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A HISTORY OF DALLAS NEWSPAPERS

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PREFACE

Since 1849 when the first issue of the Cedar Snag was circulated, newspapers have exerted a profound influence in shaping the history of the modern metropolis of Dallas.

Today's newspapers are products of an historic process evolving from the "weekly weakling" of Editor J. W. Latimer printed in the obscure little village at the Three Forks of the Trinity River. They are the manifestations of men of vision who, in more than a century of Dallas newspaper history, have projected their personalities and ambitions into the pages of their journals.

In the course of its relatively brief history, the press of Dallas has undergone a remarkable series of transfigurations. From the country weekly of 1849 it progressed through the era of personal journalism and through the boom days of expansion and prosperity. It survived the age of sensational journalism. The big newspaper syndicate had a fling but fell by the wayside after less than four decades. The survivors have become newspaper giants of the Southwest.

Over the years, innumerable dailies, weeklies, monthlies, and other periodical newspapers have ~~were~~ published in Dallas. Many vanished from the scene after a few years or a few months. But they came in such large numbers that Dallas bloomed forth as the publications center of the Southwest.

As Dallas has grown, so have the newspapers grown in independence and confidence. The history of the city is ably mirrored in the pages of her great newspapers. And their histories are indestructibly linked with that of Dallas.

The development of newspapers in Dallas can be classified into certain definite dates: 1849-1865--the founding of the first newspaper to the Reconstruction period following the Civil War; 1865-1885--the postwar period and the expansion of newspapers; 1885-1906--the development of the present newspapers, the Dallas Morning News, and the Dallas Times Herald, and others; 1906-1942--advent of sensational journalism and the emergence of the newspaper as big business; and 1942 to the present--a decade of unprecedented growth and entrenchment.

This study is based largely upon files of newspapers in the Dallas Historical Society, the University of Texas, the Texas Historical Society, and the private collections of the newspapers concerned. An appraisal of earlier newspapers has been limited because files of the period are either non-existent or inaccessible. In a few instances, only one or two copies of the newspapers were available for study. The method used was to study the earliest issues extant for each newspaper, the files for a representative year for each five years thereafter, and special historical issues published by newspapers.

There is much variance among the historical writers and the newspaper directories consulted as to dates and facts. Those used were selected only after careful examination and study of their backgrounds.

Today's newspapers are serious, solidly-entrenched journals that have their roots in a serious, industrial-minded community. They are wealthy business institutions whose functions have been not only to present the news but to foster Dallas as a city of unlimited horizons. The city's phenomenal growth is due in some part to this civic boosting. The spirit of local and state pride is apparent in the editorial attitudes and news policies which, consciously or not, influence public thought.

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CHAPTER I

DAWN OF DALLAS JOURNALISM, 1849-1865

In the autumn of 1837, a company of twenty Texas volunteers scouting the west fork of the Trinity River in North Texas was suddenly ambushed by a horde of rampaging Indians. A fierce battle ensued in which the volunteers lost nine men and all their horses. On foot, the survivors wandered down the river until they reached the junction of the Elm and Main forks. They crossed the Trinity to the east side at the mouth of Turtle Creek, and some two miles down on the bluffs they pitched camp to attend their wounds. These were the first known white men to encamp at the site of the modern city of Dallas.¹

Two years later John Neely Bryan, a backwoods Tennessee lawyer, and more recently an Arkansas Indian trader, stood on the same bluffs and contemplated building a trading post. He had come to Texas on the irresistible appeal of generous land grants being offered settlers by the new republic of Texas. Now viewing his future from the Three Forks, Bryan saw that the ease with which the river could be forded would

¹Frank M. Cockrell, "History of Early Dallas," manuscript in private collection of the Dallas Historical Society. The author's father was a contemporary of John Neely Bryan.

make it a likely crossing for settlers and Indians and that the bluffs above the river would be an ideal site for a town. He apparently believed also that the Trinity could be navigated from his campsite to Galveston.²

In 1840³ Bryan disposed of his holdings in Arkansas and returned to Texas, building his humble cabin near the site of the present Dallas courthouse building. When the Texas military highway was extended through the region from Austin to the Red River, he abandoned his trading post project and started a town on his 640-acre headright tract. In 1842 Bryan persuaded three families to move to his site from Bird's Fort, a Ranger stockade to the northwest, and soon other settlers were drifting in from the surrounding areas.⁴

Texas, in the meantime, had contracted in 1841 with Will S. Peters, a Kentucky land "empresario," for settlement of a grant covering approximately 16,000 square miles in the region of the upper Trinity. This grant became known as the Peters Colony with Farmer's Branch as its headquarters. For a while it outgrew the Three Forks settlement of Bryan.⁵

²Cockrell, "History of Early Dallas," pp. 1-6.

³The date was set by John Henry Brown, contemporary historian of early Dallas. Cockrell places the date a year later.

⁴John Henry Brown, History of Dallas County, pp. 16-17.

⁵Texas, A Guide to the Lone Star State, American Guide Series, WPA Writers Program, pp. 222-223.

In 1845, Texas voluntarily relinquished her sovereignty as an independent nation and became one of the United States. At this time Bryan's settlement and Peters Colony used the name of Dallas in honor of George Mifflin Dallas who had been recently elected Vice-President of the United States, partly on the issue of Texas annexation. When the Texas legislature was convened in 1846, Dallas County was created, taking in Bryan's settlement and the Peters Colony. Bryan's Dallas was named the temporary county seat, and its promoter was authorized to conduct an election.⁶

Dallas, unlike some other Texas cities, had no tradition of invasions and battles of wild days when cattlemen, gamblers and outlaws participated in stormy scenes of violence. It came into existence as a serious community with its citizens a peaceable and hard-working type. A townsite had been surveyed and platted in 1846. Bryan had been appointed its first postmaster. Settlers continued to come into Dallas and farmers of the South and Middle West came to live and to plow the neighboring fertile blacklands.⁷ It was into this atmosphere of agricultural industry that Dallas's first newspaper was born in the year 1848.

During the formative years of the little village at the Three Forks, a number of the men who settled there

⁶ Texas, A Guide to the Lone Star State, pp. 222-223.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 222-223.

became prominent and influential in affairs of the town and county. One of the most important of these early Dallas pioneers was James Wellington Latimer, who came in 1849 from Paris, Red River County. Latimer was a member of a noted North Texas family which included a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, Albert H. Latimer.⁸ A printer by trade, he had in 1848 established a newspaper in Paris that was destined to be short-lived and unprofitable. Loading his "weekly weakling"--an old press, type and other printing equipment--into ox-carts, Latimer headed for the new town of Dallas. It is significant that two distinct elements of culture came to Dallas when Latimer's press and the town's first piano arrived simultaneously.⁹

Prior to Latimer's arrival, Dallas had remained a small village with only a few stores and dwellings--not a very inviting field for the exercise of newspaper talent. There had been no newspaper and scarcely enough readership or business to support one. But Latimer joined the community of thirty-nine souls with courage and determination and soon was publishing a tiny weekly newspaper. Located in a crude cabin on the west side of the present Houston and Commerce

⁸ Dallas Morning News, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 2.

⁹ A. C. Gray, "History of the Texas Press," an essay in Dudley G. Wooten, ed., A Comprehensive History of Texas, II, 390.

Streets, the paper was a small sheet called the Dallas Cedar Snag, the name of the publication before it came to Dallas.¹⁰

There is no evidence as to what type of printing press Latimer used to publish his Dallas newspaper, but it was doubtless the old Washington hand press invented by Samuel Rush in 1829. This was the common variety of press employed by contemporary newspaper editors, and was, at best, laborious and awkward. On this device, "rollers" made of several thicknesses of cloth wound around a wooden core, were used to transfer the ink to the type forms. These were superseded by rollers of glue and molasses cast around an inner core of iron or wood in a metal mould. It required one person (the pressman) to operate the hand press, and another, usually a boy, to apply the ink evenly to the roller and to the type forms on the bed of the press. A "token," which was ten quires or 240 sheets, an hour was about the limit of a Number Four Washington hand press.¹¹ And yet it is amazing to see what remarkable work was done by this early day printing press.

One of the Cedar Snag's first editorial projects was its advocacy of Dallas as the county seat of the new North Texas county. It boasted that Dallas County had more towns

¹⁰ Cockrell, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

¹¹ Ben C. Stuart, "History of Texas Newspapers from the Earliest Times to the Present," a typescript in the archives of the Texas State Historical Society, pp. 176-177.

than any other county in the state. Among these were the prosperous villages of Cedar Springs, Hord's Ridge (present Oak Cliff), Farmer's Branch, Cedar Hill, and Lancaster. Hord's Ridge, a settlement established in 1849 by Judge William Hord, was vigorously contesting with Dallas for the site of the county seat in 1850.¹² In the election that settled the location of the courthouse, 460 votes were cast in the county, which by now boasted a population of 2,743 residents.¹³ Dallas won the election, receiving 191 votes to 178 for Hord's Ridge and 101 for Cedar Springs. In the runoff election Dallas won by a margin of 244 to 216.¹⁴ Six years later the city was organized by an act of the legislature, with the city limits a half-mile square fronting on the river. At the first city election in April, 96 votes were cast, and Dr. Sam B. Pryor was chosen the first mayor of Dallas.¹⁵

When the permanent location of the county seat was definitely established in favor of Dallas, Publisher Latimer rechristened his paper the Dallas Herald. This action was

¹²Cockrell, op. cit., p. 13.

¹³The number had been somewhat depleted by the California gold rush that claimed many of the county's original settlers, including the redoubtable John Neely Bryan.

¹⁴Cockrell, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 41. Pryor was a brother of Charles R. Pryor, editor of the Herald in 1859.

probably the result of Latimer's feeling that his newspaper's position in the young community called for more dignity. It was part of the complete metamorphosis of the city that became so apparent in the decade, 1849-1859. Businessmen, merchants and mechanics from surrounding areas came to the little settlement which was, even at this early date, beginning to show signs of the commercial progress that was to characterize it in later years. Farmers found the soil fertile and productive, and moved into the Dallas area in increasing numbers. They soon realized the need of a central market for their goods, and Dallas, located in the heart of the North Texas farm region, was the logical choice. A bridge was built across the Trinity to join Hord's Ridge to Dallas by Alexander Cockrell, a fabulous figure of the period and the city's first capitalist.¹⁶ This move enabled farmers and merchants to the west and southwest to come to Dallas with greater convenience, and aided materially in the new market's subsequent growth. The city became a favorite trading post. The first cotton was planted by James A. Smith, who also built the first cotton gin in Dallas. Stage coaches and "freighters" from Galveston, Corpus Christi and Austin brought in more settlers and goods, for the wagon trails from these towns converged at Dallas, making it an

¹⁶ Father of Frank M. Cockrell, author of a work on early Dallas history.

important transportation hub in the state. These and many more signs of progress made the decade 1849-1859 a more prosperous period than any other time prior to the coming of the railroads in 1872 and 1873.¹⁷

In the midst of these important developments, the Herald was establishing itself as a popular organ of news dissemination, and assuming an important role in the life of the little village on the Trinity. These were times to try the editorial talents of Latimer, who possessed sharp wit and piercing insight into the events of the day. His material was ample. Not only was a new economic life providing a thousand points of stimulus, but the mighty issues of the Civil War were brewing. The public was passionately interested and at the same time puzzled and divided at the swift-moving news developments. It was only natural that they should turn toward the newspaper for much of the intellectual leadership demanded by the times.¹⁸

Latimer supplied much of this leadership, although he had the assistance of some able associates. These early frontier editors wrote prolifically on virtually all the controversial subjects of the day in their endeavor to shape reader opinion on local, state and national affairs. Theirs

¹⁷Cockrell, op. cit., pp. 35, 36, 41.

¹⁸Eric W. Allen, "Economic Changes and Editorial Influence," Journalism Quarterly, VII (September, 1931), 116.

was a brand of journalism that treated all questions as the editor's personal projects. Like most newspapers of the nation at this time, the Dallas Herald was the product of this unequivocal "personal journalism."

Among the editorial associates of Latimer during this explosive period were William Wallis, J. W. Swindells, Charles R. Pryor, and John W. Lane. Wallis, who once fought a duel with Latimer over differences in political opinion,¹⁹ was associated with the Herald in the early 1850's. In 1854 Latimer was joined by J. W. Swindells, a practical printer who came to Texas from New York.²⁰ He assumed control of the Herald at the death of Latimer in 1859 and hired Pryor, "a Virginia gentleman of good literary attainment," as editor. The following year Lane became co-publisher with Swindells in a partnership that lasted through the Civil War.²¹

In the weekly production of Dallas's only news journal, the major portion of the work was performed by the editor

¹⁹The "Code Duello" flourished in Texas as in most Southern states in 1850. Wallis, reported an abolitionist, feuded with Latimer, who refused to retract derogatory statements. In a duel that followed, neither was injured and the Herald's editor admitted editorially that Wallis, although wayward in politics, was, nevertheless, a gentleman. The two became friends and business associates. Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. 4, p. 2.

²⁰John H. Cochran, Dallas County, p. 55.

²¹Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 2.

himself. He frequently composed his news stories as he set type laboriously by hand. Since there were at that time no co-operative news gathering agencies available to the Herald, the editor scanned the pages of Texas and out-of-state newspapers subscribed to on exchange to secure news of world events. There were no large news or advertising staffs; consequently, the gathering of local news items and soliciting of advertising and business were normally the editor's personal tasks. He gleaned material from dispatches of correspondents residing in surrounding communities, and accepted news items from numerous private and public sources. The substance for Latimer's news columns were the social, economic and political issues of the day. But little distinction was made between straight news and editorial comment, and the editor left little doubt as to his position on the main issues. Consequently, any reference to Dallas's first journal was not to the Herald but usually to "Latimer's paper."

The future of the Herald during the cradle days was uncertain. While a newspaper editor of the times could establish a paper with a small capital outlay, it frequently became necessary to resort to devious means to keep the enterprise going. Job printing was a source of income to Latimer, and advertising, although in a crude and undeveloped stage, supplied some revenue. Subscription rates were negligible and generally uncollectable. The paper's circulation

was small and when the press of finances became overbearing, Latimer turned to sharing his business with others of the trade. Under the ownership of Latimer and Swindells, the Herald prospered and became financially stable in the late 1850's.²²

In 1859 the Herald undertook to expand its printing facilities and Swindells left for the North, where he was to purchase new type and print equipment. During his absence Dallas lost its first journalist when, in April, J. W. Latimer was accidentally killed.²³ His death ended a decade of newspapering which had built the Herald into the leading journal of North Texas. Latimer brought the Herald to the acme of conservatism in the school of politics and to the position of the leading paper in the Democratic party of Texas. A gifted writer, he demonstrated strength of conviction in arguments for developing the resources of his community and state. It was a tribute to the man and his accomplishments and to the place he had earned in early Dallas society that every store in the town's square closed for his funeral.²⁴

²²Philip Lindsley, History of Greater Dallas and Vicinity, I, 58-59.

²³While carrying an armful of firewood, Latimer suffered a fall in which his skull was fractured. He died the next day, Lindsley, op. cit., I, 58-59.

²⁴Ibid., I, 59.

After the death of Latimer, Swindells returned to Dallas and assumed full control of the Herald. He hired the talented Pryor as editor and vowed editorially to continue the policies of his predecessor in striving to build up the newspaper and promote the interests of the city and state. With enthusiasm and staunch faith in the future of the community, Swindells began a new era with the Herald that lasted for more than fifteen years.

A little over a year after Swindells and Pryor took charge of the Herald's fortunes, an event occurred that came close to wiping out both the newspaper and the entire city of Dallas. During the troublesome times just before the Civil War when the slavery question was at white heat, the rumored presence of abolitionists and underground railway agents in North Texas towns caused much excitement which increased as the time for the presidential elections of 1860 drew near. All of the northern part of the state was filled with alarm at reports of slave uprisings in various counties, and two Iowa preachers who had recently come to Dallas were eyed suspiciously by the townspeople.²⁵ The apprehensions of Dallas citizens were amplified when, on July 8, 1860, a roaring fire swept through the town square, destroying some twenty-five business houses, and leaving only the courthouse standing. Property loss amounted to nearly \$300,000.²⁶

²⁵Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 2.

²⁶Cockrell, op. cit., p. 73.

The Dallas Herald was among the casualties of the great fire of 1860, but a few days after the blaze another edition had come off the presses, giving Dallas readers the details of the fateful afternoon. Swindells, in keeping with his firm purpose of giving the people the news at any effort, had utilized the press and facilities of the newspaper at McKinney in Collin County, thirty miles away. It was a severe setback to the Herald, which wrote of its misfortune:

The loss of the Herald office was complete; four printing presses, a large amount of new and valuable material, a large quantity of paper, files of the Dallas Herald, important documents, correspondence, letters and the entire library and furniture. We had barely time to save the business books of the office before the rush of fire and smoke and intense heat drove us out and prevented all attempts at saving anything more. Our entire wardrobe (a very slim concern by the way), a large amount of old boots, hats, gloves and such like paraphernalia peculiar to a bachelor's establishment, all went glimmering and left us sans culotte, sans souliers et sans habitout suite.²⁷

It was four days later before most of the state had learned of the big fire at Dallas.²⁸ Editor Pryor sent lurid dispatches to other Texas newspapers describing "a most diabolical plot" of which the burning of Dallas was said to have been only a small part. A widespread slave insurrection was taking place throughout North Texas, it was alleged,

²⁷ Dallas Herald, July 15, 1860, p. 1.

²⁸ An interesting insight into the speed with which news traveled at this time is revealed in the fact that the Houston Telegraph, 250 miles away, was so impressed as to get out a special edition concerning the disaster. But it was four days after the fire before this edition hit the streets. John William Rogers, The Lusty Texans of Dallas, p. 91.

instigated by Northern abolitionists and designed to repeat the Dallas disaster throughout the state.²⁹

Whether such a plot existed or not, the excited citizenry was moved to action. The fire occurred on Sunday, and on the following Tuesday three Negroes were tried for the offense by a committee of fifty-two men chosen to hear the case. They were speedily found guilty and hanged the next day. As a result of the furor, the two northern white preachers were whipped and forced to leave the country.³⁰ A vigilance committee was formed to punish any disturbances and the negro slaves were closely guarded.

There were differing theories about the causes of the fire. The charge that the Negroes fired the town was most popular, but there were some who maintained that it was caused by a lighted cigar stump thrown inadvertently into a pile of shavings in Wallace Peak's drugstore.³¹ It was a controversy that raged in Dallas for many years afterward, although there were documents uncovered later purporting to disclose a diabolical plot against the whole of North Texas with the sacking of Dallas only a mild beginning. Fortunately,

²⁹ Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 6.

³⁰ Fuel was added to the fire when the New York Tribune was quoted as saying that "it is highly possible that the obscure little village of Dallas was burned . . . and what of it." Dallas Herald, Oct. 10, 1860, p. 1.

³¹ Dallas Herald, July 15, 1860, p. 1.

the timing was bad, and the plot, if there was one, was stillborn.³²

The people of Dallas began immediately to rebuild their town, and by October they had a new brick hotel under construction, a small frame building for the postoffice, several new mercantile establishments--and a newspaper office. The Dallas Herald, on October 10, came back with new dress and new type, a new building not quite complete, and a plea for the long list of subscribers to pay up and relieve the paper's indebtedness.³³ Publisher Swindells announced that the Herald would again have a co-publisher, and entered into a partnership with John W. Lane. The move was a powerful manifestation of Swindell's life-long confidence in the future of Dallas for he apparently surmised that the life of his business would be strongly linked to the future of the lusty new city that was arising from the ashes. The great fire of 1860 had been a terrible setback to the Herald and to the little community of Dallas but it conditioned both to an even greater conflagration that was just over the horizon.

When news of Lincoln's election as president reached Dallas in 1860, its effect was electric and instantaneous. Located virtually in the center of the "black" belts of

³²Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 2.

³³Dallas Herald, Oct. 10, 1860, p. 2.

East and Central Texas, Dallas depended to a large extent on slave economy for its livelihood. Most of its citizens had come from the South and were possessed of deep-rooted convictions about slaveholding and states rights. Therefore, there were many who regarded Lincoln's election as a personal affront since the party soon to be in power had been born in opposition to the extension of slavery, and its leader, now the President-elect, had said publicly that slavery must ultimately be abolished.³⁴ The Dallas Herald, which had up to now been a conservative organ advocating the continued union of the states, reversed its position and embraced the cause of states rights and secession. On November 14, the following editorial appeared:

Among the results attending the election of Lincoln . . . one of the most probable is the complete dissolution of the United States. We do not apprehend a complete segregation of the States, but a separation into a Northern and Southern Confederacy. In that event, the South would have every advantage in a Commercial and Monetary point of view. . . . The effect of such a separation will be disastrous upon the Northern manufacturing & banking interests. . . . The population of the Northern states can no more subsist without the staple of cotton than can the South without exporting said cotton and the revenue resulting. . . . The position of the South would be that of Independence sustained by a large Constitutional party in the North.³⁵

The immediate reactions of the people were expressed in different ways. There were undoubtedly those who felt

³⁴Rupert N. Richardson, Texas, the Lone Star State, pp. 245-246.

