

SAM RAYBURN HOUSE

— STATE HISTORIC SITE —

Bonham, Texas

GUIDE: The Rayburn Farm

Garage

The garage houses Mr. Sam's 1947 Cadillac. Cadillacs were considered luxury cars. Mr. Sam rarely drove the car around town in Bonham, but he did drive little Barbara, his cook's granddaughter, to school in the Cadillac.

Ask: How would you feel riding to school in a luxury car like Mr. Sam's Cadillac?



The Smokehouse

After butchering a hog on the farm, the hams were placed in large boxes full of salt. After six weeks of curing in salt, the meat was removed from the crates, rinsed, wrapped, and hung in the smokehouse. Curing the hams kept them edible for a long time, which was a necessity for rural families who did not have electrical refrigerators.

Ask: What are some ways electricity might make farming and raising livestock easier today?



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Garden

Mr. Sam's mother Martha enjoyed working in the garden. She especially loved eating red potatoes with their peels on. The family ate whatever fruits or vegetables were in season and produce that they had grown, picked, and canned or preserved.

Ask: What is growing in the garden today?



Tractor Shed

Items in the shed include

- whetstone: used for sharpening axes, knives, and plow blades
- plow: used for breaking soil in preparation for planting crops
- grinding mill: used to grind corn for animal feed; powered by a belt connected to a tractor or engine
- 1948 Farmall Model H tractor. This tractor was fully restored in 2016 and is now operable. The original motor is on a nearby stand.

Ask students to identify each item and suggest possible uses.



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Caretaker's Cottage

The original cottage was built around 1924. The current structure is a reproduction. The caretakers of the Rayburn farm lived in the house with their families. At the time of Rayburn's death, the original structure had deteriorated and was torn down in 1973. This reproduction cottage has two bedrooms and is designed to look like the original cottage. Currently, it is used for staff offices.

Ask: How do reproductions help us know about the history of a place?



The Chicken House

This structure is a reproduction of the original Rayburn chicken coop which was located in this area of the property. The Rayburn family raised Rhode Island Red chickens, and Miss Lou raised turkeys.

Ask: What birds and other wildlife do you see here today?



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Pump House

This structure was built around 1935 when the Rayburns acquired electricity. They replaced their windmill with an electric water pump.

Ask: How would an electric water pump be more beneficial than a windmill?



Barn

This 1950s barn replaced an older barn that had burned down. The Bonham FFA kept their show cattle in the barn during the 1970s and 1980s. During 2016 and 2017, the Texas Historical Commission restored the barn, and it now has modern electricity, heating, cooling, and an alarm system.

Ask: What might be stored in the barn that would require heating, cooling, and an alarm system?



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Mr. Sam's Cadillac



Thank you for visiting Texas Historical Commission's Sam Rayburn House Historic Site and family farm!

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