

THE GROWTH OF DALLAS FROM 1850 TO 1930'

Edwin J. Foscoe

With the Texas Centennial being held in Dallas next summer, and emphasis being placed upon the development and growth of the state throughout the period, it seems fitting to trace briefly the growth of the centennial city even though it be only ninety-five years old at the time.

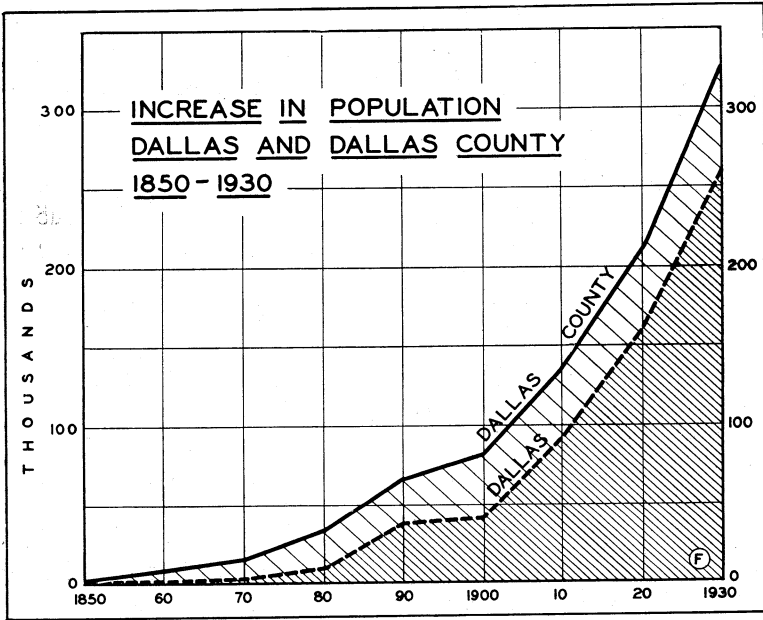
Dallas, today a city of more than three hundred thousand people, began as a single log cabin, on the east bank of the Trinity River, when its first settler, John Neely Bryan, built his hut there in 1841. Texas at that time was a republic, and this pioneer settlement was an outpost location in the northern part of the republic. From that very humble beginning the city of Dallas grew.

Within the next few years Dallas County was organized and the city made the county seat. At the same time Texas ceased to be a republic and became a state of the United States. Hence only nine years after the first settlement was made in the county, the first federal census (1850) was taken. As the Dallas settlement was not incorporated, only the county showed a census return. The accompanying table and graph shows the federal census for the city and county by decades from 1850 to 1930.²

Year	Population of City	Population of County
1850	?	2,743
1860	?	8,665
1870	2,967	13,314
1880	10,338	33,488
1890	38,067	67,042
1900	42,638	82,726
1910	92,104	135,748
1920	158,976	210,551
1930	260,745	325,791

¹This is the first of a series of brief articles to appear in *Field & Laboratory*, on the geographic background of Dallas, Texas.

²United States Census Reports, 1850-1930.



From 1850 to 1870 population increased only slightly, due in part to the devastation of the Civil War period. Dallas was incorporated as a town in the sixties, so that it rendered a census return separate from the county for the first time in 1870, at which time the town had nearly three thousand people, the county more than thirteen thousand. Since 1870 the growth of the city and county have remained fairly constant, or rather the county outside of the city has increased only slightly, and the total population of the county has increased only as the city has grown (see population graph). Since the county's growth has been due largely to that of the city, only the city of Dallas will be considered.

Railroads reached Dallas in 1871, hence the first important growth came between 1870 and 1880. This was greatly increased during the next decade by the important railroad building period of the eighties. Dallas secured most of her railroads by 1888 so that the decade of 1890 to 1900 witnessed only a slight increase for the city. The

county made its greatest gain during that period, due largely to an increase in settlement of the black prairies during the decade. By 1900 Dallas County reached a population of about fifty thousand in excess of the city, and has maintained that population excess to the present. The growth of the city began in 1900 from a small town of 42,638 people to a large urban agglomeration of 260,745 in 1930, an increase of more than 500 per cent in a space of thirty years. Estimates for 1935 place the population above 300,000, and the present rate of growth indicates a federal census return of about 350,000 by 1940.

Unlike many northern and eastern cities that have experienced rapid growth during the last two or three decades, Dallas is not primarily an industrial center. Its population growth has been based upon the growth of Texas, and particularly north Texas, which it serves as a trade center. One wonders if the Dallas of the future will maintain this rate of growth, or will it increase at a slower rate. From all indications, it seems reasonable to assume that the growth curve will hold up for at least two more decades before it begins to flatten.

GYPSUM—ITS VALUE TO TEXAS

May L. Whitsitt

“Gyp” water is for many people the only means of acquaintance with gypsum. A grayish deposit in the tea-kettle and the difficulties encountered when “gyp” water is used for laundering do not serve as a fitting introduction to the beautiful alabaster of the Taj Mahal. For alabaster is gypsum, too. There are still other forms of gypsum which are making this mineral increasingly important.

The most abundant form is a grayish-brown opaque rock or massive gypsum which is a hydrated, crystalline calcium sulphate, $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$. When this massive form is especially free from impurities and is clean, finegrained and pure white, it is called alabaster. Selenite is a transparent, crystalline form almost identical in appearance with calcite though not so hard. There is also found naturally an