³⁵Dallas Herald, Nov. 14, 1860, p. 2.

that the election of Lincoln was insufficient to justify a rebellion and favored preservation of their union. But their voices were apparently weak and became lost in the uproar of secessionist sentiment. Public meetings were held to discuss the matter and eloquent speeches were made. Resolutions were adopted asking Governor Sam Houston to convene the legislature that it might indicate the course to be pursued by Texas; condemnations of the "black Republican" party were made. At one fiery rally, a resolution was passed, which stated:

Resolved: that the people of Dallas County will not submit to an administration of the government of Abraham Lincoln, and that we call upon the people of our state to arise, declare . . . independence, and prepare to defend their liberties.³⁶

On December 12, 1860, the radicals took matters into their own hands after Governor Houston had refused to convene the legislature or call a convention. An unofficial call for a state convention to "express the sovereign will of the people of Texas" was issued. The resolution calling the convention was signed by sixty men, prominent among them John J. Good and George Guess of Dallas, and Roger Q. Mills of Navarro County.³⁷

The elections were held and the convention met as called on January 28, 1861, to ponder Texas' secession from the Union and entry into the Confederacy. The Dallas Herald

³⁶Dallas Herald, cited in Lindsley, op. cit., I, 64.

³⁷Lindsley, op. cit., I, 64.

joined in the cry for separation with such states rights newspapers of long standing as the Houston Telegraph, the Galveston News, the Austin State Gazette, and the Marshall Texas Republican.³⁸ Among the newspapers opposing secession was the Austin Southern Intelligencer edited by A. B. Norton, who in later years was to become an important figure on the Dallas newspaper scene.³⁹

During the critical period immediately prior to disunion, the columns of the Herald were filled with news about secession and the danger of an approaching conflict. It had begun use of dispatches brought in from nearby cities that in 1858 had telegraphic facilities, and by 1861 was carrying wire news from all over the state and nation--dispatches that stirred sectional sentiments and told of preparations for war.

On March 4 the Texas secession convention officially placed the state in the Confederacy after electors had approved secession at the meeting of February 23. The Dallas city government on April 10 voted heartily in favor of secession and the village at the Three Forks joined Texas in the rebellion that was leading irrevocably toward the Civil War.⁴⁰

³⁸Charles W. Ramsdell, Reconstruction in Texas, pp. 13-17.

³⁹Stuart, "History of Texas Newspapers from the Earliest Times to the Present," pp. 190-191.

⁴⁰George Jackson, Sixty Years in Texas, p. 154.

After the firing on Fort Sumter on April 12 and President Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the insurrection,⁴¹ Dallas joined other cities in making preparations for the approaching struggle. Troops and supplies were raised and the feeling of optimism pervaded efforts to put Texas on a war footing. The Dallas Herald proclaimed the Southern chances for the first victory and said: "The war would be prosecuted with vigor."⁴²

The war was on, and for four years, the country was to be gripped in mortal combat as the tramp of the hosts and the roar of artillery carried it close to ruin and to the final scene of tragedy--Appomattox.

The exigencies of war are well identified in the successive changes of the Dallas Herald. Although it had not been large or influential in state affairs before the war, it was well-regarded and a financially stable business enterprise. But with the outbreak of hostilities, the troubles of the owners increased. Dallas was practically isolated, at least from the more populous part of the state. As a result, the Dallas Herald was among the first of the Texas newspapers to suffer when the paper famine struck. It changed size several times, a factor which was determined by the availability of newsprint, and frequently the editor had

⁴¹Richardson, op. cit., p. 250.

⁴²Dallas Herald, cited in Lindsley, op. cit., I, 67.

to resort to drastic measures. Periodically, the newsprint was wallpaper, foolscap paper, wrapper paper, and even tissue paper of varying degrees of color and texture, and purchased at enormously inflated war prices. Bulletins, documents and notices were printed upon paper scraps of every kind, and the public, hungry for the news, happily devoured anything of printed character, regardless of the time element.⁴³

Toward the end of the first year of the war, the Herald began to experience labor troubles. Editor Pryor had already resigned to accept a position as the first Secretary of State in the new Confederate state, and his place had been taken by Junius Hutchens. Swindells and Lane managed to keep the paper alive despite the severe shortages of newsprint and ink. Finally, on December 11, 1861, the Herald announced it was suspending publication because its available force, from the publisher on down had joined the Southern army.⁴⁴

This was the first of several suspensions and two changes of ownership. Of its next publishers, little is known. The paper was leased to two men known as Richey and Corey, who

⁴³ Ferdinand B. Baillio, History of the Texas Press Association, p. 369. Baillio lists the Herald as one of twenty-eight papers publishing in Texas in June, 1862.

⁴⁴ Dallas Herald, Dec. 11, 1861, p. 2.

published for nearly nine months from February 6, 1862. The new editors announced that they would pledge themselves to the cause adhered to by their predecessors. They qualified their position, however, declaring: "It will not be so much an object to discuss questions as it will to afford the public an advertising and news medium. . . ."45

Richey and Corey continued their publication of the Herald until November 15, when Swindells, in ill health, returned home from service in the Confederate army. Under the ownership of Swindells the paper struggled along, publishing erratically and suspending on one occasion for as long as eight months. On March 11, 1863, the paper on which the Herald was printed was brown; on March 18, it was red; in October the newspaper suspended publication and was not issued again until July 2, 1864, when it was printed on only one side of tissue paper, a material used until September 4. During these and subsequent intermissions of the Herald's printing, the news fare was indeed lean for Dallas citizens. The hunger for news from the battlefields must have been intensified by the daily scenes of Dallas youth marching away to war and the increase of rumors and unreliable reports of the progress of Southern armies in the field. When the Herald did publish, there was greater interest in its content, and a single copy passed through

⁴⁵Ibid., April 19, 1862.

many hands. Those same audiences which had gathered in the postoffice and other meeting places before the war to hear the newspaper read aloud were surely larger. Under these conditions one can believe that the Herald exerted considerable force on the thinking of Civil War Dallas.

The hopelessness of the Southern rebellion became apparent to most Texans in 1865. With Lee's surrender, the landing of the Union General, Gordon Granger, at Galveston, and the establishment of a provisional government in Texas, the curtain was rung down on a critical phase of the history of Dallas and its newspaper. Both had survived the war. And for all its apprehensions and hardships the Herald had remained a free press. Its press had not been seized or confiscated by invading armies and it had not been shackled with press censorship of the nature imposed by the Confederate government on many newspapers in the circle of fighting. It discussed freely the conduct of the war and the policies of the Southern leaders. With the fighting over, the Herald was ready to begin a new era in which it would come in competition with another newspaper for the first time and would make a fresh bid for public confidence and support.

CHAPTER II

FORMAT AND CONTENT OF DALLAS'S EARLIEST NEWSPAPER, 1849-1865

It is unfortunate that the earliest files of the Dallas Cedar Snag and the Herald did not survive the years. For more than six years after its birth the Herald chronicled events of the village at the Three Forks that must remain unappraised except through the eyes of contemporaries. What the Herald was really like cannot be accurately surmised as these accounts deal only in vague generalities.

A perusal of later day issues furnishes an interesting insight into the character of the Herald. The first number known to be extant is the issue dated December 8, 1855. It was an extremely well-printed paper, snug and clean, although in appearance it exemplifies the "grey" page,¹ with no typographical variation. Under the Herald's banner appeared J. W. Latimer's motto, the epitome of his political beliefs: "Our Country--May she always be right; but right or wrong--Our Country." The Herald was printed on four pages 16"x24", usually containing seven columns of varying width. The publishers made their announcements in a special

¹A term applied to a page of close-set type, rarely broken by white space or headlines.

front-page box wherein were listed subscription and advertising rates, the publishers' names, and other general information concerning the operation of the paper. Type faces were so small as to strain the eye on reading.² News items were lengthy, and disjointedly written, and frequently jammed together without benefit of headline. They sometimes ran the length of a column and were carried over to the next. A story was introduced usually by a short "label" headline such as "Killing in Bastrop!," or "Terrible Riot on the Isthmus!" in six or eight-point bold face type. The news varied. It consisted chiefly of reprints from other newspapers, crime and criminals, items of local, state and national politics, tables of California gold mine production, and lengthy poems.³ There were no illustrations except an occasional woodcut of a medicine bottle, a steamboat, or a train. Contrary to custom, the Herald did not carry advertisements on the front page until the Civil War.⁴

Contents of the second page consisted of the masthead, which contained the names of the publishers and a list of correspondents. The practice of placing editorial matter on a specific page had not yet gained wide usage, but the

²If the paper had an abundance of news items (as it normally did) it used six point (agate) type, although seven and eight point type was occasionally used.

³The editors welcomed contributions of both prose and poetry and often gave half a page or more to such literary offerings of the citizens.

⁴Some exceptions: legal, medical, and political notices.

Herald used Page Two for its editorial opinions. News matter consisted of reprints, local news items, news from correspondents, and haphazard advertising. This same pattern was customary with the other two pages of the Herald.

The pages of this early Dallas newspaper were virtually free of typographical errors, indicating strict supervision by the editors and tedious care in setting type by hand. They varied in size, contingent on the availability of newsprint. From a full size of seven columns, 24x16 in 1855, the Herald had the following year diminished to 20x13 with five columns. In May it returned to its regular size, but with the coming of the war, changes in its physical appearance were frequent. The size of the pages, size of type, number and width of columns, and placement of news and advertising matter were seldom consistent. The agate type became more difficult to read as poor-grade ink smeared and discolored many issues of the Herald.

Newsgathering and Newswriting

The period, 1849-1865, was an era of personal journalism in which the editor or publisher was the news editor, the business manager, and frequently the printer. There were no large staffs of reporters, correspondents, or editorial writers. The Dallas Herald was no exception. It depended on hit-or-miss methods of gathering the news in most cases.

The Herald's editor was the heart of the news system and of the editorial policy of the paper. He was the newspaper's reporter for local news and its "scissors and paste-pot" expert on exchange newspapers.

The Dallas Herald relied much on the letters from correspondents for state and domestic news. This service was furnished by twenty-three persons in 1856, many of them editors of other newspapers, merchants, lawyers, preachers and farmers. Their news was sparse and sporadic; it was usually published in letter form. A typical example of this mid-century news correspondence:

HUNT COUNTY--DEMOCRACY TRIUMPHANT

Greenville, Aug. 6, 1856

Friend Latimer:--The mail for your town will leave in a few moments, and I hasten to give you the results of the election in Hunt. . . .

The official returns cannot yet be obtained, and I presume it unnecessary to send along a list of names. . . . it is sufficient that we can write our county thoroughly Democratic. . . . In the future she will always be found right side up.

We have no news of importance. Some sickness over the county--a few "shakin agers." Crops fine.

In haste, yours, etc., H.⁵

News from outside Dallas was brought in by messengers and mail riders. These intrepid horsemen braved swollen rivers, burning sands, and Indian raids to carry dispatches from Gulf Coast ports and other cities where the steamship or telegraph first broke the news. Such dispatches came

⁵Dallas Herald, Aug. 9, 1856, p. 2.

days (and weeks) late, and editors complained editorially of the delay. With these unsatisfactory modes of communication, it is understandable that timeliness of the news did not become an important consideration until many years later.

Editors of the Herald made little fuss over the display of news. In its tight, ultra-conservative typography, the small label headline was common. There were no large bold-face types of different character such as grace the pages of the modern newspaper. Space limitations and the infrequency of publication contributed much to this restriction, but there were exceptions to the rule. For example, the Herald on October 6, 1856, put out an extra on an Indian fight near Wichita Village, and on its front page appeared the following headline:

HERALD EXTRA

GREAT Indian Battle!!
 56 Warriors Killed
 Lieut. Van Camp Killed and Major
 Van Doren Wounded
 A Glorious Victory over the Comanches⁶

And during the emotional days immediately prior to the Civil War came these stirring, dramatic lines:

THE LATEST NEWS

Lincoln's War Manifesto!
 Virginia About to Secede!
 Ky., Tenn, & Virginia!
 Army in Favor of the South!
 Excitement in the North!⁷

⁶Dallas Herald, Oct. 6, 1856, p. 1.

⁷Ibid., May 1, 1861, p. 1.

Such multiple-deck headlines were carried in single columns and ranged usually from three to six decks. The type used varied from ten to twenty-four point (frequently both) in bold face.

The writing of news was a paradoxical manifestation of personal journalism. On matters of politics or public interest, the editors printed stories that were not only detailed but embellished with editorial comment. But the Herald carefully guarded itself against publication of facts it considered to be a man's private business. An example of this may be seen in published accounts of a sensational duel between Alexander Cockrell, Dallas's first capitalist and city builder, and Andrew M. Moore, city marshal, in April of 1858. The Herald carried a subdued story of the altercation which cost Cockrell his life. Under the label heading "Fatal Recontre," (the use of French words was common practice in Southern newspapers) it declared:

. . . as the whole affair will come under judicial investigation we forebear making any comment or from stating the circumstances in detail as we do not wish to prejudge or prejudice the case one way or the other in advance of the trial. . . . We will only add that this unfortunate occurrence has thrown a gloom over the whole community. . . .⁸

Such handling of the news is a striking illustration of the attitude of the community then and in later years. The code

⁸Dallas Herald, April 19, 1858, p. 1.

of honor with which men grew up in this frontier land brooked no rash public discussion of what was considered to be a man's private business.⁹

During the explosive decade prior to the conflict, the Herald kept close tab on politics. Such news matter received much space and lengthy reports of legislative and other government proceedings were published with regularity. For instance, half a page was devoted to printing a platform of the American Party of Texas in the election of 1856. At other times the paper carried verbatim accounts of a Texas legislative session, and occasional proposed bills or whole bills in the legislature. During elections, successive issues of the Herald contained names and offices of candidates in the local, state, and national contests. On the controversial issues of the day the Herald quoted extensively the opinions and news from southern and northern newspapers. When secession and war became a reality, this function of the Herald was given precedence in some cases over local news, and the great public documents of the day were presented in their entirety to the people of Dallas.¹⁰

⁹John William Rogers, The Lusty Texans of Dallas, p. 71.

¹⁰On March 6, 1861, the Herald published the Constitution of the Confederate provisional government and the inaugural address of President Jefferson Davis. On March 20 Lincoln's inaugural address was printed along with the United States Constitution, consuming the entire front page.

Editors of the Herald wrote their news stories in a flowing, rhetorical style characterized by exuberant images, exaggerated figures and voluminous description. Even the simplest event more often than not conformed to this pattern. An example of this may be seen in the following item:

A gay party of ladies and gentlemen had a delightful picnic near town on Saturday last. We were present a part of the time, but were so overpowered by the array of beauty, loveliness, &c . . . that we find ourselves wholly incapable of describing the events of the day. . . . We have a confused recollection of a white cloth spread out on a carpet of living verdure, with a maze of savory viands and edible delicacies floating before us, and little green snakes crossing thereon. . . . The ladies of Dallas are angels. . . and when they return to their homes (heaven, of course) they will be assigned to the kitchen. . . .¹¹

The leads of such news stories were long and rambling, and followed no definite pattern. The modern news story lead had not been developed, and writers allowed the real substance of a story to be submerged by personal references or information as to how the news was received. The following type lead was common:

INDIANS IN YOUNG COUNTY--By private advices from R. J. McKenzie Esq., of Weatherford we lear [sic] that an express had arrived at that place on the 25th inst., bringing the sad intelignce [sic] that 20 Indians had killed and scalped a wagoner near Col. Whatley's on the Belknap Road.¹²

The trend toward a more condensed lead did not become noticeable until after the outbreak of the Civil War. The shortages

¹¹ Dallas Herald, May 10, 1856, p. 2.

¹² Ibid., Oct. 10, 1861, p. 2.

of newsprint and the excess of news forced writers to be brief, almost to the point of terseness. The increasing importance of telegraphic news contributed much to this change in style of writing. Editor Charles R. Pryor of the Herald was moved to write about these effects editorially:

The Magnetic Telegraph has had a marked effect upon the style of literature, rendering it terse, condensed, and comprehensive. . . . It has taught people to come to the point at once.¹³

Pryor had put his theory into effect by condensing the news into special columns which were somewhat similar to the modern news roundup features of some newspapers. Under a special heading such as "Items of Interest," the Herald carried scattered news briefs and even statistical information and facts. From the August 31, 1864 issue come the following examples:

The New York World sets down the loss of the Federals in the late assault on Petersburg at from 5,000 to 7,000.

The Vicksburg Herald of the seventh announces that there are no steamers from above in several days. Those infernal guerillas are on the river again.¹⁴

This condensation of news produced many types of telegraphic columns under various titles as "Telegraphic News," "Latest News from Europe," "Washington Items," or "Miscellaneous News." Many of them were dropped at the conclusion of the war and others were carried for two decades afterwards.

¹³Dallas Herald, Aug. 18, 1861, p. 2.

¹⁴Ibid., Aug. 31, 1864, p. 1.

A large portion of the news of the Herald during the Civil War was devoted to events of the battlefield, gleaned mostly from other Texas newspapers which had the use of the telegraph.¹⁵ Following the story of an engagement there would sometimes be the long list of dead, wounded and missing. Such news was generally tardy because wire outlets were not always available and news often broke far from telegraph or railroad. Letters from soldiers were printed verbatim. Patriotic prose and poetry as well as vigorous editorials called on Texas youth to answer the call to the colors and later praised his bravery in battle. The emotional overtones of the times were poignantly and colorfully reflected in the columns of the Herald.

The departmentalization of newspapers such as is demanded by the modern reader was conspicuously absent from the pages of the Herald. News items of sports,¹⁶ society, the arts, and gossip tidbits were sandwiched in with political news, miscellaneous news, and advertising. The nearest approach was a special column which the Herald, like most Texas papers of the day, devoted to the farm and home. In it appeared a well-written account of the agricultural progress of the county, and household hints for the women.

¹⁵The Texas Telegraph and Register and the Galveston News were most frequently quoted.

¹⁶Sports items were a rarity. They consisted chiefly of cockfights, prizefights, picnic games, hunting and fishing lore.

The column featured articles on such subjects as "Are Potatoes Wholesome Food?" "How to Restore Luster to Silk," or "The Barometer of Washing Day." These newspapers devices were popular with Dallas readers of the period and were welcome diversions from the heavy political and war news that crowded the pages of the Herald.

The Editorial Viewpoint

The editorial page, as such, was unknown during this early period of Dallas newspaper history. Since there was little differentiation between factual news and opinion in printed stories, editors apparently did not recognize the need of a separate department to express their views. The Dallas Herald as early as 1856 had begun to place its opinion matter on another page (near the masthead of Page Two), but it still was inclined to inject opinion into news matter at any other point in the paper. The pattern was usually to editorialize in the lead of the story, or to follow various methods of presenting the news with an editorial summary. A favorite editorial function was the use of the "Grapevine Telegraph," a vernacular term for rumor. The heading, "Important If True," was commonly employed, and the Herald, when unable to get reliable news, would write about a rumor as a news item, but give it editorial treatment. The procedure was to relate the substance of the rumor (and occasionally the source) and follow with the editor's opinion as to its truth. An example:

The painful rumor that Col. M. T. Jackson has been assassinated on the Frontier lacks confirmation. We believe it to be untrue, we cannot conceive of anyone who could commit such an atrocity. . . . A company of his friends had started from Tarrant last week to ascertain the truth of the report, and if it were true, we would have been apprised of it before this.¹⁷

The editors of the Herald, like their country weekly counterparts, followed the examples of the larger newspapers of the East. They specialized in short, pungent paragraphs, although they printed longer editorial articles--"leaders," as they were called, after the English fashion--that were characteristic of these years. The tendency toward lengthiness was heightened by the troublesome issues before and during the war, and as the gulf between the northern and southern editors widened, the Herald used its columns more and more to print its pro-Southern views and that of other Southern newspapers. Locally written editorials naturally conformed to the editorial bent of the newspaper, particularly on political subjects. It was undoubtedly a function of the Herald, as with most party organs of the time, to exert its influence by presenting arguments of the politicians and party activities for the purpose of molding public opinion. Editors were actually expected to discuss politics on any government level just as fully as preachers were required to expound on eternal punishment: it was their business.¹⁸

¹⁷Dallas Herald, March 13, 1861, p. 2.

¹⁸Mott, op. cit., p. 295.

Local and state questions and immigration propaganda were important literary motifs of Dallas writers until the approach of the Civil War. As early as June, 1859, the subject of a free bridge over the Trinity became the center of an editorial crusade. The columns of the Herald were filled almost weekly with stories favoring the construction and calling for "plans and specifications," deprecating the heavy tax on the people west of the Trinity, and pointing out the dangers as well as the disadvantages in loss of trade from farmers and merchants of the west. Realization of this dream was a slow process for it was not until ten years later that the project was actually completed.¹⁹ In 1859, the Herald was also instrumental in promoting the Dallas annual fair. Even at this early date, the Herald sensed that the fair would become a great factor in the city's future growth.²⁰

Like its twentieth century counterparts, the Herald was an ardent advocate of agricultural, commercial and industrial progress for Dallas. It reported and urged the opening of new markets in Dallas for farmers, merchants and businessmen. It consistently worked editorially to bring railroads to Dallas, even before the war. Dallas hoped to be on the proposed route of a railroad from Memphis west to

¹⁹Justin F. Kimball, Our City--Dallas, p. 31.

²⁰Lindsley, op. cit., p. 62.

El Paso (now the Texas and Pacific), and another from the Gulf of Mexico to the Red River. A few years before the war the latter was begun from Houston and the Herald predicted that the road would reach North Texas, and that Dallas had an excellent chance to become an important terminal. The road was built only about seventy-five miles to Navasota when the war halted construction.²¹

It was only natural that the editors of the Herald should be pro-Southern in their loyalties when the first rumblings of the impending struggle were heard. Ninety per cent of the white immigrants to Texas had come from the Old South, bringing with them pronounced opinions on their institutions and rights. When the rancorous controversy over slavery divided the nation into two well-defined camps it was inevitable that Dallas and the state should join the proslavery group.²²

The Herald heretofore had always been an ardent advocate of Texas as a member of the United States. But it also had always supported slavery and states rights issues. These questions eventually precipitated an about-face in the political leaning of the Herald and prompted editorial discussions on a wide scale, some colorful and vitriolic, and others studied evaluations of regional ways of life. The

²¹Kimball, op. cit., p. 31.

