

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON
Samuel "Sam" T. Rayburn House; "The Home Place"
Sam Rayburn House Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER About 1/2 mile west of the Bonham
city limit, on U.S. 82
CITY, TOWN _____ STATE _____ CODE 48 COUNTY Fannin CODE 147
VICINITY OF Bonham CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1
Texas

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Texas Historical Commission; Sam Rayburn Foundation
STREET & NUMBER P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station; on U.S. 82
CITY, TOWN Austin; Bonham STATE Texas
VICINITY OF _____

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. County Clerk's Office
STREET & NUMBER Fannin County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN Bonham STATE Texas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Texas State Historical Survey; National Register
DATE 1965; 1972
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Texas State Historical Survey Committee; National Register
CITY, TOWN Austin; Washington STATE Texas; D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

During virtually his entire national political career--from 1916 until 1961--Sam Rayburn's Texas residence was this farmhouse known as "The Home Place." The stately dwelling is nearly unchanged since Rayburn's death. With it, as part of the designated area, are a garage, storehouse, wellhouse, shed, and barn. All date from Rayburn's occupancy, and all except the barn are owned and maintained by the Texas Historical Commission. The barn stands on grounds owned by the Sam Rayburn Foundation. Of extant dwellings associated with Rayburn, "The Home Place" represents him best. He came here whenever possible, and he welcomed numerous dignitaries here. The only other known Rayburn residences are his Washington apartment, which he occupied from 1929 until his last illness, and a crude, now deteriorating, cabin north of Bonham, which he used in cattle ranching.

Despite the widely acknowledged significance of "The Home Place," there remains a degree of uncertainty about the construction date of the main house here. Dr. James Jameson, curator of the historical commission property, has concluded that the National Register nomination for the house bears an incorrect date. That form states that the house was built by 1904 and that, though the Rayburns did not acquire the farm until 1914, they may have rented the house from 1912. Jameson says, however, that Rayburn's brother Tom took a lien on 121 acres of vacant farmland, including "The Home Place" land, in 1914. Then in 1916 Sam acquired one-half interest, and later the family purchased additional land. The residence was built in summer or autumn 1916, while the Rayburns lived temporarily in the town of Bonham. As documentary evidence Jameson cites a 1915 letter from a carpenter and an April 26, 1916, letter from Sam to a friend in which the Congressman writes, "I am starting now to build us a nice house on a splendid farm we have bought just two miles west of Bonham."⁸ Whatever the initial construction date, in 1933-34 Rayburn commissioned Dallas architect W.B. Yarborough to remodel the house, and Rayburn made some later changes too. After Rayburn died in 1961, his sister Meddie Rayburn Bartley resided here until her death 8 years later, at which time the Sam Rayburn Foundation received the property. In 1972 the foundation deeded almost 2 acres, including the house and all the outbuildings except the barn, to the Texas Historical Commission to maintain as they were at the time of Rayburn's death. The foundation lends use of the barn to the local chapter of the Future Farmers of America.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1916-1961

BUILDER/ARCHITECT W. B. Yarborough (1933-34)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Samuel "Sam" T. Rayburn, according to his biographer C. Dwight Dorough, was "an institution, unique in the history of American politics and government."¹ A statesman whose Congressional career spanned almost a half-century from the New Freedom of Woodrow Wilson to the New Frontier of John F. Kennedy, "Mr. Sam" became a figure familiar to millions of Americans as he presided over the House of Representatives or the quadrennial gatherings of the Democratic Party.

During his 17-year tenure as Speaker of the House of Representatives--more than twice as long as any other man who had served in this position--Rayburn rendered invaluable service to the American people. His success in saving the peacetime draft bill in 1941 and in getting money appropriated for the Manhattan Project with no questions asked contributed greatly to American victory in World War II. In the postwar era he played a significant role in the development of a bipartisan foreign policy and in gaining approval for important measures like the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. Despite his ardent advocacy of most of the policies of Democratic Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy, Rayburn's statesmanship was perhaps most clearly revealed in his dealings with the administration of Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower. During the late 1950's, Rayburn and his protege, fellow Texas Lyndon B. Johnson, the Senate Majority Leader, "followed a deliberate strategy of compromise and cooperation," says historian Arthur S. Link.² This preserved a delicate balance between the northern and southern wings of the Democratic Party and at the same time contributed greatly to a period of national tranquility that most Americans welcomed in the post-McCarthy years.

