



# Garland LANDMARK SOCIETY

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GARLAND LANDMARK SOCIETY

PO BOX 462232, GARLAND, TX 75046



The Landmark Museum and the Pullman Railcar are operated by the Garland Landmark Society, a non-profit and volunteer organization.

Open Every Saturday  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Weekday tours available on request  
Heritage@garlandtx.gov  
972-205-2992

FREE Admission  
Donations are encouraged

Calendars are for sale  
NOW!!

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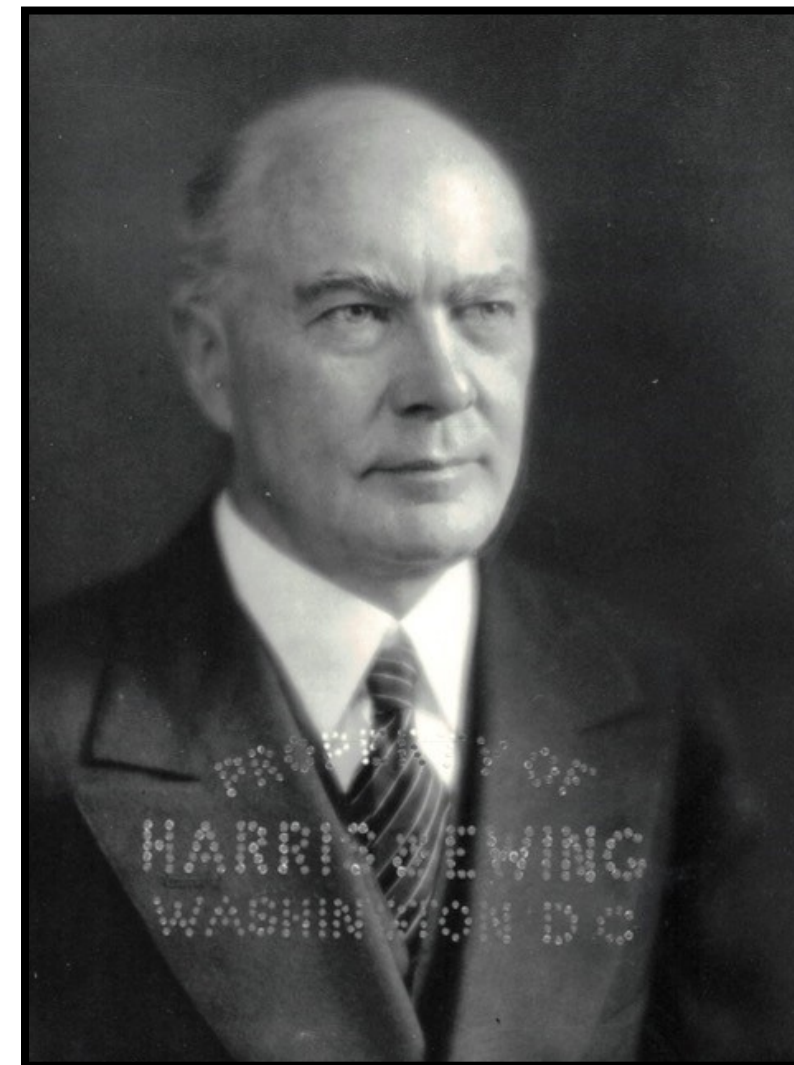
# TRACK

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GARLAND LANDMARK SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## Hatton Sumners



A stamp from Harris & Ewing Studios in Washington, D.C. marks this '20s proof of Congressman Hatton Sumners' image. The congressman routinely retained and distributed all sample proofs along with copies of his chosen head shot from a sitting. Notoriously frugal with his own spending, Sumners never married, but frequently made personal gifts and loans to needy students. He also invested shrewdly in real estate, and his Will proceeds funded the Hatton W. Sumners Foundation. [hattonsumners.org](http://hattonsumners.org)

Garland Landmark Society Archives

Hatton W. Sumners adopted Garland as a teenager, worked most of 50 years between Dallas and Washington, then returned here for the duration.

Born in 1875, Sumners hailed from Lincoln County, Tennessee, adjoining the Alabama border. Named for Revolutionary War General Benjamin Lincoln, the county was eponymous for the Lincoln County Process, involving the 'steeping' of Tennessee whiskies through charcoal chips prior to ageing in wooden casks. Fifteen miles NE in Lynchburg stood the Jack Daniels Distillery. Thirty miles NW lay Pulaski, named for a Polish-born Revolutionary hero, and birthplace in 1865 of what became the Ku Klux Klan.

When he was 18, Sumners moved to Garland with his younger sister and parents, former Confederate Captain William A. and Anna Walker Sumners. Back home they had operated a co-ed school, then farmed. The Capt. Sumners hoped to improve their economic lot alongside Anna's Dallas County relatives, including the Beaver, Walker and Wyatt families already here in 1894. Other previous Garland arrivals from the Sumners' Tennessee neighborhood included the families of W. F. Brown and M. D. Williams. Hatton's older brother Tully, a country doctor, stayed behind.