²²Richardson, op. cit., p. 241.

paper approved action by Dallas Democrats who adopted resolutions endorsing Buchanan's administration, but condemning his tariff policy and his failure to protect the Texas frontier. While asserting vigorously its belief in states rights, it approved of the efforts of Northern Democrats to preserve the Union. And yet, it joined in repudiating the stand of Sam Houston on slavery and his strong Unionism.²³ With the election of Lincoln the Herald ended its policy of indecision and became one of the first Texas newspapers to urge secession. With the outbreak of hostilities, it was a spokesman for the Southern cause, trumpeting for the rightness of the cause and condemning the wrongs perpetrated on the South. It tried to ameliorate the condition of the people at home and the suffering of the soldiers in the field by supporting every charitable enterprise on foot during the struggle.²⁴ While it occasionally found fault with the conduct of the war and Southern leaders, the Herald remained unwavering in the avowed aims of preserving the Confederacy and successfully prosecuting the war.

Advertising

Revenues from advertising constituted a sizable portion of the Dallas Herald's income. Like many of its weekly

²³Houston's election as governor in 1859 was seen as a bitter blow by editors of the Herald.

²⁴Gray, op. cit., p. 395.

counterparts, the paper devoted over one-half of its space to the publication of many types of advertising. This proportion fluctuated with the times, as did the costs, but it was important that a considerable amount of space be allotted if the paper was to survive and show a profit. This became extremely difficult at times as rates were low. The Herald used the "square" system in which advertisements of ten lines or less cost one dollar per square for the first insertion, and fifty cents for each insertion thereafter. Advertisers on a yearly basis received one-half off, and business cards, if more than one square, cost ten dollars. Announcements of candidates for state or district offices cost ten dollars while candidates for lesser offices paid five dollars.

Advertising typography followed no set standard. Most insertions consisted of single column space ranging from three-fourths of an inch to three inches. Some on occasion were deeper, and an experiment with double-column ads was tried but not frequently used. While there were no large display ads, the Herald had a semblance of the modern classified system. The bulk of this advertising was concerned with land sales, patent medicines, professional cards, legal notices, and miscellaneous business and personal insertions. Patent medicines for many years occupied by far the greatest volume of space. In one issue, two distinct types of such advertisements may be seen. One is the cure-all for ailments:

SAYRES ANTI-BILIOUS AND FAMILY PILLS have been found eminently useful in the following diseases: bilious remitting and intermitting fevers, diseases of the liver, jaundice, indigestion, constipation, bilious colic, fixed pains in the head, chest, side, &c., Prepared and sold only by

F. A. Sayre, druggist²⁵

Another is the appeal to vanity:

The original genuine Balm of Columbia, for restoring the hair and keeping it from falling out. Genuine for sale by N. Beeler

COMSTOCK'S East India Hair Dye, the only sure coloring for the hair and whiskers for sale by N. Beeler.²⁶

The Herald's columns were also utilized for advertising by schools and academies wishing to secure students. The issue of June 8, 1859 contained seven school advertisements; one of them was the "Cedar Springs Institution" four miles north of Dallas. Tuition for the season of five months, per month: primary department, \$1.60; Intermediate Department, \$2.00, Higher English Department, \$2.50, Lingual Department, \$3.00. The same issue also contained advertisements of a military academy and a school for females.²⁷

When secession and war became a reality, the columns of the newspaper were used for a new purpose--the recruiting of soldiers. For example, the Herald carried in one issue the following notice:

²⁵Dallas Herald, Dec. 8, 1855, p. 2.

²⁶Ibid., Dec. 8, 1855, p. 2.

²⁷Ibid., June 8, 1859, p. 2.

The minions of Lincoln are gathering at every point to invade and overwhelm our country in the spring; the time is short. To Arms! And let us be ready to repel the base inhuman foe.

I am authorized to raise a regiment of Rangers for 12 months service. Report to me at Dallas, Dallas County, Texas.
Henry C. Scott²⁸

Advertising during this period was weak and undeveloped as compared with the modern system. Economic conditions of the times prevented widespread use of the medium by merchants of Dallas. Advertising to some was considered as an unnecessary expense and many were unable to visualize benefits from it. The use of limited sizes of type and a lack of attractive features such as art, half-tone pictures and eye-pleasing layouts, did little to sell the merchants of Dallas on the value of advertising. The editors had not yet themselves begun to see the profitable uses to which this sleeping giant could be put.

Newspaper Management

During its existence before the Civil War, the Dallas Herald was neither very large nor very important except in North Texas. From a very humble beginning it grew rapidly and enjoyed a brief period of prosperity under Latimer and Swindells. Its income was derived from subscriptions, job printing, and advertising. But as soon as the war started, trouble began for the Herald. The appeal to arms created an overwhelming demand for news, and circulation increased

alarming (from the editors' viewpoint). Anticipating paper shortages, the newspaper accordingly made arrangements to continue subscriptions with old readers until more paper could be obtained, and refused to accept new subscribers. In these years it had to face the high costs of paper and labor, and bear the heavy burden of taxes. Finally, came the series of suspensions when the ownership and publication of the Herald fluctuated.

These changes, as could be expected, did not help to bring about very stable management. In addition, the editors had difficulty collecting money from the subscribers who remained on the war-curtailed list. This rate was only \$2.50 a year if paid in advance or within one month, \$3.00 if paid in six months, and \$4.00 at the end of the year. The editors pleaded through the columns and badgered their readers for their money. A typical instance of this appears in the issue of June 28, 1856:

Last Call--This is the last call we shall make to delinquent subscribers, some of whom never paid us a cent in the world. If the money is not forthcoming, the constable will be.

No country editor, unless drawn to the very verge of personal independence can afford to take such a commanding ground. We would advise him, however, to keep out of sight of the sheriff, if he is not long-winded and sound in limb.²⁹

Thus, the Herald floundered around in wartime shortages and financial uncertainties; but, despite its difficulties,

²⁹Dallas Herald, June 28, 1856, p. 3.

it remained a respected voice in Texas journalism circles.

Its value is indicated by an editorial published in the

Galveston Tri-Weekly News:

The Dallas Herald comes to us again as an exchange after a suspension of several months. We trust our friends, Mssrs. Swindells and Lane, may be able to keep their paper going through the balance of the war, for it is the only representative for quite a large and important portion of our country, embracing the principal wheat growing counties. It is very desirable also that our cause should have the support of so able a paper in that section.³⁰

What Made the News

During the early days of the Herald, Dallas was a frontier town with fierce Comanche and Wichita Indians roaming the wilderness to the west. Accounts of Indian massacres and fights between troopers and savages continually were big stories of the day. The editor spared little detail and filled his story with gruesome descriptions of the affrays.

The dispute of settlers in the Peters Colony over headrights, and the subsequent attack on the land company headquarters was big news in 1852. John Neely Bryan sold most of Dallas to Alexander Cockrell for \$7,000 that same year. Unsuccessful efforts were made to establish water transport on the Trinity in 1852.

The year 1854-1855 saw the coming of men wearing long smocks and speaking strange tongues. They were 350 Frenchmen, Belgians, and Swiss recruited by Victor Considerant,

³⁰ Galveston Tri-Weekly News, June 13, 1864, p. 1.

a follower of the French Socialist, Francois Fourier, to establish a cooperative community at La Reunion in the North Texas wilderness. After three years of struggle with droughts, grasshoppers, and "blue northers," they abandoned their colony, which was located four miles west of Dallas.

Incorporation of the town of Dallas in 1856 started a building campaign that attracted a floating population of buffalo hunters, trappers, and unskilled laborers whose boisterousness threatened disorder. But immediate steps were taken to meet the threat. The tin cup and the whiskey barrel--free drinks to the customers--were banished from the settlements stores, and gambling houses subsided.

Sectional issues such as the Kansas-Nebraska bill, quarrels over the fugitive slave law, the Dred Scott decision, and John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, were important contributions to the news columns of the Herald during this period. Texas politics, the Unionist sympathies of Sam Houston, and his controversial election as governor in 1859, the ordinance of secession, and Texas' entry into the war were dramatic events. Finally, mobilization and the stirring events of the Civil War from Sumter to Appomattox made the news in the pages of the country weekly in the still obscure North Texas village of Dallas.

CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH OF NEWSPAPERS IN POSTWAR DALLAS, 1865-1885

The War Between the States came to a close in the summer of 1865. It ended for Texas when General Gordon Granger led a Union force into Galveston, and President Andrew Johnson appointed A. J. Hamilton provisional governor on June 17, 1865. Reconstruction had begun for the rebel state of Texas. It did not end until the inaugural of Governor Coke and the return of civil authority in January, 1874.¹

The little village of Dallas had remained fairly prosperous during the war, especially during the early stages. It had not been within the circle of the fighting. No hostile armies besieged it. Good crops were produced even though able-bodied men had gone into service. The halting of progressive movements such as railroads and industrial development, and the inconvenience of a few economic stringencies were, perhaps, the worst effects on the home front.

The Reconstruction Acts passed by Congress forced Texas to reorganize its constitution in order to admit Negro suffrage while disqualifying many of the white voters from a

¹Ramsdell, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

voice in selecting delegates to the state constitutional convention.² Citizens of Dallas feared the rise of the Negro might possibly influence the balance of political power, and the Dallas Herald openly expressed concern that "Texas would become Africanized."³ But in the election of convention delegates, February 10-14, 1868, the people manifested very little interest. It passed without incident. The Herald supported A. J. Hamilton for governor in the election of 1869 because it felt he would favor more liberal provisions for voting than would E. J. Davis, the other candidate.⁴

During these turbulent times the task of the Dallas Herald's publishers was monumental. Faced with shortages and decreased revenues, publication at times became extremely difficult. The outlook for newspapers anywhere in Texas was not bright. Swindells and Lane,⁵ however, went about their chores with courage and determination.

In July, 1865, Dallas's second newspaper was launched. The new publication, Norton's Union Intelligencer, ushered

²The registration reduced the number of white voters to 390 and certified an almost equal number of Negroes. Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 2.

³Dallas Herald, cited in Lindsley, op. cit., I, 75.

⁴Ibid., cited in Lindsley, op. cit., I, 75.

⁵Lane had rejoined Swindells during the war but left in July, 1865, to enter the hotel business. He later served as mayor of Dallas and as a state legislator.

in a new era of Dallas journalism, being the first to compete with the Herald, and bearing the dubious distinction of being a Republican Reconstruction organ in hostile Southern territory. Despite this handicap, it published for thirty-eight years.⁶ With the motto of Henry Clay, "Let us never despair of the American Republic," the Intelligencer introduced one of the state's most colorful newspapermen to the Dallas scene--Colonel Anthony Banning Norton. A strong Union man, Norton had been editor of the Austin Southern Intelligencer during the 1850's. He was an admirer of Clay and in his younger days he vowed he would never shave or have his hair cut until Clay was elected President of the United States. As a result he had a long beard and long, flowing hair.⁷ He was active in politics, serving two terms as a state representative from Van Zandt, Henderson and Kaufman Counties. When the secession crisis came, Norton was named state adjutant by his friend, Sam Houston, during the regular and called sessions of the legislature.

When Texas seceded from the Union, Norton gave up his position and went back to his boyhood home in Ohio for the

⁶Baillio, op. cit., p. 85.

⁷Norton was from boyhood an ardent Whig. He edited newspapers at Portsmouth, Lancaster, Mt. Vernon and Columbus, Ohio before coming to Texas in 1848, was a delegate to every national convention, and was nearly always a candidate for Presidential elector on Whig tickets. Dallas Morning News, Jan. 1, 1894, p. 1.

duration.⁸ But as soon as the issues of the struggle were settled, he returned to Texas and began publication of the Union Intelligencer at Jefferson. Strong opposition to his Republican doctrines forced him to flee the East Texas town,⁹ and early in 1868 he came to Dallas, where he had been appointed by the provisional governor as district judge of Dallas, Ellis, Tarrant and Parker Counties. It was during his incumbency that the Intelligencer was started at the "Crow's Nest," some two and one-half miles away from town in the thicket. He served as postmaster until 1879 when he became the first United States Marshal for North Texas.

As Dallas grew during the 1870's the office of the Intelligencer was moved to town. Norton's paper was always quiet, dignified and stately. It contained little news but it devoted much space to editorials, features, literature and public documents. It was seldom well-printed and Norton made no effort to improve the typography, declaring that the majority of the readers of his political persuasion (Negroes) "could not read its great truth even though printed with letters of gold on pages of silver." Despite Norton's

⁸ Dallas Morning News, Jan. 1, 1894, p. 1.

⁹ The people, still smarting from the defeat in the war, were hardly amenable to such a vigorous doctrine. As a result, Norton's office and contents were destroyed by a mob and the publisher fled for his life to the thickets of Van Zandt where he had to live for several weeks. Dallas Morning News, Jan. 1, 1894, p. 1.

political philosophy, he won over many opponents by his steadfastness of principle, and gradually gained respect for his paper. This was evidenced in circulation figures of Dallas newspapers in the 1870's. At the height of the boom years of the 1870's, Norton established a daily newspaper called Norton's Daily Intelligencer. By 1877, it had the highest circulation in the city--more than 800 subscribers for the daily edition and 2,502 for the weekly number.¹⁰

The postwar editor and the newspaper business bore a heavy burden of the war-created shortages. Labor and printing supplies were high. Newsprint curtailment struck the Texas press a hard blow, especially since there were no paper mills in the state. New Orleans was the closest paper supply center, and shipments from the East were limited, not only because of the nationwide shortage but by quarantines placed on ports during the yellow fever epidemics in some coast cities. When a shipment failed to arrive, the editor reduced the size of his newspaper until more newsprint became available. This once prompted A. B. Norton to declare: "I have many copies of papers printed on rice, straw, wrapping and wall papers, which will be sore reminders to my great and everlasting grandchildren of those terrible days

¹⁰ American Newspaper Directory, George P. Rowell, ed., hereinafter cited as Rowell's Directory.

in newspaper life."¹¹ The shortages increased prices for subscriptions and advertising. The early postwar years represented a dark period in Dallas newspaper history.

The Newspaper Boom, 1873-1885

The history of the growing press in Dallas really begins with the advent of railroads and telegraph lines in 1872 and 1873. As railroads were extended and new lines built (with their accompanying telegraph wires) the wilderness was converted into cultivated fields and the little village of Dallas began to grow into a city. At the end of the war its population was only about 1,500. But in 1873, a year after the coming of the Houston & Texas Central Railroad, the population figure had jumped to 7,063 and by 1880 with another road, the Texas and Pacific Railroad, extended to Dallas, the population increased to 10,358. In 1873 more than 750 buildings were constructed and business flowed in from all directions. The city had six banks, six flour mills, two cotton compresses, two elevators and two foundries; banking gained importance.¹² In the next few years land companies splashed big advertisements in Dallas newspapers and settlers poured in from the North and Midwest.

¹¹Anthony B. Norton, "History of Journalism in Our Nation and State," an essay in Baillio, ed., Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Convention of the Texas Press Association, 1886, p. 62.

¹²U. S. Bureau of Census, Tenth Census of the United States, Report of Social Statistics of Cities, 1880, II, 311-312.

The boom precipitated a significant change in North Texas economy. Vast cotton fields took over in what was once almost entirely ranch lands and wheat regions, and Dallas was started off as a regional distributing point for farm equipment, wagons, plows, and harnesses.¹³

This period of growth was also a time of phenomenal development for newspapers. In technological progress, the advances equalled those made in other phases of industry in Texas. The cylinder press replaced the old hand press, and other printing improvements made it possible to run off more finished papers in a shorter time. The demand for reading matter increased as cities grew, and, as a result, the slow method of hand typesetting was replaced by the faster machine method.¹⁴

Prior to 1874 only two newspapers ventured into the field which the Herald and the Intelligencer dominated. One was a German language newspaper, Die Texas Post, established in 1869.¹⁵ It was the forerunner of several German journals to be started in the next two decades. It survived only a short time, but it opened the door to a new phase of journalism for subsequent language newspapers. The other paper

¹³ Dallas Times Herald, Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Ed., Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 6, p. 1.

¹⁴ Gray, op. cit., p. 408.

¹⁵ Rowell's Directory, 1877, p. 300.

was the Dallas Weekly News, established by John G. Walker, and E. W. Bayler. It lasted until 1873.

Of all the cities in Texas, Dallas was the scene of the most publishing ventures in the years, 1874-1885. No fewer than forty-two periodicals published weekly or oftener were begun during this era.¹⁶ Very few, however, made more than a momentary impact on the city and state, and the principal newspapers to survive for any notable length of time were the religious and foreign language newspapers and the precursors of the present daily newspapers.

The most significant aspect of newspaper growth at this time was the incredible multiplication of dailies, both in the morning and afternoon fields. Whereas Dallas did not have a single daily newspaper publishing through 1873, eleven of them entered the field between 1874 and 1885. Some lasted only a few months and all had either ceased publication or had been absorbed by other newspapers before 1900.

The first of the new dailies was Dallas's first newspaper, the Dallas Herald. In 1874, Publisher Swindells obtained wire services and, believing the growth of Dallas justified it, changed his newspaper into a daily with John Henry Brown, an early Dallas settler and noted journalist, as editor. The Herald's management afterward underwent several changes. John W. Swindells ended his long

¹⁶See Rowell's Directory for the years 1874-1885.

career with the paper in 1876,¹⁷ selling his interests to Samuel J. Adams, a prominent Dallas banker. Times were hard for the Herald and circulation had been dropping steadily despite prosperous days for the city. Adams sold his interests, and several practical newspapermen each made attempts to publish the Herald. D. C. McCaleb, John G. Walker, and John L. Bartow spent considerable sums to modernize the paper and bring it up to the metropolitan aspirations of Dallas during the late 1870's. P. S. Pfouts and John F. Elliott were publishers in 1879 when the Herald completed a merger with the Daily Commercial which has been established in 1876.¹⁸

In 1876 four more dailies opened shop in the thriving city of Dallas. Colonel A. B. Norton's Republican journal, the Union Intelligencer, began publication as a daily, as

¹⁷ Swindells became a private secretary to Governor Richard B. Hubbard at this time. He died in Austin in 1884. Cochran, op. cit., p. 57.

¹⁸ The Commercial, founded in 1874 and edited by George A. Cutler, became an intense rival of the Herald. Differences became so heated once that a "coup" was arranged by the Herald. Its editor's plan was to have an imaginary human being commit suicide by cutting a non-existent throat on the Trinity River bridge and a tossing of the body in the lake. Two suicide notes and a bucket of beef's blood completed the scene. A few minutes before both papers were to go to press, the police were notified. The Herald came out with a sensational "scoop!" The Commercial publisher, W. L. Hall, unveiled the hoax by plying Herald printers with potent drinks. When the Commercial was ready with a story "ventilating the canard," an eleventh hour conference was arranged, the expose was suppressed, and the two publishers decided to consolidate their papers. Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 2.

did the Dallas Evening Mail, edited and published by M. C. Harris,¹⁹ About the same time the Dallas Evening Voice made its appearance, and the Dallas Times was established as an evening daily, a field that it still occupies, having united with the Evening Herald²⁰ in 1888. During 1877 a morning edition of the Dallas Evening Mail was begun, but it survived only a year. The Evening Blade and the Gazette were published from 1881 to 1882, and the World published apparently in 1884 only.²¹

Publications published weekly or less oftener also became numerous during this period. Some newspapers published weekly editions to supplement their daily issues. Although such editions were reprints or digests of the news in the dailies, the practice of two editions was quite common with most of the nation's newspapers. Among these were the Dallas Herald, Norton's Union Intelligencer, the Daily Commercial, the Morning Mail, and the Times.²²

The increase in church membership during the period gave rise to the desire for religious newspapers. During the period six secular publications were established by the

¹⁹ Rowell's Directory, 1877, p. 300.

²⁰ Established in 1886.

²¹ Winifred Gregory, (ed.) American Newspapers, 1821-1936, p. 669.

²² Baillio, op. cit., p. 352.

Baptist, Presbyterian and Christian churches. An anti-religious monthly newspaper, the Agnostic, was competing with them for readers by 1880. Its editor was John R. Spencer.²³

Dallas had a journal of prohibition as early as 1874. The Texas Signet began publication at that time and was edited by Lewis Newton. It ceased operation after a few months' struggle with the "rum powers."²⁴

An interesting newspaper experiment was the Sunday Mercury, first issued on January 1, 1881, and edited by Captain E. G. Rust. It took as its special mission a crusade against vice, rowdyism, variety theater and gambling. Unlike most reform sheets of the day, the Mercury received substantial support and was considered a strong voice in Dallas community life. In 1882 the name was changed to the Dallas Mercury, which it retained until it became the official organ of Texas Farmers' Alliance shortly thereafter. The name was changed to the Southern Mercury and Rust's paper soon became a powerful spokesman for the farmers' group. After 1890 it gradually turned its editorial voice toward championing the cause of the Populists.²⁵

²³ Rowell's Directory, 1877, p. 300.

²⁴ Baillio, op. cit., p. 352.

²⁵ Gray, op. cit., p. 396.

