photo shows the author of this letter, Allan F. Smith (left end of back row), Professor Simes (below Smith on the right), and the Law School's other former Distinguished University Professor, William W. Bishop, Jr. (below Smith on the left).*



authors whose vision and powers of research and analysis permitted them to prepare comprehensive treatises, widely recognized as the best authoritative sources for guidance in the particular subject matter. We are more likely today to find treatises prepared by multiple authors or the staff of a publishing house. I do not know whether it is a common characteristic of those just named, but one of the great strengths of Lewis Simes was his prodigious memory. He was renowned for his capacity to recall a particular case, the state in which it was decided, and often the year and volume of publication. This memory, coupled with his meticulous attention to detail, helped pro-

duce his lucid and carefully crafted writings. Generations of law students owe him a debt of gratitude for bringing clarity to an obscure area of the law.

The career of Professor Simes did not end with his retirement from Michigan Law School. He joined the famous Sixty-Five Club at Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco, and taught for a number of years until his death in 1974.

So may we let the record show that Professor Sax is the third (not second) member of the law faculty to bear the title Distinguished University Professor, and add Lewis M. Simes to the distinguished group.

*-Allan F. Smith, Professor of Law*