Once resettled, Sumners reportedly took classes at Garland College, the community's pre-GISD non-profit school covering all grades, including some advanced courses. No

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record exists of any graduation, but he apparently worked for a time in his uncle A.J. Beaver's store on the square's north side.

Though the exact date is unknown, he also reversed his original name order of "William Hatton." The Scotch Irish "Sumners" proved difficult for some, and the common name "William" applied also to his father, so the ambitious Hatton W. Sumners simply encouraged "Hatton."

With limited financial resources, but a determination to practice law, Hatton aligned himself with Dallas attorney A.P. Wozencraft. According to custom of the day he "read" the

law on his own, and legend has it that to save rent he often spent nights in the office. By 1897 he was admitted to the bar, and in 1900, though barely 25, Hatton W. Sumners was elected Prosecuting Attorney for Dallas County.

Local friendships cemented during those early years included those of fellow Tennesseans John H. Cullom, publisher of The Garland News and Garland banker A. R. (Rip) Davis, Sr., Hatton's contemporary. His name began appearing regularly in Garland's pallbearer lists.

In 1913, Hatton Sumners was sworn in to the sixty-third U.S. Congress as a Democrat, launching a



**Hatton W. Sumners reviews legislation of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal ca. '36 with U.S. House Speaker William B. Bankhead, whose father, Alabama Senator Hollis Bankhead, was the namesake for America's Bankhead Highway. Sumners, who died in 1962, lies buried in Garland Memorial Park off S. Garland Avenue, a portion of the Bankhead Highway. Garland Landmark Society Archives**



**Officials standing left to right in a 1934 Dallas press photo include (1) W. A. Thomas, Internal Revenue Collector of Dallas; (2) Texas 5th District Congressman Hatton W. Sumners; (3) Raymond Moley, who recruited fellow Columbia University professors for the original "Brain Trust" to advise Franklin D. Roosevelt in his 1932 presidential campaign and (4) Texas 4th District Congressman Sam T. Rayburn, who shared a train ride with Sumners to take office alongside President Woodrow Wilson in 1913. Rayburn succeeded William B. Bankhead as U.S. House Speaker, gaveling there for 17 years until his death in 1961. Moley eventually broke with FDR and became a conservative Republican commentator. He died in 1975.**

*Garland Landmark Society Archives*

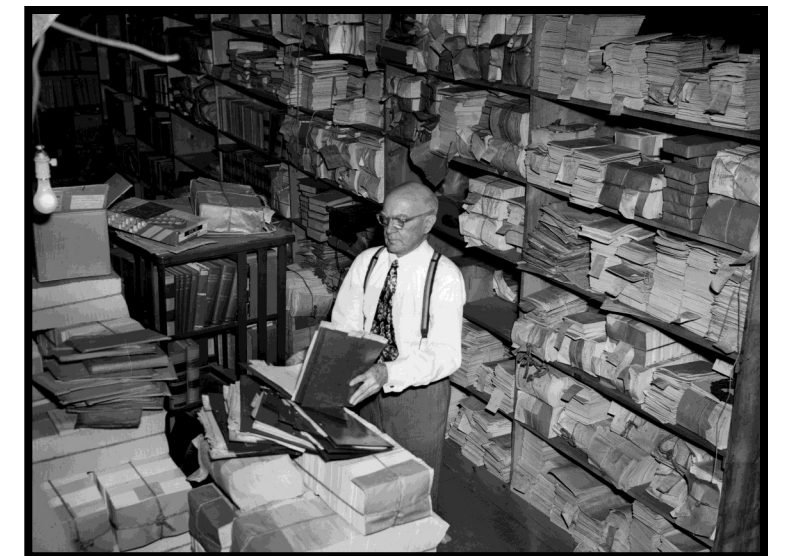
career that continues filling theses and dissertations. His first bill made Dallas a port of entry for customs, and he helped place the Federal Reserve Bank there. Former President, then Supreme Court Chief Justice, William Howard Taft once labeled the former Garland store clerk "the best lawyer in the Congress." Though Sumners balked at FDR's Supreme Court packing attempt, a 1939 LIFE magazine poll rated him highest in integrity of all congressmen.

Alongside Sam Rayburn, Sumners was considered one of the most powerful men in congress, but he still remembered his Garland roots. During the 1930s he proved instrumental in securing federal support for the Garland High School campus. With Sumners appointments in the 1940s, Garlandites Colonel John W. Armstrong and Major General Don H. Payne attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Following 17 terms in Congress, Sumners served as Director of Research in Law and Government of the Southwestern Legal Foundation and lived at the Lawyers' Inn on the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Those students with judgment to do so sought his advice. The Hatton W. Sumners Foundation, established in 1949, still awards loans,

scholarships, and funding for worthy educational endeavors. In the late 1950s, Sumners helped endow the Garland/Mills Cemetery Foundation, whose earnings still maintain those local grounds. Today, he and his immediate family lie buried there.

*Michael R. Hayslip*



**Retiring U. S. Congressman Hatton W. Sumners begins sorting records, files and personal belongings from his office. First seated in the 63rd congress, he's been reelected consecutively for 34 years since. The bulk of Sumners' papers were donated to the Dallas Historical Society. 1946 press photo. Garland Landmark Society Archives**