The increasing numbers of immigrants coming into North Texas provided a readership for which there was no sufficient Dallas publication. In 1877, the Texas Volksblatt, an independent organ of the German settlers, came into existence. It championed the encouragement of increased immigration to the area and filled the needs of the German speaking peoples of Dallas.²⁶

Makeup of Dallas Newspapers
1865-1885

Newspapers of this period presented a dreary expanse of grey areas of small type. There were no startling or radical changes of makeup, and the overall appearance was not appealing to the eye. Poor legibility was characteristic of many of these periodicals, particularly in the early part of the period. The scarcity of newsprint and ink caused rough and smeared printings. Editors were forced to use small type to get more news printed on available paper. The net result was typography of poor quality and legibility. After 1870, however, many of these handicaps had been overcome and newspapers were printing a more attractive page.

Advertising found prominent front-page placement during this time. Illustrations were used sparingly and those

²⁶ Baillio, op. cit., p. 352.

carried were woodcuts or line drawings of doubtful quality. The average column was a little over two inches in width.

Although many improvements were manifest, Dallas newspapers still had much to learn in the way of typography and reader eye appeal. It was not until the period, 1885-1906 that these qualities were recognizable.

Coverage and Writing of the News

The growth of newspapers in number and scope necessitated an increase in the size of staffs for the coverage of news. Personal journalism was still a characteristic of several Dallas newspapers, but there was a noticeable tendency in the latter portion of the period to delegate the task of gathering news (and even editorial writing) to staff members. Most local news was handled by a small staff of reporters and by the editor himself, in the case of the dailies. The editor of the weekly remained the chief news gatherer and writer for his newspaper. Letters to the editor were another source of news, and were given exceptional attention. The editors encouraged citizens to write about their travels. Nearly every newspaper carried a column of short news items about local events--the forerunner of the modern gossip column.

The system of having regular correspondents came into vogue during this era. News from correspondents in nearby communities came to be an important part of the news

gathering process. The practice sometimes created a problem, particularly before the coming of the railroads and the improvement of the telegraph and mail system. When the mails failed to arrive, news was scarce and editors complained editorially:

No mail [wrote Pryor of the Herald] has reached here from the South since Monday last at which time we received Houston and Galveston dates as late as the 28 ult.

The State line from this to Waco is in course of being restocked as a tri-weekly four-horse coach line, which we understand to be the cause of the present derangement of the mails. A mail, however was confidently looked for last night.²⁷

With the advent of the railroads, mail service became more dependable and exchanges continued to be the most popular source of out-of-city news. The correspondence system was improved and expanded. Such news was reprinted as original, published with a credit line, or was rewritten.

The telegraph increased in importance as a source of news as the period progressed. When it was put into use by newspapers, it signaled the birth of the afternoon paper. Morning papers often followed the practice of making over their front pages to accommodate late wire news and issued noon or early afternoon editions. Evening papers were established on the premise that a newspaper with a new name and new format and under the independent editorship would have a better selling power than a "late edition" of a paper

²⁷Dallas Herald, June 9, 1866, p. 2.

already purchased that morning.²⁸ The result of this theory in Dallas was the establishment of such evening papers as the Evening Times, the Evening Blade, the Evening Mail, the Evening Voice, and the Daily Commercial.

The telegraph also gave the newspapers of Dallas the opportunity to secure more wire news from newsgathering syndicates. Most editors of dailies subscribed to Associated Press facilities, and even a few weeklies used this service to some extent.²⁹

The form of writing the news was generally poor when judged by modern standards. The summary lead had not yet gained universal acceptance; indeed, no definite form of beginning a story had been devised. Many writers followed the rambling narrative form and the facts were often buried deep in the body of the story. The leads that attempted to answer a part of the "five W's"³⁰ appear to have been an accidental gesture on the part of the writer. Events were sometimes arranged in a chronological importance rather than in the "inverted pyramid" style.³¹ The writer sometimes added his comment to a news item wherever he deemed it necessary, making it difficult to distinguish a news story

²⁸Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism, p. 447.

²⁹Lawrence Copley Lang, "A Study of Texas Newspapers from 1876 to 1890," unpublished Master's thesis, Dept. of Journalism, University of Texas, 1949, pp. 84-85.

³⁰Who, What, When, Where and Why.

³¹Major facts first with details in order of diminishing importance.

from an editorial. The most impartial reports, however, came from Associated Press dispatches which served clients of different political faiths. The news agency could not afford to antagonize its customers.

There was as yet no departmentalization of newspapers. News of society, sports and business was scarce and when used consisted chiefly of "tidbits" of information. Others were items hardly akin to the exacting style of newsstory writing of the modern newspaper. The following are examples of local news typical of coverage by Dallas newspapers of the period:

Col. W. C. Holland leaves with his family next week for Mineral Wells, where he has purchased a large amount of real estate. . . .

Miss Jennie Lannamilt, a Calvert lady, is visiting the family of Mr. F. N. Crutchfield of this city.

District Court granted the wife of Bud Stamper a divorce yesterday, Bud not appearing.

A certain organist in this city who is given to following ladies and vulgarly staring at them, would do well to forsake his evil ways or he will be exposed; a word to the wise, etc. . . .³²

Reporting phraseology for traffic accidents:

As Wm. Tillman and Co's. cart was going up East Elm St. Wednesday evening loaded with whisky and cigars, a wagon loaded with cord wood collided with it. Result: Tillman's wagon considerably broken up and two indignant drivers.³³

³²Dallas Herald, Jan. 4, 1882, p. 2.

³³Ibid., p. 2.

The obituary:

Mrs. Steward, who has been sick so long with typhoid fever, corner of Pacific and Harwood streets, died yesterday morning. The remains of Mrs. Steward will be followed to her last resting place Tuesday afternoon by a vast concourse of friends.³⁴

A Sunday Mercury story on vice sometimes took an amusing literary (and editorial) turn.

A large chalk mark was made Tuesday on the ceiling of the Courtroom by City Marshal Arnold to note the fact that there were no drunks on the docket. How this remarkable fact is to be accounted for is beyond the ken of the average Dallasite intellect where 300 saloons every minute of the day pour their poisonous compounds down the gullets of their customers.³⁵

The special news column increased in popularity during the period. As Dallas assumed stature as a trading center, business news was often given prominence under a special heading such as "Commercial and Industrial," and would be followed with general remarks about market conditions, price quotations and receipts. Agricultural columns became important as more farmers moved to the city to cultivate the fertile blacklands around the Trinity River. They were frequently classified under headings such as "Agricultural Skill and Industry," and gave tips on better farming methods. A special column was also devoted to wire news by nearly all newspapers, being carried under the heading "Telegraph," "By Telegraph," or just "Telegraph."

³⁴ Dallas Sunday Mercury, Jan. 8, 1882, pp. 1-8.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 1-8.

The Editorial

The editorial was more or less submerged during the Civil War by the public's insatiable thirst for news. Readers cared less for opinion and personalities. However, the political upheavals of the early Reconstruction period and the subsequent boom years demanded definitive interpretation and explanation. Editors of the Herald, Intelligencer, Mercury, Times, and others attempted to satisfy this demand. Personal journalism was having its last fling, and before the period came to a close, there was a marked tendency for editors to confine themselves to business and allow others to write editorials.

With the exception of Norton's Intelligencer, Dallas newspapers were professedly Democratic in policy although the topics of the day did not always make for unanimity of opinion. The issues brought forth all shades of editorial thought, and lively debates aroused public interest and helped increase readership. On the questions of expansion and civic development there was little disagreement, and rival newspapers prided themselves in speaking out for any improvement or change that would benefit Dallas or the state.

Editorial subjects covered almost every phase within the scope of human activity. Editors gave much emphasis to the questions that were of national and statewide importance, but they did not neglect local matters. In fact, the newspaper as a civic booster really came into its own during the

1870's and early 1880's when Dallas's expansion and boom days were at the height. Free grass, free schools, labor problems, the railroads, business, city government, sanitation and crime were but a few of the absorbing topics of the day. Talk about navigation of the Trinity River to Galveston was still prevalent, and the project was actively promoted by Dallas newspapers.

In many parts of the state, animosities engendered by the Civil War were still smoldering. In Dallas the newspapers sought to soften the local attitude editorially by admonitions and appeals to common sense. When it was learned that Jefferson Davis, ex-president of the Confederacy, was to visit Dallas in 1875, the Herald warned:

The occasion will be tempting, and in the heat of enthusiasm there may be some who will overstep the bounds and indulge in useless recrimination. Curb your enthusiasm. Forget the passions and prejudices of the past and remember only that you are American citizens, and that you must so honor Mr. Davis as a private citizen.³⁶

Among the topics discussed editorially in Texas were Reconstruction politics, the military occupation, the new constitution, the despotic reign of Governor E. J. Davis, immigration, expansion of cattle empires, and state education. National and world problems found their way into the editorial columns with increasing regularity. The changing and eventful years took on new meaning to thousands as the

³⁶Dallas Herald, Nov. 8, 1876, p. 1.

editorial, with the help of faster means of communication and the growth of newspapers, slowly began to emerge as a separate and distinctive feature of the news.

Financing the Newspaper

The rapid increase in the number of newspapers in Dallas during this period was part of a nationwide process that saw hundreds of dailies and weeklies established in cities which showed growth in size and population. Such growth provided a ready market for newspapers. The cost of establishing a newspaper was ridiculously small and many individuals entered the field. The plant consisted of a hand-cranked cylinder press, with a few cases of type, and imposing stone, and perhaps a small foot-power press for job work. The type founders and dealers in printers' supplies usually were glad to allow credit for a new office, and the readyprint houses supplied the paper stocks (some half-printed)³⁷ on weekly C. O. D. terms. The difficulty was to have a few dollars in cash on hand each week in order to get the readyprint bundle out of the express office and to pay the help. The situation was especially acute during the early part of the period. Subscriptions were still hard to collect and editors had not yet learned to be businesslike in their methods. In desperation, the management frequently announced that they would take anything in delinquent

³⁷"Patent insides," or "canned news" was a widely used method of filling up pages when local news was scarce.

subscriptions--corn, peas, fence posts, wood, hay, feathers, scrap iron, honey, soft soap, syrup, tobacco, grease, beef or hides. A typical collection entreaty:

The Dallas Herald is furnished at \$2.50 specie, per annum. Receivable in butter, chickens, or any other produce.³⁸

The fatality rate among Dallas newspapers which were established during the boom years was high. Many suspended after just a few months' operation. The Dallas Herald and Norton's Intelligencer were the only papers to attain any degree of permanency. The main portion of their income was derived from advertising, while nearly all received added revenue from political announcements and editorial notices. Election years were especially profitable since nearly every candidate was eager to place his name before the largest number of people possible. The following is a typical quotation of rates:

To announce a candidate is \$15 for State or District office, for County or Precinct offices \$7.50. Advertising rates in currency. Specie taken at market value. Produce taken for all dues.³⁹

Most newspapers used the "square"⁴⁰ as the basis of computing the advertising rates. The system was used by the

³⁸Dallas Herald, Nov. 8, 1876, p. 1.

³⁹Dallas Herald, Oct. 31, 1868, p. 2.

⁴⁰Eight or ten lines of type, usually the same size as the body type, and one column in width. A square cost \$1.50 for the first insertion. Prices for larger ads were fixed according to space in column, and for smaller ads by a gate line and by insertion. See Dallas Herald, Oct. 31, 1868, p. 2.

Herald during its early days and carried through for many years. Later newspapers adopted the square basis, sometimes with variations in rates. Toward the end of the period advertising had begun to assume an important role as a revenue producer. As business and trade improved, merchants turned more and more to advertising, and by 1885 it had become the newspaper's biggest source of income.

Advertising

The Reconstruction period saw a general slump in advertising in Dallas newspapers. Money was scarce and the general business economy had been impaired by wartime stringencies. Newspapers carried a higher ratio of news to advertising. But as the period progressed and the boom came to Dallas, the established newspapers were recognized as a good medium of advertising. The result was a swing in the opposite direction with advertising occupying at least one-half of the newspaper's space.

Advertisements were grouped under several division heads such as drygoods, railroads, professional cards, groceries, auctioneers, commission merchants, boots and shoes, ladies wear, stationery, book and job printing, school books, land agencies and others. Out-of-state cities furnished advertisers for Dallas newspapers and were generally grouped under the name of the city. Additional notices concerned hotels, insurance companies, real estate, tobaccos,

lotteries, amusements and liquors. "Help Wanted" and "Lost and Found" were popular. But more than any other, the drug and medicine advertisements occupied the largest amount of space. Patent medicines were still bought and sold on the basis of curative values they claimed rather than on that of content.⁴¹

The general tendency of advertising placement was to carry entries on all pages without much regard for harmony or eye appeal. The front pages were now used for this purpose although the bulk of advertisements were carried elsewhere. The type used was seldom consistent. Width, height, degree of boldness and degree of condensation were changeable factors and were often indiscriminately employed. Illustrations were few and simple, consisting of line drawings of various sizes in a single column. They were generally pictures of a product or trademark, a portrait, or machines. Such products as Lydia Pinkham's Female Compound, the "Bull Durham" of Duke's tobacco, the Castoria "that children cry for," and Peruna were familiar names to Dallas newspaper readers.

The predominant characteristic of advertising procedure at this time was its increasing sales appeal. Although its possibilities had not been fully explored, newspaper

⁴¹Mott, op. cit., p. 505.

publishers, influenced by the growth of their communities, were beginning to realize the value of the advertising medium.

What Made the News
1865-1885

A gradual change of emphasis in subject matter is evident in the newspapers of Dallas between 1865-1885. The troublesome conditions of postwar Texas from 1865-1876 were common news story subjects, and newspapers gave wide play to stories dealing with the disbanding of soldiers, radical meetings, labor troubles, Negro suffrage, the registration oath, reconciliation with the North, immigration and desperadoism. The Civil War, with its accounts of battles and wholesale bloodshed, had passed and newspapers gave their attention to these diverse new problems. Such news may be grouped under the headings of local, crime, political, government, social conditions and foreign.

In 1868 the completion of a stern-wheel steamboat trip from Galveston to Dallas in a year and four days caused much excitement and elicited predictions that the city would one day be a great inland port.⁴²

Crime news flourished during these exciting days. Men were shot down in saloons, in their fields, or on the road; assault on both the Negroes and the whites, robberies,

⁴² Texas, A Guide to the Lone Star State, op. cit.,
p. 228.

forgeries and counterfeiting were among the common felonies. Perhaps one of the few remaining accounts of one of Texas' most renowned feuds, the Bob Lee-Lewis Peacock feud⁴³ are found in the pages of the Dallas Herald. Another famous feud chronicled in the files of the Herald and the Intelligencer was that between the Horrell brothers of Lampasas and Governor Davis and his state police in 1875.⁴⁴ Local crime news, while less prominent, was given much space.

One of the most momentous events in the history of Dallas was the coming of the railroads. Dallas journals were filled with news of the arrival of the Houston & Texas Central in 1872. A year later, the Texas & Pacific route was extended to Dallas. From the blacklands and the Grand Prairie, long wagon trains brought wool, cotton and hides; sheep and cattle were driven in to be shipped to vast new

⁴³ Lee, a prosperous frontiersman of Fannin County, angered scalawags, union sympathizers and ruffians of the neighborhood led by Lewis Peacock who decided to "get" him. All through 1867-68 there was killing and waylaying, and the last man did not die until 1871. The Herald carried accounts of how the Lee brothers sought to eliminate their tormentors systematically. There were more killings, even after Bob Lee was ambushed in 1869. Dallas Herald, March 25, 1873, p. 2. See also S. L. Sonnichsen, I'll Die Before I'll Run, pp. 10-16.

⁴⁴ Gunplay and killings livened up the countryside around Lampasas and Georgetown when local and state police attempted arrest of the Horrells following a cattle-stealing spree. The Horrells fled to New Mexico but returned to engage in further feuding with the law and with others. Dallas Herald, March 25, 1873, p. 2; Norton's Intelligencer, Feb. 15, 1873, and Sonnichsen, ibid., pp. 98-105.

markets. Rail travel was encouraged and the city even tried to build its own railroad to Santa Fe, New Mexico. The project was halted by the panic of 1873, and subsequently was abandoned.⁴⁵

A growing civic pride became evident in Dallas at this time. The newspapers constantly wrote about and argued for better streets, sanitation, schools, municipal reforms, and Americanism. The Dallas Fair was publicized. The city had a number of variety theaters during this period and the idea of Dallas as a center of culture was gaining impetus. The Field Opera House was built in 1873 and was Dallas's first legitimate theater. That same year the Dallas Opera Association was formed and thespic performances were being given by such immortals as Maurice Barrymore, Edwin Booth and Fanny Davenport.⁴⁶

Dallas heard big news from elsewhere in the world. Newspapers got wire reports of Washington politics, and the presidential elections of Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland. Newspaper readers learned about the disastrous Chicago fire of 1871, the panic of 1873, and in the same year the Virginius affair that almost brought the United States to blows with Spain. In 1876, they read about

⁴⁵ Texas, A Guide to the Lone Star State, op. cit., p. 228.

⁴⁶ The Dallas Times, cited in the Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 7, p. 6.

General George Custer and the massacre at Little Big Horn, the opening of the nation's first telephone exchange in 1877 and the Russo-Turkish War. Corruption in high places, prohibition movements, and the silver controversy were much discussed issues. In 1881 the news of Garfield's assassination shocked the community of Dallas. The movement for civil service, the industrial progress of the nation and the entangling alliances of Europe, the start on the Panama Canal in 1882, and the opening of the first electric street railway in Baltimore made the headlines.

These momentous years, 1865-1885, were indelibly recorded on the pages of Dallas newspapers. They were years of social, political and economic upheaval not only in the events of America's history but in the process of producing a newspaper. They opened the way for even greater changes and expansion in the next twenty-one years.

CHAPTER IV

BIRTH OF A TEXAS NEWSPAPER COLOSSUS

In the spring of 1839, Samuel Bangs, a practical printer from Alabama, landed at the Texas port of Houston with his wife, Caroline, and her two brothers, George and Henry French. He brought with him a small hand press, a few trays of type, and little else.¹ Bangs found too much competition in the newspaper world of Houston, the capital city of Texas, and he soon moved to Galveston, where he established on April 1, 1839, a newspaper called the Daily Galvestonian. His two brothers-in-law served as editors of the Galvestonian, which became familiar as a vociferous pro-Lamar² journal. Bangs' newspaper venture struggled through most of Lamar's two-year term of office, but when Sam Houston was returned to the presidency in 1841, the Galvestonian suffered politically and financially. The bitter alignments that grew out of the dreams of a Texas "empire" by one faction and of annexation to the United States by another had left Texas in a state of apprehension

¹Lota M. Spell, "Samuel Bangs: First Printer in Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXXV (April, 1932), 267-68.

²Mirabeau B. Lamar, second president of the Republic of Texas; see Sam Acheson, 35,000 Days in Texas, A History of the Dallas News, p. 9.

and discord. In this uneasy atmosphere Bangs abandoned the Galvestonian and began publication of his second and more successful newspaper, the Galveston Daily News, on April 11, 1842.³ This was a momentous event in the history of Texas journalism, for it heralded the birth of a business institution that was in time to become a newspaper colossus of the Southwest--the Dallas Morning News.

Actually, the Daily News, a humble, four-page sheet measuring only eight and one-half by twelve inches, was little more than a rebirth or renewal of the Galvestonian. It came into being in the same building and on the same press. One of eighteen newspapers started in Galveston during the period of the Republic, it seemed much like a fly-by-night venture in the "graveyard of Texas journalism."⁴ It was published as a daily only two months when the editors cut it down to a tri-weekly, a form it followed through the Civil War. And, as could be expected, the new journal was a pro-Lamar organ, sharply opposing England.⁵

Within a few months the restless Bangs grew tired of the News and sold it to two printers, Michael Cronican and Wilbur F. Cherry.⁶ Under its new owners, the News attained little distinction and soon was on the verge of bankruptcy.

³Acheson, op. cit., p. 11.

⁴Ibid., p. 15.

⁵The British policy of advocating abolition of slavery was a nightmare to slave-holding Texas.

⁶Acheson, op. cit., p. 15.

Cherry bought Chronican's interest and shortly after merged with B. F. Neal, founder of the San Luis Advocate on the lower end of Galveston Island. It was through Neal that Willard Richardson, the guiding genius of the "Old Lady by the Sea," would be attracted to the newspaper.⁷

Willard Richardson came to Texas from South Carolina in 1837, working variously as a teacher, surveyor and government employee. One of his earliest acquaintances in the new Republic was Mirabeau B. Lamar, then its Vice-President. Richardson had already absorbed the dominant political and social creed of the South and subscribed to the states rights principles championed by John C. Calhoun. As a partisan of Lamar and a disciple of Calhoun, he at once found himself crosswise with the Jacksonian Houston. His chance to propound some of his ideas came in the summer of 1842 when he was asked to substitute for a few months as editor of the Houston Telegraph. His success was instantaneous, and his editorial vigor impressed the News publishers. Richardson readily accepted Neal's offer to become editor of that paper.⁸

The Galveston News was an insignificant paper of about 2,000 circulation when Richardson began his long rule over its destinies. From the outset he made it clear that the

⁷Acheson, op. cit., p. 15.