As a legislator, Rayburn authored a number of significant measures like the War Risk Insurance Act of 1917, the Truth-in-Securities Act of 1933, the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, and the Rural

(continued)

1 C. Dwight Dorough, Mr. Sam (New York, 1962), 583.

2 Arthur S. Link, American Epoch: A History of the United States Since the 1890's, 3d edition (New York, 1967), 754.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dorough, C. Dwight, Mr. Sam (New York: Random House, 1962).

Freidel, Frank, America in the Twentieth Century, 2d edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about 2 1/2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 4	7, 59, 2, 50	3, 7, 1, 7, 7, 5, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See last page of description)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Cathy A. Alexander and Ralph Christian, Assistant Editors; and George R. Adams, Managing Editor

ORGANIZATION

American Association for State and Local History

DATE

January 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1400 Eighth Avenue South

TELEPHONE

(615) 242-5583

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee 37203

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

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

267

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE one

The Main House. The 1916 main house stood 2 1/2 stories high and measured two bays across the north (front) facade. It had a two-tiered, three-columned front porch and a hip roof. On the front roof slope was a wide, hipped dormer. Architect Yarborough increased the number of front bays to three, replaced the front porch with a full-height, four-columned front portico, and erected a gable roof with an east-west ridge. Inside, he enlarged the living room, added a first-floor guest bedroom to the east end, and expanded a second-floor bedroom. Jameson believes that a small, one-story, L-shaped, southwest kitchen wing was added by Rayburn about 1950.

The present 2 1/2-story, weatherboard-covered house has a very low foundation. White-painted wooden quoins trim the corners, and green shutters flank the five front windows, which have, along with most of the house's windows, six-over-six lights. Three low steps mount to the full-length front portico with Tuscan columns and entablature. The 15-pane glass front door has 10-pane side lights, a transom, and a pediment. Three front-facing gabled dormers, one white-painted brick central chimney, one white-painted brick interior end chimney, and a television antenna top the gable roof, which is new. The Texas Historical Commission had to replace the old one in 1975. In back, on the first floor, two adjoining screened porches, each with a green-painted door, enclose all but the southwest kitchen wing. The eastern porch extends rearward slightly farther than the western one and has its own small sloping roof. Directly above, on the second floor, mullion windows cross a rear, full-length sleeping porch and extend down its sides. The whole porch extension has a flat roof, and the kitchen wing has a small gable roof. A dinner bell hangs from a tall, rough post near the west rear door.

Inside, most of the furnishings that were here in 1961 remain. The Texas Historical Commission has only installed central heating and air conditioning, new electrical wiring, structural supports, and some new wallpapers, which duplicate as nearly as possible the original ones. Floorboards measure about 2 1/4 inches wide on the first floor and about 3 1/2 inches on the second floor. Simple baseboards remain throughout. Most interior doors and windows have cornices with egg-and-dart trim.

The front door enters directly into the living room. Apparently Rayburn used the living room sparingly and preferred the sitting room behind it. The sitting room's south door leads onto the eastern screened

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE two

porch, and its north wall holds the only fireplace in the house--at least since the 1934 alterations. Before that remodeling the sitting room was the dining room, and the current dining room was Rayburn's parents' bedroom. Now the dining room is west of the living room. Behind the dining room are the stair hall and breakfast room. Apparently until the southwest wing was built about 1950, the breakfast room was the kitchen. Accessible via the western screened porch, the L-shaped southwest wing consists of a rectangular kitchen and a small pantry, both of which are tile-floored. At the northeastern end of the first floor, to the left of the living room, is the 1934 guest bedroom and, rear of it, a bathroom. President and Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson number among those who have occupied the guest suite. The house does not extend any farther rearward on the east side.