⁸Ibid., pp. 19, 22, 28.

central theme of his newspaper policy would be devotion to progress of his state and to internal improvements. He earnestly strove to follow a policy of independent journalism and to lay aside all burning political questions in favor of what he considered more important problems.⁹

Richardson's News consisted of a four-page paper whose sheets were slightly larger than a modern newspaper. The main edition of statewide circulation was the weekly, which was four times larger than formerly and carried ten times more news, editorial matter and advertising. It was largely an accumulative edition of material carried over in type from the smaller tri-weekly editions which served readers in Galveston and immediate vicinity. To expedite printing, Richardson purchased a power press in 1855. This was one of many moves he made to build up the News after becoming its owner as well as its editor five years before. In the next fifteen years prior to the Civil War, the Galveston News emerged as the most widely circulated, the wealthiest and most influential newspaper in Texas. Its circulation grew to some 3,500 subscribers and gross advertising revenue amounted to \$10,000 a year. But the growing business was too much for one man, and in 1852 Richardson was joined by David Richardson (no relation) in a newspaper partnership that lasted until the second year of the Civil War.¹⁰

⁹Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 3.

¹⁰Acheson, op. cit., p. 34.

Under the Richardsons' guidance, the News printed facts about the state designed to attract more settlers. The two publishers decided in the 1850's that an almanac would best serve this purpose. Accordingly, the first issue of the Texas Almanac and Immigrant's Guide was published in January, 1857, with David Richardson as its editor. It became a cyclopedia of Texas, filled with articles of interest not only to the people of Texas but to the United States and foreign countries. It contained historical reminiscences, descriptions of Texas soils and their products, flora and fauna, mineral resources, climatic facts about the state, land laws and laws relating to business, waterways and water supply, the public domain, and the provision for interesting the home seeker, particularly the immigrant.¹¹

The Texas Almanac enjoyed wide circulation in the United States and foreign countries. Twenty-five thousand copies were sold immediately, spurred somewhat by Richardson's historical sketch attacking General Houston's reputation as the hero of San Jacinto. The Almanac continued to grow in circulation and influence through the years.¹²

With the Civil War raging in 1862, the News was forced to obey the Galveston evacuation order necessitated by the Federal blockade of the Gulf Coast and the subsequent removal of defenses to Houston and other cities. Willard

¹¹Gray, op. cit., p. 393.

¹²Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 3.

Richardson moved the News to Houston and David Richardson continued to Austin for publication of the Almanac. For the duration the Richardson enterprises were plagued with war-time shortages of newsprint and other handicaps which bedeviled the Civil War editor. Shortly after the move to Houston the entire plant was destroyed by fire; but Richardson quickly raised cash and purchased more equipment to put the News back in operation.¹³

Richardson continued publishing the News at Houston for several months after the conclusion of the war. But with the lifting of the blockade, the coast cities experienced an economic boom, and Richardson began making plans to move the "old lady back to the sea." The News itself was beginning to feel the surge toward normalcy. It had returned to its original size of four pages, circulation had increased, and the big advertisers began using the columns of the News again. In March, 1866, the News returned to Galveston, but not before Richardson had made a move that was to insure the newspaper's continued growth and prosperity. He hired a new bookkeeper named Alfred H. Belo, a twenty-six-year-old former Confederate officer from North Carolina.¹⁴

Colonel Alfred Horatio Belo, who was to extend the influence and financial stability of the News in its subsequent

¹³Acheson, op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 66.

history, served gallantly in several major engagements during the war and was wounded at the second battle of Cold Harbor. After Lee's surrender, he came to Texas hoping to continue the fight with General Kirby Smith's rebel army, but Smith had already gone into exile in Mexico. He was serving as a tutor to plantation children in South Texas when he saw Richardson's advertisement for a bookkeeper.¹⁵

Colonel Belo took the job in the counting room and promptly showed unusual business judgment and organizational genius, two qualities which characterized his later career in the expansion of the News. Within a few months he was admitted to partnership with Richardson. The News, now a four-page daily, was soon on the road to recovering the place it once held in Texas journalism but lost to the Telegraph at Houston during the war.¹⁶

On July 26, 1875, Willard Richardson died at his home in Galveston. Regarded as one of the most important figures in Texas journalism, he had built up one of the largest and most profitable newspapers in the state. But his death caused scarcely a momentary disturbance in the institutional character of the News which had been so solidly shaped in the past decade. Colonel Belo took full control, buying the

¹⁵Sydney S. Johnson, Texans Who Wore the Gray, I, 125.

¹⁶Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 3.

interests of the Richardson heirs. The new venture was styled A. H. Belo & Company.¹⁷

As the prosperous 1880's opened, the Galveston News began to reflect the rapid development of the state as a whole. Circulation had grown so swiftly that the newspaper was unable to make suitable train connections for delivery to many parts of the state. Permanent reportorial and business offices were extended to handle unprecedented demands for the News. Offices were opened at San Antonio, Fort Worth, Waco and Dallas in addition to those already in operation. The News' claim to be a state-wide newspaper was proved by circulation, news and advertising figures. Despite this journalistic prosperity, the paper had one pressing need: the extension of its circulation to the upcoming North Texas region. It had already been impressed with reports coming in concerning the booming area around Fort Worth and Dallas which had grown steadily in population since the war and was beginning to assume leadership in agriculture and commerce. Colonel Belo watched this development and apparently realized that the News, if it was to maintain state-wide importance, would need to have its home closer to the area than Galveston. He also saw that a paper in an inland city would serve Texas much better than one in the island city of Galveston where the sphere of

¹⁷Acheson, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

influence and trade of the paper were limited to a semi-circle.¹⁸ He wasted little time in investigating the possibilities of such a move by the News.

In 1881 the management of the News was converted into a joint stock company under a charter from the state, with Colonel Belo as president, Colonel R. G. Lowe as vice-president, Thomas W. Dealey, secretary-treasurer, and a three-man board of directors. The move was significant in several ways. Colonel Belo, ailing from old war wounds, was turning much of the newspaper's management over to others. It began a noticeable shift in the News toward the concept of impersonal journalism and the growth of the newspaper as big business. But the change served an even higher purpose. It helped pave the way for the establishment of the North Texas branch since the charter provided that "A. H. Belo & Company might establish one or more newspapers at such places within the State" as the corporation might desire.¹⁹

After the incorporation, the News began in earnest its search for the answer to its growing circulation problems in the North Texas region. Belo sent Lowe to the area to study all possible angles. The solution arrived at was one of the most radical departures in the field of journalism

¹⁸Acheson, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

¹⁹Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 3.

yet undertaken. It was decided that a branch office would be established in a North Texas city. The plan was to duplicate the News--complete with printing plant, staff and all--but connected by special leased wire with Galveston, more than 300 miles away.²⁰ By shipping its papers by wire, the News could accomplish what it took hours for the lumbering locomotives to do.

There were newspapers in the United States held loosely under a common ownership but this was to be the first instance of a "chain" newspaper in the history of American journalism.²¹ Radical though the idea was, it was approached with extreme caution. Where in all the northern portion of the state should the branch be located? The answer to this and many other questions required detailed investigation and the services of an individual with initiative and foresight. The man selected for the task was George Bannerman Dealey.

Fifteen-year-old George B. Dealey joined the staff of the Galveston News on October 12, 1875, as an office boy. It was a new dream world for the young English immigrant. He was born in Manchester on September 18, 1859. After severe financial losses in 1870, the Dealey family struck out for the new world and landed at Galveston, where they had

²⁰ Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 3.

²¹ James Melvin Lee, History of American Journalism, p. 340.

relatives. Young Dealey was introduced to the new country by taking a series of odd jobs. He pumped the organ and rang the bell at the Trinity Episcopal Church where he frequently went to sleep during the sermons. His next job was for a candy company. He ate so much candy the first week that he never liked candy thereafter. He took other jobs, as dishwasher, messenger boy, leather worker, cipher clerk, grocery clerk and cook. When the opening at the News came, he told Colonel Belo about his past positions. "Well, George, you're versatile; that's what we need in the newspaper business,"²² Belo said. He engaged Dealey, who went to work that same day at a salary of three dollars a week. Belo also hired young Dealey because of the satisfactory service of the boy's older brother, Thomas, who had just been promoted to the counting room.²³

Thus, G. B. Dealey began with the publishing concern a connection that was to remain unbroken for seventy-five years. From that time until the death of Richardson in 1875, the three builders of a mammoth business, Richardson, Belo and Dealey, were associated together and the youngest, who was then only an office boy, was to become the greatest of them all.

²²Ernest A. Sharpe, "Dealey of Dallas," unpublished Master's thesis, Dept. of Journalism, University of Texas, 1941, pp. 22-24.

²³Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 3.

Dealey, alert and intent in his work, rose quickly to the position of foreman of the mailing room and later became circulation manager. Between 1882 and 1884 he served as staff representative at Waco, Dallas and Houston.²⁴ When Dealey learned of the proposed expansion of North Texas, he showed so much interest in it that the management assigned him to make a study of circulation and business possibilities in several North Texas towns. The first part of the assignment Dealey received from Belo was to find the best city for the News' North Texas newspaper. He selected Dealey for this undertaking because Dealey had shown in numerous ways that he could be depended upon to do a good job on whatever he undertook, and because his position as circulation manager had equipped him with subscription figures on every town in the state. The second part of Dealey's task was to estimate the circulation that might be expected for a North Texas newspaper. He was told to bear Dallas and Fort Worth in mind as the most likely cities for the paper, but to consider others.²⁵

In the summer of 1882, Dealey left Galveston on his survey. He went west as far as Abilene, north into the Indian territory of Oklahoma, as far northeast as Fort Smith, Arkansas, and to the east along the Louisiana border. He

²⁴Acheson, op. cit., pp. 92, 95.

²⁵Sharpe, op. cit., pp. 39-40.

toured all the railroads between these points with Austin as the southern limit. At each point he got off the train, sized up the town and estimated the possible circulation. His main estimates were based on the size of the town, the circulation of other newspapers, and railroad facilities and time schedules available. In towns close to Dallas, for example, he would ascertain the circulation of the Dallas Herald. This gave him a second basis for his estimate because he had a strong conviction that the new paper would take over those subscriptions. Then, examining each town, he determined whether it could best be served from Fort Worth or Dallas. He also checked Waco and Sherman as focal points.²⁶

Upon learning that Dallas was being considered as a possibility, business and civic leaders endorsed the proposal. They were not content with the endeavors of the local newspapers. Norton's Daily Intelligencer had recently ceased publication. The Herald, lacking the talent of making and keeping friends, was losing readers at a rapid rate and other newspapers were weak and unstable. The situation was ripe for a newspaper with the prestige and influence of the "Old Lady by the Sea."²⁷ The News and the St. Louis newspapers furnished the type of metropolitan journalism which the Dallas leaders wanted. They urged the advantages of

²⁶Sharpe, op. cit., p. 40.

²⁷Gray, op. cit., p. 408.

their city and offered to raise subscriptions of stock to the News in the amount of \$25,000.²⁸

Dealey conducted his survey for about a year, and made a complete report to Colonel Belo in 1883. He advised that the paper be located at Dallas because that city could expect to build a circulation of from ten to fifteen thousand in a reasonable length of time and with possibly 5,000 as a starting figure. Although Fort Worth had more rail connections at that time, he liked Dallas because it was the center of a large and well-developed farm area whereas Fort Worth was fronted on one side by vast and undeveloped West Texas.²⁹ He told the directors that the St. Louis papers provided the strongest competition in the territory, since many Texans came from the St. Louis area. But he pointed out that the News could compete successfully if it could get the cooperation of the railroads and ship its papers to North Texas towns on the day they were printed since the St. Louis papers arrived a day later. He visualized a great future for Dallas and the News branch in that city.

The directors of the News accepted Dealey's recommendations, and on July 22, 1885, the management served notice through the columns of the News that "on the first day of October, 1885, they will begin publication of a daily paper

²⁸Acheson, op. cit., p. 100.

²⁹Sharpe, op. cit., pp. 40-42.

at Dallas, Texas, the title of which will be the Dallas Morning News."³⁰ This name was chosen because a new journal under the title, the Dallas News, had been started by several enterprising gentlemen a few months before. An indicated offer to surrender the name for a consideration was refused by Belo and associates, and the other name was used. Soon the other folded in the face of the threatened opposition.³¹

G. B. Dealey was sent to Dallas as business manager and soon the first home of the Dallas Morning News was under construction, a three-story brick structure built for little more than \$10,000. It was located on the north side of Commerce Street between Lamar and Austin. The building was to be lighted completely with the newest invention, the incandescent lamp of Thomas A. Edison. From Chicago and St. Louis, new equipment including several tons of type and chases, stereotyping machinery and an eight-page web-perfecting Bullock press, capable of printing 12,000 copies an hour for the folding machine. The News also had advantages of facilities that Dallas newspapers to date had not enjoyed. It possessed the parent Galveston News's membership in the New York Associated Press, together with that newspaper's wide and near perfect system of agencies and

³⁰ Galveston News, July 22, 1885, p. 3.

³¹ Acheson, op. cit., p. 102.

correspondents.³² And since the Dallas Herald held the local franchise of the Western Associated Press,³³ the News secured services of the United Press (no relation to the present UP) and the Baltimore and Ohio Telegraph Company for a daily budget of 7,000 words on national and foreign news.³⁴

To demonstrate the permanence of the new venture, Belo moved to Dallas with his family. The News' editor-in-chief, Donaldson C. Jenkins, also moved to Dallas. William O'Leary, who had been staff correspondent in Dallas, became the first city editor. William G. Sterett, a prominent Dallas newsman who had several years earlier bought an interest in the Dallas Times, sold his stock and soon joined the staff of the News. A full news and editorial staff was ready for the first issue. At the head of the business department--counting room, as it was called then--was G. B. Dealey.³⁵ The experiment was now ready to begin. At 4:15 a.m. on Thursday, October 1, 1885, the presses began to roll and the Dallas Morning News was born--the North Texas baby of "the Old Lady by the Sea."³⁶

³²Gray, op. cit., p. 419.

³³Predecessor of the modern Associated Press.

³⁴Acheson, op. cit., p. 103.

³⁵Dallas Morning News, Oct. 2, 1885, p. 1.

³⁶Acheson, op. cit., p. 105.

The birth of the News and of "chain journalism" evoked comment beyond Dallas and the state. Charles A. Dana of the New York Sun declared: "It is well worth watching. . . ." ³⁷ Describing its new rival as a ". . . credit to Dallas and the State Press," the Dallas Herald, which now stood to suffer the most, said of the News: "It is a facsimile of its parent stem . . . and as neat and newsy as its other half." ³⁸

In the lead editorial of the first issue, the News described its new position in Dallas:

In establishing a regular daily edition at Dallas, the News does not conceive that it is introducing itself as a stranger in a strange country but it merely proposes to cover more fully a familiar field and to converse more directly with a familiar public. . . .

The editor stated its policy thus:

The antecedents and traditions of the paper commit it to the cause of reform and progress, but also to an uncompromising conservatism on the fundamental point of law and order as absolutely indispensable alike to liberty and security, all true reform, and to all wholesome progress.

Reform, however, was not to be loosely construed:

While advocating every practicable form of amelioration where there is a wrong condition, the News will continue to recognize, as it has recognized, the presence in politics, in public affairs, in society, in industrial and business arrangements, of a certain measure of persistent evils that defy rectification--that in the nature of things, and by the inexorable force of human imperfections, are inevitable.

Where this is the case, the nearest approach to remedy or compensation is to accept the inevitable with philosophic resignation and, where this is the case, the

³⁷ Ibid., p. 105.

³⁸ Dallas Herald, Oct. 2, 1885, p. 2.

part of a wise and faithful counselor of the people in journalism is to inculcate such resignation--not to excite vain and vexatious strife for impossibilities.

Summing up its philosophy, the News declared it was to be:

. . . more largely than ever a people's university of information, a people's forum of discussion, a people's electric circle of illumination, and in the highest sense of the words, a people's inquisition and censorship.³⁹

The News was well received by the citizens of Dallas, but it was obvious from the outset that the city, with less than 20,000 people, could not support two morning newspapers. The struggle between the new paper and the Herald was watched with interest; but it was of short duration. In less than eight weeks the power of capital thrown into the battle was decisive and the old Dallas Herald sold out to the thriving Dallas Morning News.⁴⁰ The purchase ended a friendly but dogged rivalry, and the News was thereby able to gain control of the Western Associated Press franchise and take over the circulation of its former adversary.⁴¹

The News published notice of the sale on November 30:

The News takes pleasure in announcing that, for personal and business reasons of their own, the editors and proprietors of the Dallas Herald, Col. P. S. Pfouts, Col. J. F. Elliott, and Col. W. L. Hall, have identified themselves with the News by becoming purchasers of [part of] its capital stock. . . . This involves, of course, the discontinuance of the Herald, but it

³⁹Dallas News, Oct. 1, 1885, p. 4.

⁴⁰Gray, op. cit., p. 419.

⁴¹Acheson, op. cit., p. 107.

does not involve any changes in the business status, the business principles or the general policy of the News.⁴²

On the same day, the Dallas Herald bade farewell to the city it once knew as John Neely Bryan's village at the Three Forks. It declared:

With this issue, the Dallas Herald ceases to exist. . . . Since 1849, through peace times, civil war and peace again, this Herald has been the faithful reporter for the past thirty years. It first came to Dallas as a weekly weakling on a little ox cart from Paris, Lamar County, with the popular, able and beloved Mark Latimer as proprietor and editor.

In 1874 . . . it blossomed into a daily [and] passed into the possession of these its last proprietors in 1879.

And now . . . they today enter into combination and hearty cooperation with the newcomer in our midst. With it they trust their own fate under the conviction that a harmony of feeling and the general effort in the direction named can better be secured throughout the community than by possible antagonisms that might ensue with two Richmonds in the field.⁴³

With the absorption of the Herald by the News, G. B. Dealey's hunches had borne fruit. In only two months the News had added to its own traditions of high enterprise and achievement inherited from the mother paper at Galveston the record and facilities of Dallas's own pioneer newspaper.⁴⁴ It had embarked on a new and colorful career in which it was to gain in prestige and remain one of the Southwest's most

⁴² Dallas News, Nov. 30, 1885, p. 4.

⁴³ Dallas Herald, Nov. 30, 1885, p. 1.

⁴⁴ Acheson, op. cit., p. 108.

influential newspapers. This was the Dallas Morning News--
the first venture in cooperative journalism in America.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Lee, op. cit., p. 340.

CHAPTER V

BEGINNINGS OF A SECOND NEWSPAPER GIANT:

THE DALLAS TIMES HERALD

During the first two decades following the Civil War, the prevailing attitude in Texas toward big business was friendly. This was apparently no less evident in Dallas, a bustling frontier town which owed much of its prosperity of the 1870's to the coming of the railroads and the growth of the area as an industrial and mercantile center. The constitution of 1876, framed by a convention controlled by farmers, contained no provisions hostile to organized wealth. But soon the clouds of discontent were gathering as agitation for regulation of railroads and other corporations mounted. Reforms in national and state government were popular crusades of the day. Movements for reform in economic, political and social fields became more intense, particularly among the farmers and the laboring class, the groups which constituted a majority of the people. Such agitation produced the Grange and the Greenback party, the Farmers' Alliance and the Knights of Labor. In 1891 the new People's Party (or Populists) was formed, aided greatly by the Farmers' Alliance, and struck telling blows at various abuses of the prevailing order. Seventy-five weekly

newspapers, including the Southern Mercury printed at Dallas, carried the gospel of Populism everywhere in Texas.¹

Another important movement which shaped the newspaper history of Dallas was the agitation for prohibition, credited largely to the churches and organizations fostered by them. About 1870 the United Friends of Temperance and Bands of Hope were introduced into Texas. Members pledged total abstinence from drink and sought to cultivate public sentiment against the liquor traffic. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union was formed about 1882. Advocating a constitutional amendment, these groups and their opponents organized, and the ensuing struggle was heated and bitter. The Reverend G. W. Briggs, editor of the Texas Christian Advocate, the Reverend S. A. Hayden, editor of the Texas Baptist Herald, the Reverend B. H. Carroll, Dr. J. B. Cranfill and others were supported in their fight for the amendment by Senators John H. Reagan and Sam Bell Maxey.²

The controversial issue of prohibition was directly responsible for the establishment of several newspapers in Dallas. At least two anti-liquor journals, the Texas Prohibition Advocate and the Texas Signet, threw their strength

¹Rupert N. Richardson, Texas, the Lone Star State, pp. 351, 353, 361.

²Both of these periodicals were begun in other cities but moved to Dallas later. The Texas Christian Advocate was established in Houston in 1866. The Texas Baptist Herald was begun at Galveston about the same time and moved to Dallas in 1873. Gregory, op. cit., p. 669.

into the fight before the movement was defeated in the state-wide election of 1887. Four others³ continued the campaign although the question of a prohibition amendment was not to be voted on again for twenty-four years. Dallas had grown rapidly as a publishing home for more than twenty religious publications before the turn of the century, and doubtless many of them were ardent supporters of reform.

Aside from the mushrooming growth of religious and temperance publications, the red-hot issue of prohibition was to have far greater significance in its influence on the field of newspapering in Dallas. It brought into existence two daily newspapers that were, in time, to merge as the city's second newspaper giant. The product was the forebear of the Dallas Times Herald.