A steep, two-flight stairway with plain newel and balusters leads to the second floor. Mr. Tom's Room, named for Rayburn's younger brother, stands west of the stairs, and the boys' sleeping porch lies behind it. The brothers' victrola is exhibited here. Minnie Eldridge, a cousin, and Lucinda, "Miss Lou," Rayburn's sister, occupied the northwest and southeast bedrooms respectively. Behind Miss Lou's Room stands the girls' sleeping porch, and the bathroom between Tom's and Minnie's rooms was the only one in the house until 1934. At that time, Yarborough enlarged the northeast bedroom, Mr. Sam's Room, and for many years, it doubled as the Congressman's library. Mr. Sam's Room contains his personal mementos. Rear of it, a bathroom completes the east end of the second floor.

The Sam Rayburn House Museum charges no admission and offers guided tours only. A parking lot and visitor center stand at a discreet distance west of the house and outside the designated historic area. The one-story, white-painted frame visitor center, which resembles the original outbuildings, holds a slideshow auditorium and gift shop. None of the original outbuildings, described below, is open to the public.

The Garage. Often the 1947 black Cadillac that his fellow Democratic Congressmen gave to Rayburn is parked in the open rear of the house, but across the gravel driveway is a white-painted, frame, three-car garage. A gable roof with north-south ridge surmounts the middle part, and sloping roofs top each side wing and the rear extension for the Cadillac. The garage dates from the 1920's and holds at least two other Rayburn automobiles.

The Storehouse and Garden. The storehouse and garden stand directly behind the main house. The one-story storehouse was built prior to 1932,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE three

and because meats were stored in it, it is sometimes called the smoke-house though no meats were ever smoked in it. The white-painted structure has board siding, a north-south gable ridge, and one rear window.

The Curator's Residence and the Shed. The one-story, gable-roofed curator's residence replaces a caretaker's house that stood on this spot from about 1924 until 1973. The two exterior facades that can be seen from the main house duplicate the original, but the interior is entirely modern. The former farm machinery shed serves as the curator's automobile garage.

The Wellhouse. The southernmost building on historical commission property is the wellhouse. The one-story, white-painted frame structure has a gable roof.

The Barn. The white-printed frame barn stands just beyond the chainlink fence that marks the southern boundary of the Texas Historical Commission property. The barn has a gable roof with an east-west ridge. The Sam Rayburn Foundation permits the local chapter of the Future Farmers of America to use the structure. Compared to the other outbuildings, it is in poor condition. Nevertheless, it is an essential part of the rural setting of the Rayburn House.

Boundary Justification. Included within the boundary of the designated historic area are: (1) approximately 2 acres owned by the Texas Historical Commission and containing the main house and all the historic outbuildings except the barn; and (2) approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ acre situated generally rear of the historical commission property, belonging to the Sam Rayburn Foundation, and containing the Rayburn barn. The latter area is included because the barn, although in poor condition, seems, like the other outbuildings, to be an essential part of the rural setting of the Rayburn House.

Boundary Description. As indicated in red on the accompanying maps [(1) U.S.G.S. 15' Series, Tex.-Okla., Bonham Quad., 1958; (2) AASLH Sketch Map, 1976], a line beginning at the southwest corner of the visitor parking lot and running approximately 285 feet due south to an unmarked point 75 feet south of the south side of barn; thence about 365 feet due east on a line parallel to and 100 feet south of the chainlink fence rear of the house to an unmarked point on a plane with the chainlink fence that bounds the Texas Historical

(continued)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE four

Commission property on the east; thence northward about 390 feet along the plane of that fence to the southern edge of the right-of-way of U.S. 82; thence about 290 feet due west along the southern edge of the right-of-way of U.S. 82 to a point on a plane with a continuation of the chainlink fence as it passes north-south about 5 feet east of the visitor center; thence about 185 feet due south along the plane of that fence to the southeast corner of the visitor parking lot; thence about 75 feet due west along the southern edge of the parking lot to the starting point.