Citizens of Dallas had watched the comings and goings of seven daily newspapers up to the middle of the 1870's. One was the Dallas Evening Times, which entered the field in 1876; but the going was rocky from the start. Established by the Reverend J. A. Adams, it was published as a temperance organ and was watched with a great deal of interest in the churches, on the street corners and in the saloons of Main Street. But the Reverend Adams, with little knowledge of the inner workings of the newspaper business and less ability to

³The Texas White Ribbon (1889); the Texas Family Journal (1889); the Texas Blue Violet (1892); and the Texas Messenger (1897).

manage the enterprise, apparently had little impact on the paper which he founded. He soon dropped out of the newspaper picture in Dallas and the Times was taken over by W. G. Sterett, a forceful and colorful editor who was of a decidedly different moral temper from his clerical predecessor. In fact Sterett was soon carrying on the fight of the saloon keepers against the rising prohibition sentiment of the day.⁴

Sterett was a Kentuckian who came to Texas after the Civil War, hanging up his law shingle at Port Lavaca. After enjoying little success there, he moved to Dallas in 1872 in the hope of finding more fertile fields for his legal talents. After several years he decided that he was more inclined toward journalism than the law. He bought the faltering Times and launched what was to be a lifetime of distinguished achievement in the newspaper world.

Sterett was a personality of many idiosyncracies who could write the English language in a colorful and memorable fashion. But he was not a businessman; the Times was never on secure financial footing. Sterett preferred writing rather than the financial responsibility of the paper and he gave the latter as little attention as possible. The paper's printing plant was insignificant, its circulation

⁴Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 6, p. 1.

was only 1,500,⁵ and its handling of the news was undiplomatic. It was not uncommon for the Times to give emphasis to the sensational, a characteristic of the "yellow journalism" which was then gaining ascendancy in many parts of the nation. For example, if a killing occurred on the streets, the Times would, regardless of the prominence of the killer or extenuating circumstances such as self defense, carry the story over such a headline as "Another Cold-Blooded Murder," and would not spare the lurid details in the story. Sterett, a red-headed fireater, was always ready to back up his person and his newspaper's independence (and frequently did) with his fists or anything handy.⁶

On the issue of prohibition, Sterett stood staunchly against the temperance element. He was a violent, articulate exemplification of personal journalism. It was inevitable that he would, after 1886, find himself entangled in bitter editorial combat with the newly established Dallas Evening Herald⁷ and its fiery young prohibition editor, C. E. Gilbert.

⁵Rowell's Directory, 1886, p. 560.

⁶Ted Dealey, "Colonel Bill Sterett--Tribute is Paid to a Personage," Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 4, p. 5.

⁷Not to be confused with the Herald published mornings which was absorbed by the Dallas Morning News in 1885.

Unlike many of his contemporary publishers, C. E. Gilbert possessed the facility of combining a strong conviction on the moral, political and economic issues of the day with a sound sense of business. In addition to his unwavering advocacy of prohibition, Gilbert was a shrewd and imaginative journalist who introduced mechanical innovations to Texas through the columns of his Herald. He was the first to make use of multiple editions which brought late news items into print the same day. He caused fellow newspapermen to marvel at his liberal use of staff-drawn illustrations, and climaxed the prohibition election campaign with a four-color piece of temperance art.⁸

Gilbert's aggressive crusades in the interests of temperance forced him into almost daily editorial discussion with organs of the opposition. This was especially true of Sterett and his Times and the cautious, conservative Dallas Morning News. The battle of words attracted a larger readership and within a year the Herald's circulation was boosted to 3,500, second only to the News in Dallas.⁹

Despite its increased readership, the Herald, unlike its arch-enemy, the Times, was suffering from financial insolvency. Times were hard in Texas in 1887. There was little revenue from circulations and business was slow. The Herald had been severely weakened as a result of a damaging

⁸Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 1.

⁹Rowell's Directory, 1886, p. 560.

\$3,000 libel suit brought by the owners of the Wichita Saloon. Gilbert, in his prohibition zeal, had counseled rural visitors to shun the place, citing instances when customers were parted from their money under questionable circumstances. Too, as Gilbert wrote several years later, "the prohibition amendment was so deeply snowed under and the Herald so disfigured . . . it was rough sailing for several months."¹⁰

With the prohibition issue apparently dead, the young editors of the Times and the Herald found themselves perching precariously on the brink of financial ruin. Just a few months after the state-wide prohibition election of 1887, Gilbert and Sterett decided that, for the sake of their tottering fortunes, they would get together and merge their respective newspapers.

The resulting incorporation of the Times and the Herald became common knowledge over the state some weeks before it actually took place, creating considerable interest in the newspaper world. This interest was reflected in the columns of the Austin Dispatch which declared:

It's an excellent combination . . . but just how Mr. Gilbert who is both a Christian and gentleman and a prohibitionist will amalgamate with his wicked partner, Sterett, is something that puzzles the friends of both gentlemen.¹¹

¹⁰Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 1.

¹¹Austin Dispatch, cited in the Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 1.

On January 1, 1888, the corporate marriage united for better or for worse two articulate newspapermen who had for months been bitter enemies. Sterett's friend, Colonel W. M. C. Hill, county clerk and later postmaster, became president of the Times Herald Publishing Company, J. T. Trezevant, vice-president of the City National Bank, was vice-president of the corporation, Gilbert became secretary and business manager while Sterett was named editor. The merger had provoked curiosity through the state, but in the Dallas saloons speculation was intense and probably apprehensive as the first issue was awaited Monday afternoon, January 2.¹²

Publication of the consolidated Times Herald began at 506-508 Main Street opposite Sanger Brothers department store. The recently acquired press of the Herald was used in the new enterprise. The press was powered by a gas engine which was knocked out of commission at times when mud from the Trinity River, the city's water supply source, backed up into the cooling system. The newspaper was a neat, eight-page sheet of five columns that adhered to the custom of placing advertising on the front page.

In the early days of the Daily Times Herald, no conflict arose between the erstwhile co-editors over the prohibition question, for that issue was dead, at least for the present.

¹² Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 1.

Sterett immediately resumed his specialty of baiting politicians, especially those not of a staunch Democratic faith, and Gilbert turned toward business problems of the newspaper.¹³

In May of the first year, the Times Herald published a special edition which Gilbert called "the first illustrated paper descriptive and illustrative of the city ever printed here."¹⁴ Virtually all of the city's newspapers to date had been ardent proponents of civic and cultural progress for Dallas and the state. This early special feature was the forerunner of the giant editions produced by Dallas newspapers which later served the interests of the city.¹⁵

Many observers had predicted in early 1888 that the Sterett-Gilbert combination could not possibly succeed. It was not a happy arrangement and in the summer of that year the two came to a parting of the ways. Gilbert purchased the stock of the restless Sterett and President Hill, and became sole owner. Sterett began contributing paragraphs to the Dallas News although he continued to be listed as co-editor of the Times Herald until December 13 when public

¹³Ibid., sec. H., p. 1.

¹⁴Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 11.

¹⁵The greatest were the 264-page issue of the Dallas News, "Texas Unlimited," of April 11, 1942, and the 176-page edition of the Times Herald called "The Dallas Story," of Aug. 28, 1949.

announcement was made of the split. He later became a renowned political writer for the News, and he was that paper's first Washington correspondent.¹⁶

Now in complete control, Gilbert undertook to build up his newspaper by introducing many innovations in the daily process of publishing. At the State Fair of Texas in 1888, for example, he set up a press in an exhibit building to print the paper for the first time by electricity. The Times Herald boasted that it was the first in Dallas to try electricity for motive power, although acknowledging that the experiment was "a very costly one, resulting in late delivery of the paper to subscribers, much annoyance to the management and heavy losses to the Times Herald for several weeks, losses, too, which the paper was illy able to stand."¹⁷

The historic policy of the paper was--and still is--to make Dallas its primary field of operation and to produce a home-town newspaper for Dallas readers and Dallas advertisers. It offered little competition to the state circulation of its rival, the News, and it promoted its policy with participation in hundreds of campaigns for the advancement and betterment of the city. In 1899 it added telegraph press services for national and international news events, but the editor advised the readers that the new policy would not entail neglect of local news. It joined other Dallas

¹⁶Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 11.

¹⁷Dallas Times Herald, Dec. 8, 1888, p. 4.

papers in campaigns for paving the major streets of the city with bois-d'arc blocks, improving water supplies and sanitation, and other civic improvements. Gilbert published another illustrated edition on May 1, 1890, which he described as the "largest paper ever published in Dallas with more and handsomer engravings of the city's buildings, grounds, etc., than before published in any form."¹⁸

The year 1892 was a critical depression period for nearly all of Texas and the Times Herald suffered painful financial losses. It was also a year of political victory for the paper but of personal loss to Publisher Gilbert. He was a staunch supporter of Governor James S. Hogg, who was seeking reelection. While the Dallas News vigorously attacked Hogg and came out for his opponent, George Clark,¹⁹ the Times Herald threw its strength behind Hogg and contributed much to his reelection. Governor Hogg was considered a friend of the "common folks" and his platform included regulation of railroads through creation of a Texas railroad commission. Most of the big business interests (particularly the railroads), were violently anti-Hogg.²⁰ Consequently, Gilbert's campaign for Hogg quickly succeeded in alienating many of the community's business leaders who were pro-Clark.

¹⁸Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 10.

¹⁹The News and the Times Herald have historically been political opposites--with rare exceptions.

²⁰Richardson, op. cit., pp. 355, 358.

The paper's advertising revenues dropped sharply and financial obligations piled up. Even while the political fight was in full fury and the paper's business dwindled, Gilbert continued his policy of working for the advancement of the city. He helped organize the Merchants Cotton Association from which the Dallas Cotton Exchange later evolved, and campaigned for a pure water supply while campaigning for Governor Hogg.

The election was won by Hogg, but Gilbert, unable to recoup his financial losses, announced on November 9, 1892, that he was placing the Times Herald in receivership. When the court appointed O. P. Bowser, vice-president of the corporation and Dallas real estate man, as receiver, Gilbert bowed out after six years of colorful, aggressive journalism that contributed much to the early growth of the community.²¹

For the following two years the paper's leadership was fluid. J. N. Simpson became editor after Gilbert's departure, but by 1894 control had passed into the hands of J. F. Elliott and associates, with Elliott as general manager and editor. Elliott was a Unionist in 1861, but saw service in the Confederate army. After the war he was a newspaperman in Philadelphia and a merchant at Galveston. He came to Dallas in 1879 and secured an interest in the Dallas Herald (morning), becoming its editor. Elliott fathered the Texas Press

²¹Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 10.

association and was of state-wide renown as an orator. And yet, despite his rich background in business and journalism, he failed to get either the Morning Herald (in 1879) or the Times Herald on a permanent, sound financial basis, and in a little over a year word spread that the paper was for sale.

The struggles of the Times Herald were watched with more than a casual interest by Edwin J. Kiest, a young executive of the Western Newspaper Union's Dallas office. For five years Kiest had been doing business with the Times Herald and when the paper fell upon lean times, he became convinced that, with better management, it might succeed. He had ideas that he felt certain could bring the newspaper out of the red--and he was soon to get his opportunity to put them into operation as owner and editor of the Times Herald.²²

Edwin J. Kiest was born in Cook County, Illinois, September 24, 1865, the son of a Methodist minister. The Reverend John C. Kiest was not able to provide abundantly for his family. Consequently, his son learned the habits of thrift that were to characterize his business dealings in later years and make him a wealthy man. At the age of ten young Kiest went to work as a newsboy selling the old Chicago Times on the streets of the big city to help with

²²Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 10.

the family income. His schooling was limited but his education was broad for he soon became a journeyman printer, learning to use the English language by setting type. From the print shop of the Western Newspaper Union plant at Chicago Kiest moved into the business office, and while still in his twenties, he utilized his business acumen to earn a position as a junior executive in the company. He was appointed manager of the company's Dallas office and arrived in that city in December of 1890. During the next five years as manager of the WNU branch, Kiest became completely sold on Dallas as his lifetime home. When his company sought to transfer him back to Chicago, he refused to go and began to confide to friends his plans of entry into the newspaper field. He was advised not to jeopardize his future with the Times Herald, the unstable newspaper down the street. But Kiest's boyhood dream was not to be denied. He persuaded two of his friends, Frank P. Holland and Louis Blaylock, to invest in a stock company which assumed ownership of the Times Herald on January 1, 1896.²³ J. F. Elliott was retained as editor, a position he held until 1900 when he was replaced by Hugh K. Taylor, the city editor.

²³Holland and Blaylock, both pessimistic about the paper's chances, assisted Kiest chiefly out of warm regard for him. When the "dubious venture" floundered during the early days, they were more than happy to sell out to Kiest. In later years they frequently joshed Kiest for "easing them out of a good thing." Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 10.

Kiest's little newspaper was published in a building where the second unit of the Adolphus Hotel was later constructed. It had a circulation of only 2,100 and its future seemed black, indeed. Kiest worked long hours to make the paper a paying venture.²⁴ He gathered news, wrote and sold advertising, set type and helped run the presses. In July, 1896, he contracted for linotype composition for the newspaper which heretofore had been set entirely by hand. It was not until thirty years later that Kiest purchased equipment and established his own typesetting department.²⁵

Kiest promptly reaffirmed the policy upon which the Times Herald was built from the first--a home-town paper--and on that basis the paper survived from the first lean years and began to prosper. To further stress the home-town qualities of his newspaper, Kiest instructed his editor to give big headlines to local news events as well as to national and international happenings. Four years from the date of its rebirth, the Times Herald was publishing a Sunday edition, thus giving seven day service to the reader.

The memory of the lean years of his boyhood and of the first days of the Times Herald stuck with Kiest throughout

²⁴Kiest had to hock his watch to obtain enough cash to meet the first week's obligations. Out of the first few trying months grew the legend that Kiest followed this practice until his business began to show a profit. Tom C. Gooch, a personal interview.

²⁵Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 1.

his life. He developed a powerful aversion to debt, a quality instilled in him by his Dutch father and Alsatian mother. As soon as his newspaper was on its feet financially, he established a policy of buying nothing, not even a new building, until he had money in the bank. Kiest would never sign a contract for new equipment or expanded facilities until the cash was on hand in full. He periodically astonished manufacturers of the great presses and other printing equipment by writing checks of six figures. It was a policy that his successor was to follow in dealings that frequently ran into millions of dollars.²⁶

Kiest's fight for the Times Herald against seemingly insurmountable economic odds also developed in the short, stocky, fiery-tempered publisher a firm belief in the values of individualism.

Rugged individualism [he declared] built this country . . . and I don't believe that prudence and economy should be penalized. You must have rugged individualism to retain for America what rugged individualism has built up.²⁷

A sound philosophy built the Dallas Times Herald into one of the most prosperous business institutions in Texas. Kiest's forceful and philosophic nature was reflected in the business and editorial policy of the paper which has been decidedly Democratic in political affiliation and devoted

²⁶ Tom C. Gooch, a personal interview.

²⁷ Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 1.

to civic progress in Dallas. A conservative organ that based its editorial policy on the good will of the people rather than on crusading or reform principles, the Times Herald began truly as a home-town paper.

CHAPTER VI

GROWTH OF THE NEWSPAPER AS BIG BUSINESS, 1885-1906

In the early years of Dallas journalism, newspaper subscribers paid money to read the opinions of such editorial writers as Latimer, Pryor, Sterett, and Gilbert. These pioneer newspapermen and others were offsprings of an era of personal journalism in which the publisher, editor, and printer were usually the same individual. But in the two decades encompassing the turn of the century, the situation underwent a readjustment. The domination of a single man in all phases of a newspaper's activity waned when telegraphic reports, fast presses, and eight-page newspapers came along to widen the scope of the older, immature journalism. An increasingly varied news menu demanded many men and many talents which in time served to depose the old-time editor. News coverage became a multi-faceted function. Changes in newspaper content were evident with the introduction of syndicated material, increasing reliance on cooperative press services, press photography and photo-engraving, features and semi-departmentalization. Business management became a greater responsibility. In circulations, in number of pages per issue and in volume of advertising,

the careers of the successful newspapers represented investments, costs, and revenues of mammoth proportions.¹ The change was further heightened by the improvement of many mechanical phases of newspaper production. Larger, more expensive presses helped speed printing processes as did the invention of devices such as the composing machine. These and other conditions demanded an astute business manager as publisher to guide the newspaper over rough seas which the old-time editor had never charted. The dividing line between the publisher and the editor became very distant. The former became the downstairs office devoted to business and the latter the upstairs man devoted to the profession.²

Expansion and Readjustment of Dallas Newspapers

The fortunes of Dallas and its newspapers fluctuated during the period, 1885-1906. During the first five years the city entered a period of remarkable growth, as new trades and industries located in Dallas, and the flow of immigrants increased. More concerns from Texas and out-of-state moved in, and the population of 18,000 more than doubled. Taxable wealth increased four and one-half times, according to the Federal census of 1890, and Dallas advanced

¹Mott, op. cit., pp. 546-547.

²Lee, op. cit., pp. 252-253.

in size from the fifth to the first city in the state.³ During the next decade it showed the slowest growth in many years, dropping from first to third place. But the turn of the century seemed to invigorate the city as foundations for its future in such diverse fields as jobbing, medicine, banking, manufacturing and insurance were laid.⁴

The fortunes of Dallas newspapers closely paralleled those of the city during this period. The upward curve in the number of newspapers established showed no signs of diminishing as many more individuals jumped into the field, usually with few resources and less credit. It was not until near the end of the century that this practice was stopped as the newspaper grew into a big business that had to have a sound financial foundation in order to succeed.

The Dallas Morning News, which began with the entire resources of the wealthy Galveston parent behind it, was an example of this new financial readjustment. The News in a few years outgrew the Galveston branch and far outstripped other Dallas dailies which by 1896 had reached a crowded total of eight. By the end of the first year the News enjoyed an average daily circulation of 5,786, or three times

³U. S. Bureau of the Census, Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890: Valuation and Taxation, Vol. 2, p. 342; Population, Vol. 1, p. 390, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1892.

⁴Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 1, p. 8.

as great as the old Dallas Herald had known in its most prosperous days.⁵ Starting publication with an average of only twelve columns of advertising, the News, at the height of the booming 1880's, was carrying some eighty-nine columns. By the time of its sixth anniversary, a second new press had been put in service, a Seymour-Brewster inset machine capable of printing 24,000 copies an hour and equipped with two-color printing.⁶

Under the shrewd business management of G. B. Dealey, the News successfully promoted the Galveston News policy of cash for subscriptions. He created an organization to build up circulation in towns around Dallas such as Sherman, Paris, Bonham, Clarksville, Denton, Greenville, and Gainesville. A circulation agent was placed in each town and subscribers were promised a special correspondent to gather items to be printed in the News. He had little trouble selling the idea since these cities would get the News on the morning it was published--a novel service, indeed. Within a month the News contracted with the Texas and Pacific to operate a special train to Fort Worth to insure connection on all outgoing trains. To overcome the influence of St. Louis papers in North Texas, he arranged with the Houston and Texas Central for another special train to run from Dallas to

⁵Rowell's Directory, 1886, pp. 559-560.

⁶Acheson, op. cit., p. 111.

McKinney, to Sherman and to Denison, some 73 miles away. The "Comet," as the high-speed special was called, helped spread the fame of the News to the farthest reaches of the state and practically routed the St. Louis newspapers from North Texas.⁷ It was an expensive arrangement but Dealey felt the move would not only increase the influence and circulation of the News but would, with the added influx of trade, build a bigger city and a bigger newspaper.⁸ Time proved him correct.

At the dawn of the new century, the News embarked on a new program of expansion. Its circulation had reached an all time high of 24,370.⁹ In 1900 the News became a charter member of the modern Associated Press with Colonel Belo as one of the six incorporators.¹⁰ New mechanical facilities and improved presses capable of printing 34,000 copies an hour were added, and the News finished construction of a new three-story home at Commerce and Lamar Streets. It was one of the most nearly complete newspaper plants in the country.¹¹

In the midst of its growing pains, the News lost a great benefactor. On April 10, 1901, Colonel Belo, in ill

⁷Acheson, op. cit., p. 117. ⁸Ibid., p. 118.

⁹Rowell's Directory, 1901, pp. 1093-1094.

¹⁰Dallas Morning News, April 11, 1942, sec. 3, p. 1.

¹¹Acheson, op. cit., pp. 205-206.

health for some time, died at his summer home at Asheville, North Carolina. The sentiment of the News and of many others was expressed by former President Grover Cleveland who said of Belo:

This is a personal loss, as he was a friend to whom I was warmly attached. He was a chivalrous, high-minded man, an exceptionally able, fearless and conscientious journalist. His death is a loss to the entire country.¹²

After the death of Belo, duties as president of the company fell to Alfred H. Belo, Jr., trained almost from birth to be his father's successor. Young Belo had entered the Dallas office upon graduation from Yale in 1896 and had quickly familiarized himself with the News routine. He was prudent enough to work closely with his associates including the ebullient Colonel Robert G. Lowe, coordinator of the news and editorial departments, and Thomas W. Dealey, secretary-treasurer of the company at Galveston. Under the guidance of this trio, the News continued to prosper as one of the state's leading newspapers.¹³

During 1906 the News suffered one of its severest setbacks. It was a deeply felt loss when Colonel Lowe died suddenly in Galveston in January. Then, one month to the day (February 15) that Colonel Lowe was stricken, the News mourned a second loss when T. W. Dealey, now retired, died at his

¹²Acheson, op. cit., p. 216.

¹³Ibid., pp. 225-226.

home in Mineral Wells. Young Belo himself was ailing, having suffered a relapse from an earlier illness. Doctors diagnosed it as cerebro-spinal meningitis. On February 27, A. H. Belo, Jr., lost his fight for life. Thus, in less than six weeks the oldest business institution lost three top executives.¹⁴ As a result the management of the Belo interests fell upon G. B. Dealey, who had become vice-president and general manager at the death of Colonel Lowe. Dealey declined the invitation of the Belo family to become the company's president and suggested that Colonel Belo's widow, Mrs. Nettie Ennis Belo, become the titular head. This was done, and at the same time Cesar Lombardi, a relative of the Belo family, was sent for and asked to become a member of the corporation. Lombardi was named vice-president, and Dealey remained as vice-president and general manager. Although inexperienced in the newspaper business, Lombardi quickly won the esteem of his associates and in the next thirteen years contributed a gracious and liberalizing influence on the career of the News.¹⁵

While the News was the most dominant newspaper force in the city during the period, it was not without competition. The Dallas Times Herald was formed with the hope that the union of Sterett's Times and Gilbert's Herald would not

¹⁴Acheson, op. cit., pp. 218, 222, 230, 231.

¹⁵Dallas Morning News, April 1, 1942, sec. 3, p. 3.

only give stability to the paper, but would lead to successful competition with the News. The failure of this combination and the subsequent purchase of the Times Herald by Edwin J. Kiest constituted no serious challenge to the supremacy of the News originally, but the entry of Kiest into the field in 1896 was the beginning of a new and hopeful era for the afternoon daily. Kiest conceived that two newspapers might succeed in the same town although taking different routes. He realized that publication in the latter part of the day had advantages in street sales and that extra editions could catch shopping crowds, homebound crowds, and theater crowds. Carrier boys could make home deliveries. Women, with more leisure in the afternoons liked the later papers; and since the department stores aimed their advertising at women readers, Kiest's newspaper gradually increased its revenues and circulation. From a total of 2,100 subscribers in 1896, the Times Herald had 7,120 in 1900.¹⁶ It was forced to move to larger quarters in 1903 and occupied two buildings at 1305 Elm Street where it was to publish for the next 26 years.

During its early years the Times Herald faithfully adhered to its policy of giving larger play to home-town news. While not blessed with the benefits of the press services such as its morning rival had, it was able to print most of the news from the nation and abroad. This was largely

¹⁶Rowell's Directory, 1901, pp. 1093-1094.

through the efforts of the industrious and capable Kiest whose personal drive and salesmanship filled the slack in each of the under-staffed departments.¹⁷

One of the most significant contributions to the Times Herald of this period came from the art world. In 1901 Kiest hired a cartoonist named Tom Carbry Gooch. This was a momentous decision because the young artist was destined to go far in the Dallas newspaper world. Gooch was born at Bonham in Fannin County on January 25, 1880, the son of a salesman of buffalo skins and president of a lumber company. He was educated at Bonham and at Arkansas City, Kansas, where his talents for drawing were discovered. His parents, wishing to give him a better opportunity to study, moved to Chicago, where Gooch resumed his class work as a part-time student at the Chicago Art Institute. There he discovered that he could write as well as draw and decided that this combination might be useful in a newspaper office. He secured a position as free-lance cartoonist for the Chicago Daily News, and a year later was working as a cartoonist-reporter for the Fort Wayne (Indiana) News. After his family moved back to Texas, he got a job as reporter for the Fort Worth Record. He was soon attracted to the city at the Three Forks, and was successful in obtaining the Times Herald

¹⁷Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 3, p. 6.

position. Gooch embarked on his job with enthusiasm and soon won state-wide attention as a cartoonist and writer, particularly on political subjects. He soon became city editor and then managing editor. Later Kiest moved him, protesting, to the business side of the paper. Having burdensome responsibilities and inadequate authority, Gooch decided the position was too difficult and resigned. He worked for a San Antonio paper for a while, but was soon back in Dallas as an employee of the Dallas Morning News. When Kiest tendered him an offer to return to the paper with full authority as managing editor, he accepted. It was the renewal of an association that was to advance both himself and the Times Herald up the ladder of success in Texas journalism.¹⁸

While the News and the Times Herald were becoming firmly entrenched in the esteem of Dallas readers, scores of other newspapers--dailies, weeklies, and monthlies--entered the field. Eight dailies were publishing at one time or another, but only the two attained any lasting influence or security. Among the others were the Dallas World, an afternoon sheet published from 1887 to 1890, and the Daily Constitution, established in 1890. They were followed by the Dallas Democrat, begun in 1892; the Dallas Dispatch, published by Cash

¹⁸Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 5.

Sirpluss¹⁹ and edited by Hugh Fitzgerald;²⁰ and the Dallas Observer, an afternoon paper published a short time from 1896. The consolidation of the Times and the Herald eliminated one newspaper from the scene in 1888.

The number of weeklies also showed a substantial rise during this period. Sixteen of these were devoted to straight news, two of them being weekly editions of the News and Democrat. Two others, the Republican (1897) and the Texas State Journal (1898), were organs of the Republican party, and two were Negro newspapers, the Item and the Express. The remaining were independent or of miscellaneous character.²¹

Religious newspapers became more numerous during this period. Published weekly or less often, these secular journals were increased by fifteen, representing the

¹⁹ Apparently a facetious appellation joshing other newspapers which failed for financial reasons. It is so listed, however, in Ayer's Directory, op. cit., 1895, p. 749.

²⁰ Fitzgerald, who came to Dallas in the late 1880's, was later managing editor and staff correspondent of the News for fourteen years. He was also managing editor for the Times Herald for ten years, and an outstanding figure in state political affairs. He became editor of the Fort Worth Record in his last years. His wife, Mrs. Hugh Nugent Fitzgerald, was an accomplished newspaper woman. She served as society editor on both the News and Times Herald, but her greatest fame lies in the weekly society magazine, Beau Monde, which chronicled the ultra-fashionable society events of Dallas. It was published fourteen years from 1895 and a rare copy of the magazine is treasured as a period piece.

²¹ Gregory, American Newspapers, 1821-1936, p. 669.

Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian faiths. Of this number three were Negro.²²

News of the workingman was ably heralded in the pages of four labor newspapers which published in the two decades from 1885-1906. Foreign language newspapers found favor with the large German element of North Texas. Four of them were in publication at different times. Approximately thirty new trade newspapers were begun, representing interests of liquor dealers, merchants and industrialists, fraternal organizations, railroads, health groups, schools, sportsmen, farmers and livestock owners.²³ The most outstanding of these was the Semi-Weekly Farm News published by the Dallas Morning News. Issued a few weeks after the News was begun, it was G. B. Dealey's answer to the farmers' need of a cheaper, more specialized publication. This side venture grew into the largest publication of its kind in the state, reaching a circulation of 125,000.²⁴ Other newspapers of the period concerned themselves with literature, humor, prohibition, immigration, populism and the single tax system.

²²See Ayer's Directory, 1895, 1899; Rowell's Directory, 1886, 1890, 1892, 1897, 1898, 1900; Gregory, op. cit., p. 669.

²³Gregory, op. cit., p. 669.

²⁴Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1925, sec. 3, p. 2.

Revolution in the Editorial Department

The entire period from 1885-1906 was one of unprecedented change in the newspaper's editorial function. It was an era when the scope of news gathering and handling was widened. As circulations grew and larger editorial staffs were required, the news department necessarily had to be streamlined. The process was speeded by the introduction of many novel features and the improvement of older ones. New presses and new machines hastened the daily production of the newspaper and made extra editions possible. The photo-engraving process opened up a new field of photography, and the increased use of photos and news supplied by syndicates enlarged the news department's responsibility to the public. Departmentalization came closer to reality. Toward the end of the period, sports began to play a larger part in the new plan; news of society, women, clubs and home-making was given greater emphasis; features and human interest stories captured the imagination of thousands, while special "colyums," comics, magazine sections, news of the theater, of business, and of the farm found favor with Dallas readers. Editorials began to find a place on a special page, and political cartoons brightened up such pages. Reporters gave more attention to special beats in covering the news, and the system of correspondents was expanded. The Sunday edition, which was before 1890 little larger than a

regular edition, grew bigger as comics and syndicated matter supplied an endless stream of material. With these innovations, the newspaper took breath-taking strides toward maturity. The system of news reporting was forced to grow up with it.

Wide coverage of the news presented a striking contrast between the leading papers of Dallas. The News spared no expense to obtain the most comprehensive services possible, while its rival, the Times Herald (and lesser papers), struggled along on limited capital and small staffs. The meteoric rise of the News editorial department was aided greatly by this financial substance, but it was also pushed along by the progressiveness of its leaders. The revolutionary idea of rapid delivery, special trains, and promotion stunts captured the fancy of the people. Steps were taken to obtain services of new gadgets like the linotype machine. The ten purchased replaced two dozen hand compositors. Engraving and illustrations were improved and the half-tone²⁵ photograph came into being. The use of pictures was made less costly by purchasing paper mats of the engravings from news and photo syndicates. The News' Sunday edition of 1889 was a sixteen-page number which included a regular installment of a serial novel and an illustrated chess

²⁵ Produces the effect of a photograph. The first used was that of General A. P. Cronje, a prisoner taken during the Boer War. Acheson, op. cit., p. 206.

problem. At the turn of the century it was more than thirty-two pages, and in 1904 an eight-page Sunday magazine section was begun with Harry Lee Marriner as its first editor. Comics were added and Dallasites laughed at the antics of Foxy Grandpa and a mule named Maud.

During the Spanish American War, extra editions became common. The publishers boasted that the News at Galveston and Dallas then received the most costly war service of any newspaper in the South. D. Prescott Toomey, a young artist on the staff, produced the first war cartoon, a representation of Spain's cringing attitude before the American eagle. More syndicate services were added and the News saw its circulation increased by several thousand.²⁶

Crime news was given much space. The News' daily "Sheriffs' Column" fed by more than 200 local correspondents, proved a valuable mine of crime detection and notification. Society news became an indispensable feature, and items of sports had a remarkable development. Sports came to be segregated on special pages, with special makeup, pictures and news writing style. The first dramatic review appeared in the News of October 2, 1885. It was not complimentary of a play called "Fortune's Fool" by the Rial-Bigger Troupe. Subsequent reviews told of the merits and shortcomings of many outstanding personalities as Jersey Lily Langtry, and

²⁶Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 12.

Sarah Bernhardt, and of such performances as "Hamlet," by Edwin Booth; "Julius Caesar," by Lawrence Barret, and "The Count of Monte Cristo," by James O'Neill. The News stimulated the public interest in the fine arts, in music and in books. It took great pains to promote the cultural and civic development of Dallas in many other fields.

For the struggling Times Herald and for other less solvent dailies, the gathering and handling of news was a serious problem. During the initial year or two of operation after the consolidation, the paper was forced to publish without telegraph wire service, picking up its out-of-Dallas news from other newspapers and from mail dispatches.²⁷ While not the most satisfactory service, the telegraph supplied the Times Herald with dispatches from the nation and abroad with limited quantity and quality. It was not until 1910 that the paper secured the services of the Associated Press wires.

The Times Herald, like the News, began to subscribe to the newspaper syndicates for feature material. Departmentalization was begun in a limited degree after the turn of the century. Social affairs were reported in special columns labeled "Society." There was no sports page as such, but baseball and the relatively new game of football were reported generously. Boxing also received good play because a special

²⁷ Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 4, p. 10.

session of the state legislature had outlawed the sport on the eve of the world championship fight between Bob Fitzsimmons and Jim Corbett. Cock fights were routine events and horse-race stories usually had some reference to Colonel Henry Exall's Lomo Alto stables. On June 3, 1902, a story recording a Dallas victory over Waco of the Texas League ran some eighteen inches in length and included standings, results and the league schedule for the next day. There was also an occasional story on bowling, golf, and greyhound racing.

The column became a popular Times Herald feature. Two unsigned columns called "Town Topics" and the "Observer" were carried. The former consisted of brief interviews on current issues with prominent citizens and visitors. The latter was written in a lighter vein about such matters as bloomer-clad young ladies who were falling victim to the cycling craze. Occasionally a skillful scalpel on such affairs as the City Council's economy measures was wielded by the columnist.

Crime news was an important news commodity. Such phrases as "Murder Will Out" and "A Most Shocking Murder" became common as men on the frontier were sometimes apt to render their own justice. Stories of murders, gunfights, lynchings and other felonies gave editors opportunity to thrill readers with gruesome descriptions, rumors, and speculation. Diagrammatic illustrations of the scene of a murder with the familiar "X" marking the spot of the body was a favorite crime story

device. Much of this sensationalism was no doubt influenced by the popularity of yellow journalism in northern newspapers.

As early as 1886 the Times Herald policy of emphasizing business progress of the city was noticeable. The chronicling of such progress is seen in this editorial bouquet for business written in October of 1886:

C. H. Shoellkopf, jobber and manufacturer of saddlery and shoe bindings has increased his business to between \$300,000 and \$400,000 a year. . . . It is to such citizens as he that cities owe their progress.²⁸

This interest was intensified by Kiest whose prior experiences with newspapers was mainly in the business phase and who was alert to possibilities of expanding his newspaper in a region he believed to have a vast opportunity for growth.

News of homes was gaining new importance. Special features devoted to planning of kitchen equipment, for example, were prominent in the early 1900's. Not only was the local angle used but occasionally special stories featured other sections of the country with their top kitchen designs.

The Technique of News

As the scope and quality of news coverage increased, Dallas newspapers also took strides to polish methods of presenting the news to the public. It was a gradual process. Headlines still retained much of the wordy, rambling generalities of the early days. They seemed to serve about the same

²⁸Dallas Times Herald, cited in Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 8, p. 10.

purpose as a signboard beside the road, designed to give in general terms some information of the content of the articles which followed. Headline schedules were modest in comparison with later usage. Lines were nearly always set in single-column measure with hanging indention as in the following examples:

BIG FIRE YESTERDAY

The Department Had Hard
Work To Do Before
Breakfast

BEAUTIFUL DEPOT BURNED

Santa Fe-Central Station
Badly Damaged

BUSINESS IS GOING ON AS USUAL

Roof Burns off of Main Building
But Walls and Side Rooms are in-
tact-Fire started in Boiler
Room and Climbed Wall to Roof.
Details of the Catastrophe--Un-
injured Portion Rearranged²⁹

The headline of the period was set in small, ornate, hard-to-read type, and meandered down the columns in six separate decks. Although verbs later appeared more regularly in headlines, alliterative and editorializing lines were common even in the best of Dallas newspapers. A "Dastardly Deed" of earlier years was still dastardly in the eyes of the writer. There appeared such literary gems as "Waco Wad of Wickedness," "Lispings from Laredo," "Denton Doings," and "Sherman Siftings."

²⁹Dallas Times Herald, Feb. 22, 1896, p. 1.

Early headlines of two columns were used occasionally, but the light-face type employed made them modest in comparison with later "scareheads."³⁰ By 1898 five-column headlines made their way into the wartime makeup of the News. Other Dallas papers soon began to increase headline sizes as the import of the war struck home. But on many other big stories the newspapers kept to single-column headlines although they used larger type for the story, for maps and for other illustrations. It was not until near the end of the period that the shorter, crisp headlines of modern newspapers made any headway.

Writing of the news story of this era did not assume the terse, to-the-point style of the modern newspaper. Leads of such stories were still of the old-fashioned, tantalizing kind which never seem to get to the gist of the story. The theory was, of course, that the headline bulletined the flash, and the writer of the story could be allowed his time to lead up to his principal statement. This was true even in Associated Press dispatches. Later in the period, the inverted pyramid form of story arrangement and the five-W's became more in evidence. Editors began to realize that the facts should be summarized for the reader. Likewise, the increase of wire dispatches and syndicated material necessitated the cutting of stories to suit space requirements. Much of the later

³⁰ A headline in enormous, black type.

conservatism in news writing was influenced by the press services. The Associated Press, which served a variety of clients of different political faiths, was required to be impartial in its reports. Editorialization was, therefore, fairly rare in AP dispatches, and seldom was more than an error in choice of words.

Interview stories were common in both dailies and weeklies by this time. The usual interview article was written in question-and-answer form, in conversational style, or in paraphrases. The "mass interview," or public opinion poll, was also used at times when important questions came before the public. Government documents were responsible for a large portion of the paper's income when printed as official legal ads, but many were run full length in news columns. Supreme court decisions, proclamations, minutes of the legislature, presidential messages, and even public contracts were printed. Condensations of speech stories were published verbatim or paraphrased, but there seemed to be little inclination by the editors to crystallize the more important parts of the speech for the reader. Oratory was popular and the editors felt the readers were entitled to know every word of it. Some traces of this practice remained until well into the twentieth century.

News correspondence was still highly personalized in the 1890's as evidenced by this article from a Fort Worth correspondent of the News:

Fort Worth, Texas, March 31.--Well this business is pretty nearly over. If it was to last another week a preacher by the name of Sam Jones and a reporter who represents the Dallas News would be having their attenuated forms in the soup. There is no use talking, we've put in ten days of good hard work for Fort Worth sinners and we sure are tired. . . .

But the most worldly will grant that we've done good work.³¹

Coverage of sports in the size and scope of later newspapers was not a practice until near the end of the period. There was some increase in the amount of sports news printed, but writing styles matured slowly. During the early days, the results of a contest were not often revealed until the last paragraph of the story, as in this example of 1887:

THE DOG FIGHT

Last night the old Turner Hall was packed from pit to dome by the sporting elite of Dallas and Fort Worth, the occasion being the bulldog fight between John Heffron's Spot and Charles Niemeyer's Rowdy, of which as in the case of the recent earthquakes, there has been surface indications for several weeks. Convenient seating room was found by all, and the ticket-scalpers, if any there were, retired to Flynn's Saloon and kicked themselves. The dogs' slight physiognomies that would do credit to a New York alderman, occupied seats on the platform and were then observed by all observers, including a tamale man. . . .

.
The crowd then adjourned, Spot being taken to a hotel on the strength of his laurels while Rowdy retired on his ear.³²

By the end of the period, however, this style was seen less frequently. The grouping of sports news in one place was materializing, also, but there did not appear to be a regularly assigned reporter or editor of sports news.

³¹Dallas Morning News, April 1, 1890, p. 2.

³²Dallas Morning News, Feb. 27, 1887, p. 4.

After 1900 editors discovered that arrangement of type to attract attention added much to the salability of the paper. Portions of an article were "jumped" to another page to accommodate additional stories or to aid in the page make-up. The rule appeared to be, in some cases, to create the most complicated makeup imaginable, but Dallas newspapers were slow to adopt such radical designs.

Weekly newspapers of the period underwent similar overall changes in news presentation, but their function changed little over the years. In these newspapers, the general impulse was satisfied by some emphasis on crime and scandal. But the more kindly and matter-of-fact reporting of social events, community enterprises, crops, visitors, sickness, births, weddings and correspondence from rural folk were the chief contents. The spread of the city daily circulation and of rural free delivery in 1897 forced the weekly to become more local in point of view, and besides, they found that the small items using hundreds of names built circulations.³³

Editorials

The opinion piece evolved into one of the principal features of the newspaper during the period. Prior to this time the editor or publisher managed the paper and wrote editorials. But as the period progressed, the task of managing a growing newspaper became too difficult, particularly

³³Mott, op. cit., p. 589.

for the dailies which came to depend more and more on staff-written material. The trend toward placing editorials on one page continued, and the editorial page as a department was beginning to take form. In comparison with Eastern papers which were then being influenced by the changes of yellow journalism, these pages were somewhat conservative. By 1900 they were presenting a fairly attractive appearance although small headlines and white space appeared only rarely to break up the type mass. Later, more feature material and political cartoons were printed on the editorial page and writers adopted a more concise and elementary style of writing.

Most Dallas newspapers at this time were professedly Democratic in political nature. They were deeply concerned with politics, and any development, whether concerning a presidential election or a contest for a city council seat, was given much attention. They were also staunch believers in city progress. It was in this area of endeavor that Dallas newspapers and the men who guided them were most keenly active.

The Dallas Morning News was from the start vigorous in promoting the organization of the State Fair for Dallas. It urged local tax reforms and was active in championing the city commission form of government. Long an advocate of Trinity River navigation, the News came out in red type³⁴ all over its front page when the steamboat "H. H. Harvey Jr."

³⁴Signifying a "red letter" day.

arrived from Galveston on May 20, 1883. The paper fostered the organization of the Cleaner Dallas League, supplanted in 1902 by the Civic Improvement League.

The Times Herald, under Gilbert, had fought for a better water supply and improved electrical power. The State Fair was a popular editorial topic, and received elaborate coverage virtually the year round when Kiest assumed control of the paper. Comparable energy and space were given over to a perpetual campaign to get Dallas out of the mud, and on to a system of paved streets. Other newspapers used their editorial columns to boost the progress of the city.

Both the News and the Times Herald exercised substantial influence over the state. The News vigorously opposed the amendment to the state constitution during the agitation for prohibition in 1887, and urged its defeat at the polls. After the move was beaten down by a vote of almost two-to-one, the General Baptist Convention of Texas met at Dallas in October and publicly condemned the News. A resolution was offered which read in part:

We regard the News as dangerous to the morals and good order of society and recommend to our friends everywhere to shun it as they would the Police Gazette or any other impure literature.³⁵

The resolution was tabled, and the paper was moved to call it a "virtual repudiation of the calumnies against the News."³⁶

³⁵Acheson, op. cit., p. 137.

³⁶Ibid., p. 137.

In the bitter gubernatorial campaign of 1892, the News vigorously opposed the reelection of Governor James S. Hogg. Support was given to the Democratic candidate, George Clark, as a champion of conservatism against what it considered "the more or less revolutionary impulses of Communism."³⁹ The News had long fought the rising tide of legislation designed to curb trusts, a delicate issue of Hogg's campaigns. The management of state-owned lands came in for severe criticism. The paper promoted railroads and diversification of crops. When the Cuban question and the issues of the Spanish-American war were brewing, both the News and the Times Herald steadfastly refused to accept the jingoism of William Randolph Hearst's New York Journal and other like-minded papers. But after the sinking of the "Maine," both joined whole-heartedly in the war effort and in support of the American position. Both papers had little good to say about the Tariff Act of 1890 and both opposed the issue of Free Silver. The News deserted its Democratic sympathies and supported William McKinley in the presidential campaign of 1896.