Continuation Sheet Rayburn House Item Number 9 Page one

Link, Arthur S., American Epoch: A History of the United States Since the 1890's, 3d edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967).

Parmet, Herbert S., Eisenhower and the American Crusades (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972).

Patterson, James T., Congressional Conservatives and the New Deal (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967).

Sam Rayburn House Museum, Sam Rayburn House Guide Manual (Bonham: Sam Rayburn House Museum, 1975).

Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr., The Coming of the New Deal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1958).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE one

Electrification Act of 1936. Probably most outstanding was his Securities Exchange Act of 1934 which created the Securities and Exchange Commission and gave it power to police the stock markets. According to political scholar Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., the act "owed a great deal to the parliamentary strength and skills of Rayburn, who stood off pressures with cool composure and an astute sense of political possibility."³

From 1916 until his death in 1961, Rayburn made his Texas home in this 2½-story, gable-roofed, frame dwelling, which with its accompanying outbuildings is known as "The Home Place." All the structures in the 2 1/2-acre designated area--except the barn--are owned by the Texas Historical Commission, which operates the house as a museum. The barn is owned by the Sam Rayburn Foundation. Of the three extant residences associated with Rayburn, this one clearly represents him best.

Biography

Samuel Taliaferro Rayburn was born January 6, 1882, near Lenoir, Tenn., to William M. and Martha W. Rayburn. When Sam was 5, the family moved to Texas and bought a small farm near Windom. Here Sam spent a typical rural boyhood, did his share of farm work, and attended school when he could. The turning point of his life occurred in the mid-1890's when he heard Representative Joseph W. Bailey speak. Young Sam resolved on the spot that he would be a member of Congress someday.

In 1900, with \$25 in his pocket, Sam entered Mayo Normal School (now East Texas State College) at Commerce, Tex. Working at a number of odd jobs, he completed 1 year before financial difficulties forced him to leave. He taught at a country school in Greenwood in 1901 and saved enough money to return to college in 1902 and continue his education uninterrupted. Despite his 1-year hiatus, Sam completed his college's graduation requirements in 2 years and received his B.S. degree in 1903. Despite his political ambitions, he had to delay his entry into that arena because of debts he had incurred while attending college. So from 1903 to 1906 he taught school in Fannin County.

(continued)

³ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Coming of the New Deal (Boston, 1958), 467.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE two

By 1906 Rayburn was financially able to enter politics, and he announced as a Democratic candidate for the State house of representatives from Fannin County. Campaigning on horseback, he won the Democratic primary, which was tantamount to election, by 186 votes. This was but the first of three successful bids for the Texas house. Between legislative sessions, Rayburn attended the University of Texas Law School, and by 1908, he had been admitted to the bar and had opened a law office in Bonham, the seat of Fannin County. As a legislator, Rayburn paid close attention to his duties, and by the end of his second term had begun to play a significant role in the house proceedings. In 1910 he won election as speaker of the house largely because of his ability to work out compromises between factions that were divided over issues like prohibition. Under Rayburn's direction, the house passed such progressive legislation as shorter working hours for women and children, a child labor law, and a pure food law.

In 1912 Rayburn won election to the first of 25 consecutive terms in the U. S. Congress from Texas' Fourth District. He entered Congress at the same time that Woodrow Wilson became President and was one of Wilson's most loyal supporters. Assigned to the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, Rayburn proved an active legislator. He attracted special attention with a stock and bond bill that would have required railroads to obtain permission from the Interstate Commerce Commission before issuing new stocks or bonds. Despite its appeal for Wilsonians, the measure did not pass until 1920 when it was incorporated in the Esch-Cummins Transportation Act. The young Texan enjoyed more immediate success in 1917 when he sponsored the War Risk Insurance Act which provided military personnel with insurance up to \$10,000. The stock and insurance bills might be classified as progressive measures, but at this stage of his career, Rayburn, says his biographer C. Dwight Dorough, was no doctrinaire liberal. He was "a distinctly middle-of-the-road man with the conservatism and skepticism usually found in the rural mind."⁴

In the 1918 elections Republicans captured control of Congress, and Rayburn, for the first time in his career, found his party in the minority--a condition which would persist for the next 12 years. During

(continued)

⁴ Dorough, Mr. Sam, 177.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE three

the 1920's, he devoted most of his energies to denouncing the pro-business policies of the Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover administrations and their neglect of the agricultural sector.

Democrats regained control of the House in 1931, and Rayburn became one of Speaker John Nance Garner's most trusted lieutenants. He managed Garner's campaign for the 1932 Democratic Presidential nomination and became the middleman in the negotiations which led to the Speaker's withdrawal after the third ballot, a subsequent shift of votes to Roosevelt, and Garner's acceptance of second spot on the ticket.

As chairman of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, Rayburn authored some of the most significant legislation of the New Deal era. His Truth-in-Securities Act of 1933 required the registration of new securities and the disclosure of full information about them, and his Securities Exchange Act of 1934 created the Securities and Exchange Commission with power to police the stock markets. This latter measure, says political scholar Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "owed a great deal to the parliamentary strength and skills of Rayburn, who stood off pressures with cool composure and an astute sense of political possibility."⁵ Probably the most controversial Rayburn measure was his Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 which gave the S.E.C. complete control over holding company operations and required that large companies be broken up within 5 years. Rayburn probably received his greatest legislative satisfaction in 1936, when his Rural Electrification Act passed. Within a few years, it brought electricity to most farm families.

In 1937 Rayburn became the Democratic Majority Leader. Not only did he have to try to hold all the 332 Democrats of the House in line, but he had to deal with increasingly rebellious conservative Democrats, especially those from the South. Although he had been on close terms with many of these Congressmen for years, Rayburn, says historian James T. Patterson, "was more sympathetic to the New Deal" than most of them. And "he believed that party loyalty was both desirable in itself and the best way to advance in the House."⁶ Perfecting a technique which

(continued)

5 Schlesinger, Coming of the New Deal, 467.

6 James T. Patterson, Congressional Conservatives and the New Deal (Lexington, 1967), 92.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Rayburn House ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE four

he called the "art of quiet persuasion," Rayburn took recalcitrant members aside and tried to persuade them to change their vote or support a particular bill. In this manner, he was able to secure passage of many New Deal measures, such as the WPA deficiency bill.

On September 16, 1940, Rayburn became Speaker of the House. He served continuously in that post, with the exception of the years 1947-49 and 1953-55, until his death in 1961. During World War II, the Texan proved an invaluable ally to Roosevelt in the passage of his domestic and military legislation. Rayburn's success in saving the peacetime draft bill in 1941 and in getting money appropriated for the Manhattan Project to develop the atomic bomb contributed greatly to American military success. In the postwar era, he played a significant role in developing the bipartisan foreign policies of Truman and Eisenhower and in gaining approval for measures like the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the Eisenhower Doctrine.

Although he was an ardent advocate of most of the policies of Democratic Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy, Rayburn's statesmanship was perhaps most clearly revealed in his dealings with the administration of Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower. Rayburn and his protege, fellow Texan Lyndon B. Johnson, the Senate Majority Leader, "followed a policy of accomodation with the middle-of-the-road Eisenhower policies," argues historian Herbert S. Parmet, because of "the basic consensus that the Administration represented."⁷

After the Democratic defeat in the 1956 Presidential election, Rayburn became the leading advocate of Lyndon B. Johnson for the Presidency. As Johnson's manager at the 1960 convention, he originally opposed Johnson's taking second place on the ticket. Rayburn changed his position, however, after a lengthy discussion with John F. Kennedy. After Kennedy became President in 1961, Rayburn provided invaluable assistance to his administration by pushing through the House a measure to enlarge the Rules Committee and give it a more liberal complexion. Then, serving his 17th year as Speaker, Rayburn became ill and went home for treatment. On November 16, 1961, the man who had served more than twice as long as any other in the Speaker's chair died of cancer in Bonham, Tex., at the age of 79.

⁷ Herbert S. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades (New York, 1972), 464.