During the first months of Kiest's ownership of the Times Herald, the paper argued editorially for the direct election of United States senators, reiterated the necessity for developing a good roads system throughout the state, and demonstrated its political bent by recommending that national

³⁷ Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, p. 4.

issues be divorced from state campaigns. The Times Herald undertook the hopeless task of keeping Texas Democrats from splitting into factions over the issues of populism and Free Silver which it opposed. On the matter of states rights, the paper was unyielding and fought what it considered to be federal encroachment on the rights of the states. The paper, with a motto "The Times Herald Stands for Dallas as a Whole," used a temperate approach to the issues of the day, but in matters of city progress it was constantly plugging away. It urged business expansion and spurred capitalists to put their money together and build factories and encourage the influx of outside capital. It was a leader in the publication of business news and continued to foster business progress. The Times Herald at the end of the period was also busy concerning itself with municipal government, morals, health, law enforcement, charity and other phases of Dallas community life.

Advertising

As the new era progressed it was only natural that a growing, business-minded city such as Dallas would be a fertile field for bigger advertising revenues for its newspapers. Of this revenue, the department stores contributed the greatest amount as they purchased numerous columns, and sometimes whole pages, of advertising to display their wares.

Railroads bought large amounts of space, and manufacturers of patent medicines competed vigorously for choice space. New advertisers appeared with announcements of breakfast foods, soaps, baking powders, and other items used in modern American homes. Gas and electric companies urged greater use of their products to improve living standards. Classified advertising grew from a column or two of "Help Wanted," or "Lost and Found," to a full page and more. Increasing emphasis on woman interest could be seen in the growth of department store ads, directed chiefly now at women in the home.

Another factor in the increase of advertising was the birth of advertising agencies. The famous N. W. Ayer and Son, George P. Rowell and Son, and many other such agencies came into existence, with copy departments and many staff artists at their disposal. They transformed the appearance of advertising, giving more tasteful display and employing illustrations for variety and effectiveness.³⁸

Advertising was G. B. Dealey's hardest problem during the early days of the Dallas Morning News. He found that local merchants advertised only on Sunday, that none of them had ever thought of anything but one-column ads, and were not educated to advertising at all. To encourage display advertising, he immediately began running a double-column on the

³⁸Mott, op. cit., p. 596.

News itself and kept it up for months. He eventually sold merchants on the idea of advertising during the week, and followed it up with sales on a contract basis, a revolutionary idea in Dallas. His first customer was Sanger Brothers Department Store--only a three-day contract--but others soon followed.³⁹

When Kiest took over the wobbly Times Herald, he gave advertising much attention. His astuteness in business affairs and a benevolent advertising formula were prime factors in the progress made during those early years. His policy was based on a theory that merchants of the progressive city wanted home-delivered, home-town circulation; that advertising was news; and that any man with courage to go into business for himself was apt to be honorable and a good credit risk. The credit policy of the Times Herald helped many a Dallas firm over its first uneasy years. This primary interest in the city was substantial evidence of advertising support as witnessed in the double-truck (two pages) advertisement of March 14, 1896, for J. F. Zang's furniture store. It was the Times Herald's first double-page advertisement.⁴⁰

³⁹Sharpe, op. cit., pp. 60-62.

⁴⁰Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 6, p. 6.

Business Management

Newspapers of Dallas during the period 1885-1906 achieved the status of metropolitan journals. As such they represented too heavy a financial investment not to be organized on any but a sound business basis. Presses became larger and more complicated and their prices jumped from hundreds to tens of thousands of dollars. Inventions and improved machinery necessitated further cash outlay. The telegraph and the cable made news a most perishable commodity because of the rapidity with which it could be placed before the public, thus requiring a larger news staff to handle more items. Newspapers came to depend further on press associations whose franchises became hard to get and at the same time carried with them a constantly increasing charge for better service. Typographical unions kept pushing the wages of printers and pressmen higher up the scale, and as circulations grew, more employees had to be hired. More and more the revenue to meet these soaring costs came from advertising. National advertising became a profitable source of revenue. Promotional stunts, give-away prizes and other devices were used to increase circulation. These and other conditions demanded a businesslike approach and the services of a man who was both a good business executive and able editor. Such characteristics were inherent in G. B. Dealey of the News and Edwin J. Kiest of the Times Herald.

News That Made Headlines

The period from 1885 to 1906 was an era of many important news events, both in their effect upon Dallas and upon the rest of the world. It was an age of industrial revolution, of social, economic and political change, of invention and of disaster. The big news in Dallas in 1886 was the increase in the number of railroads to six, the population growth to 35,000, the expansion of Oak Cliff, and the construction of a great new bridge costing \$200,000 to span the Trinity River. The same year the great issue of prohibition went before Texas voters and was defeated. The subjects of politics, legislative actions, the rise of populism, and crime in its more violent aspects were allotted a large share of space. The anti-trust legislation of Texas Attorney General James S. Hogg and his subsequent campaigns for governor received considerable mention. In 1889 the terrible Johnstown, Pennsylvania, flood which took 2,000 lives and the Oklahoma land rush were recorded, as was the financial panic of 1893 and the great Chicago Railway strike of 1894. The colorful Free Silver presidential campaign of 1896 provoked much comment and interest in the newspapers as the News went boldly over to McKinley, the first Republican candidate it ever supported although Texas as a whole remained in the Democratic column. Theodore Roosevelt was constantly a Page One figure. In 1897 the first motion

picture on Edison's Vitascope was shown in Dallas, and the great Klondike gold rush was on in Alaska. Newspapers gave some attention to the Cuban question in 1897-98 and urged that it was a time to "keep cool." But with the sinking of the "Maine" and the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, their enthusiasm for prosecution of the war was unmistakable.

The new century opened on a note of disaster. The catastrophic Galveston flood occurred in which 6,000 persons lost their lives. In 1901 President McKinley was assassinated and Theodore Roosevelt became President. At Beaumont the Spindletop strike started a colossal oil boom. The Confederate reunion in 1902 at Dallas was big news as was the serio-comic bonus march of Coxey's army on Washington the following year. Oak Cliff was annexed in 1903, the same year the Wright brothers made their first airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

There were five foreign wars: the Chino-Japanese War of 1894-95; the Greco-Turkish War over Crete in 1897; the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900; the Boer War the same year; and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. The visit of Theodore Roosevelt to Dallas was highly publicized in 1905, and the San Francisco earthquake was printed under big headlines in 1906. In the sports world, the Corbett-Fitzsimmons boxing fight in Nevada City in 1897 was the biggest sports story, and baseball names such as Ty Cobb,

Connie Mack, John McGraw and others were appearing in Dallas newspaper sports columns. Walter Camp's Yale teams, A. A. Stagg's Chicago athletes, and Fielding H. (Hurry Up) Yost's Michigan elevens were beginning to spread the fame of the exotic game of football.

It was indeed a golden age for news and for newspapers.

CHAPTER VII

THE MODERN NEWSPAPER: FROM SENSATIONALISM TO CONSERVATISM, 1906-1942

The thing always forgotten by the closest critic of the newspapers is that they must be immeasurably what their audiences make them; what their constituencies call for and sustain. The newspaper cannot uniformly resist the popular sentiment any more than the stream can flow above its fountain.¹

The theory that journalism is the mirror of the times and of the people received sharply contrasting interpretations by newspapers of Dallas during the period 1906 to 1942. Many factors contributed to these varying viewpoints. There was the increased effort to edit newspapers for two special classes of readers: the immigrant and the woman. The growth of the city brought the foreigner more and more into the newspaper audience. Thousands of these new readers had already been attracted to the yellow journal with its pictures, sensation, features, and simple editorials. Emphasis on department store advertising, in particular, served to direct the attention of the other class, the women, to the pages of the newspaper. The feminine viewpoint in the news was even given attention. It was an era of the chain

¹Statement by Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New York Tribune, cited in Lee, History of American Journalism, p. 429.

newspaper in which sensationalism and other features of yellow journalism made their bows in Dallas. Expansion was the keynote but it was offset by the specter of consolidation and insolvency.

The Sensational and Conservative Viewpoints

Edward Wyllis Scripps was one of the most remarkable figures in the history of American journalism. During his lifetime he rose from a poor farm boy to a powerful press magnate with a fortune of some \$50,000,000 and interests in a chain of thirty-four newspapers in fifteen states. His method was to found newspapers rather than to buy established concerns. He would choose a city (usually 50,000 to 100,000 population), advance a sum of cash and pick a man from his organization to start the paper. The young editor would receive a salary of \$25 a week until the money was gone or the paper showed a profit; but if an operating profit was reached before the money was gone, the manager received a large block of the stock. Scripps took the loss if the paper failed, and fifty-one per cent of the stock if it succeeded.²

In 1906 Scripps was considering the establishment of such a newspaper in Dallas to be sold for one penny. He offered \$5,000 in cash and a generous block of stock to the person who could first establish a newspaper as an addition to his chain. A young newspaperman, Alfred O. Andersson, a

²Mott, op. cit., pp. 552-553.

member of the Scripps United Press organization in Kansas City, was ambitious to enter the publishing business and made frequent trips to Dallas to survey the local newspaper scene. But he was forced to act quickly when he learned another group within the chain was interested in the Dallas penny afternoon field. On his return to Kansas City from his last trip and with the late Dallas newspapers in his pocket, Andersson went to a printer friend and arranged to have printed a single edition of a newspaper bearing a Dallas dateline.

On September 16, 1906, the Dallas Dispatch was born.³ The latest stepchild of the Scripps dynasty was published out-of-state but it contained such local news as could be gleaned from Dallas newspapers and from a reporter who had once worked in Dallas. Andersson learned from Dallas newspapers that city public schools would be opened on the following Monday, so he made his banner headline in the first issue: "City Schools Open with Record Attendance." This and rewrites of Dallas news items gave the paper enough local color to simulate a home-printed publication. Taking fifty or sixty copies in his valise and putting the rest of them in his trunk, he hurried to Dallas where he issued and

³ Andersson originally planned to call his publication the Dallas Express, but he learned that a Negro newspaper in the city had already claimed the title. Statement by Glenn Pricer, one-time managing editor of the Dispatch in interview with author, April 15, 1952.

hawked on the streets the first edition of the Dispatch. Andersson's ingenuity won for him the right to the Scripps grant, and he immediately began laying plans to obtain reporters, offices, and all the machinery that goes into making a daily newspaper. He soon received the \$5,000 grant from Scripps plus considerable machinery and presses brought in from other Scripps newspapers for his enterprise at Bullington and Federal Streets. With only two reporters and himself to handle the job, Andersson published the Dispatch without benefit of advertising or subscriptions for some time. The paper was printed on a flatbed press at first and was a four-page standard size sheet. Andersson was the guiding spirit behind the Dispatch which soon captured the imagination of a curious public.⁴ After it was established, he maintained quarters in an office building from which he ran the Dispatch and other Scripps publications in later years. He was successful in introducing the Scripps principle of sensational journalism although the Dispatch was seldom called "yellow" as many newspapers of the Hearst and Scripps chains were then designated. The paper never missed an edition during its forty-five years of operation, and its

⁴Andersson was born in Liverpool, England. He was graduated from Princeton and attended Heidelberg University in Germany. He was a scholarly, excellent linguist who had a sound concept of journalism ethics.

price remained one cent until after World War I when it rose to two cents.⁵

The Dallas Dispatch, like nearly all the Scripps properties, was published for the masses, both in the point of news content and sale price.

The first of my principles wrote Scripps to his editors⁷ is that I have constituted myself the advocate of that large majority of people who are not so rich in worldly goods and native intelligence as to make them equal, man for man, in the struggle with the wealthier and more intellectual class.⁶

This sincere and constant position made the Dispatch and other Scripps papers crusaders against utility abuses and political bossism. It put them on the side of labor in strike situations and aligned them with liberalism in political and economic theory. Independent of party, Scripps insisted that editorial policy should never yield an inch to even the heaviest department store patronage.⁷ It was significant that this lucrative avenue of income was closed to the Dispatch during its entire stay in Dallas.⁸

Andersson's new venture, with its sensational handling of stories, blatant display of type, wide use of illustrations, and painfully simplified writing style, was a startling departure from the regular newspaper diet of a staid Dallas society. It grew up in an attempt to capture for the

⁵Interview with Glenn Pricer.

⁶Negley D. Cochran, E. W. Scripps, pp. 235-236.

⁷Ibid., p. 236.

⁸Pricer, op. cit.

newspaper a public whose chief literature was the family story paper or the cheap novel. The formula was: love and romance for the women; sports and politics for the men; and the sensational aspect of all the news for all its readers. Extra editions with huge black headlines were printed on the slightest provocation, and they, too, sold at one cent. Circulation reached as many as 30,000 of a single issue. Big sports events and racy crimes were frequently an excuse for an extra. But with the coming of radio in the 1920's, the extra was chased from the Dallas newspaper scene.⁹

The Dispatch grew rapidly and prospered during its early years. In 1915 it had a staff of a dozen editorial employees and was continually adding to its facilities. It paid good salaries for the times, and competed successfully with other afternoon dailies in Dallas.¹⁰ But its ownership fluctuated over the years. The Dispatch early in its career was placed by Scripps under the control of his son, James G. Scripps, and at the death of the son in 1921, his widow withdrew the paper, giving control to the Scripps-Canfield League.¹¹

The transition from small town journal to metropolitan daily was a distinguishing characteristic of the period. In

⁹Interview with Pricer.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Alfred McClung Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America, pp. 214-215.

the first decade of the twentieth century, the Dallas Morning News became a big-city daily and faced the news problems that confronted the papers of the nation's larger cities. Its chief concern was its circulation and the mounting competition of its two main afternoon rivals, the Times Herald and the Dispatch. Out-of-town newspapers were also making inroads into the News circulation. G. B. Dealey was provoked with the "bulldog editions"¹² of other morning newspapers and their practice of pre-dating copies which were printed the day before and mailed over the state for next-day delivery.¹³ He determined that these editions could not be fought successfully with simple good ethics so he decided to issue an afternoon paper which would have the same news as the so-called morning papers from other cities and at the same time compete in the afternoon field with other Dallas newspapers. He also felt that the News' heavy state circulation did not benefit many of the Dallas advertisers.¹⁴

On April 1, 1914, the first issue of the "Old Lady's" second offspring came off the presses. An extra edition

¹²Initial edition released early to make night train connections for state circulation.

¹³Morning newspapers in Houston, Fort Worth, and other cities were catching early night trains with 9 p.m. papers dated as the following day and beating the News ostensibly by half a day in many towns. The News, in waiting until after midnight to print its editions, missed trains that left earlier and often had to wait for morning trains. Acheson, op. cit., pp. 257-258.

¹⁴Acheson, ibid., p. 258.

printed that day bore the headline: "The Baby is Born. It's a Real Man."¹⁵ The paper was christened the Dallas Journal and had as its editor Tom Finty, Jr. E. B. Doran was managing editor, and Harry Withers was city editor.

To all appearances, the Journal was much like its parent Morning News. It used virtually the same typography, adopted the conservative policies of the News, and utilized staff members of both newspapers in its daily production. It carried from three to four pages of want ads, considered large for the day but hardly comparable to today's eight to ten pages of want ads. At various times during its career, the paper printed two mottoes below its flag: "The Paper with the Want Ads," and "More Dallas People Read and Pay for the Journal than any other Afternoon Newspaper."

The Journal, published six days weekly, was guided by the News for over two decades but it never attained the same influence or prestige in the newspaper world. Following the close of World War I, the circulation of both the News and Journal decreased, but the Journal was hardest hit. Because of the special time adaptation of the evening paper to give the news of the war, it had seen its circulation soar to about 47,000 while the morning number was losing ground. After the war the reverse was true, with the Journal losing

¹⁵Dallas Journal, April 1, 1914, p. 1.

7,000 subscribers while the News lost only about 1,000 of its 68,867 total.¹⁶ Both lost ground to the sensational Dispatch which gave liberal coverage to the wild and woolly events of the "Roaring Twenties."

The Dispatch, however, was soon having troubles of its own. Its ownership changed several times, and although the management remained in the hands of Andersson, changes in the paper's journalistic complexion became obvious during the late 1920's and early 1930's. Following the death of his first wife, Andersson married Ruth Harper, daughter of J. C. Harper, powerful and influential attorney for the Scripps interests. After his marriage, his viewpoints on the newspaper underwent some change, possibly through the influence of his wife. He had won a long battle against the utilities; the success of his paper seemed assured. The big headlines, the extras and the flashy writing style disappeared, and the paper became conservative in dress as well as in editorial policy. Andersson once declared the paper was worth \$250,000 during its prosperous days, and stockholders had been paid well for their small investments. But by the early 1930's the Dispatch began to feel an economic pinch. The paper still failed to obtain the lucrative department store advertising, and the other afternoon papers had gained some of its circulation.¹⁷

¹⁶Editor and Publisher, LV (Jan. 27, 1930), 60.

¹⁷Interview with Glenn Pricer.

By the late 1930's it appeared that both the Dispatch and Journal were on the rocks. The afternoon paper of the News had been losing circulation and the parent paper found dual operation cumbersome. The News agreed to sell, also, when, after the death of E. W. Scripps, the Scripps-Canfield League put the Dispatch up for sale. A deal was made in 1938 to combine the Dallas Dispatch and Dallas Journal, and the purchaser was a wealthy Dallas theater magnate, Karl Hoblitzelle. A newsomr to the newspaper business, Hoblitzelle was a philanthropist who undoubtedly had a desire to contribute to the community, but he also wanted to satisfy a life-long ambition to own a newspaper.¹⁸ The new enterprise, the Dallas Dispatch-Journal, began publishing in the Dispatch building and an adjoining structure.

Hoblitzelle laid his plans on a grandiose scale. He retained Andersson as editor plus the entire combined staffs of both newspapers in the editorial, mechanical, business and circulation departments. The most modern equipment was installed and more wire services were obtained. Advertising patronage increased and circulation climbed to over 60,000. The paper was given a financial blank check when Hoblitzelle departed on a trip to Europe.¹⁹ The new publisher soon found

¹⁸He was probably influenced by the memory of his Grandfather Knapp who was founder of the Missouri Gazette, which eventually became the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Rogers, op. cit., p. 227.

¹⁹Interview with Glenn Pricer.

that a newspaper was a time and energy-consuming business. Within two years it became apparent that the Dispatch-Journal was in financial trouble. Hoblitzelle did not possess the acumen of the newspaperman in a faster news era, nor did he have the time for personal supervision.

By 1940 the newspaper was losing so heavily that Hoblitzelle decided to suspend publication.²⁰ He sold the paper to Clarence Linz, a former associate in the theater business. Linz changed the name of the paper to the Dallas Journal²¹ but he too failed in his efforts to pull the Journal out of its financial quagmire. Linz soon sold the paper to Robert West, a Houston oil millionaire. West cut down the staff and trimmed expenses, and the Journal seemed to have weathered the storm. Circulation increased to 63,795 and advertising revenue improved.²² But West died suddenly and the property reverted to his two sons, both oil men. The West interests had little enthusiasm for the newspaper profession, however, and the Journal once more floundered in the financial sea. When the United States became involved in World War II, costs of paper doubled and trebled while the Journal was still being bought for two cents or a forty-cent monthly subscription. The staff was

²⁰ Rogers, op. cit., p. 227.

²¹ The name, Dispatch, with its connotation of sensationalism, was thought to have hurt the paper's reputation.

²² Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, 1941, p. 913.

not surprised to receive a wire from the West family one day in the spring of 1942 in which the Journal was ordered to "close down with this issue." Buildings and real estate were sold and machinery and equipment were either purchased by other newspapers or junked.²³ The departure of the Journal signaled the end of the era of sensationalism, although the paper's policies had grown conservative during its last years. The daily field was now entirely in the hands of the two newspaper Goliaths, the News and the Times Herald.

During the early years of the twentieth century, the Dallas Morning News was concerned with a program of expansion. In 1911 it added a sextuple press with color attachment capable of printing 72,000 copies of a twelve-page paper per hour, the largest press ever brought to Texas at this time. In 1913,²⁴ a four-story and basement annex was completed to house the mechanical department, the linotypes, stereotypes and power plant. After the news of the European war flashed across its pages, the need for more enlargement became acute. Circulation increased as the Sunday News went over the 100,000 mark. And another cartoonist, John Knott,

²³Interview with Glenn Pricer.

²⁴The year was marked within the News by the death of Mrs. A. H. Belo, Sr. As she had not taken an active part in the management, few changes were made. Lombardi became president, G. B. Dealey continued as vice-president and general manager. Dealey's son, Walter A. Dealey, joined the News.

was made famous by his war drawings designed to keep up morale on the homefront. Knott's origination of the famous "Old Man Texas" became a symbol of the state's character.²⁵

On June 23, 1919, the leadership of Cesar Lombardi as president of the News ended with his death in California. G. B. Dealey now became president as well as general manager. Under his guidance the policies and principles of management for which he had in fact been chiefly responsible since 1906, were continued although modified and enlarged with the times and conditions.

To meet the changing economic conditions in Texas and particularly to serve better the needs of its own immediate area, the News, in 1923, sold the Galveston Daily News to W. L. Moody, Jr., of Galveston. Headquarters, as well as files and corporate records, of the oldest business institution in Texas were transferred to Dallas. At the same time the News was beginning a new expansion program. Walter A. Dealey, who had been named an executive of the company, was instrumental in the establishment of a broadcasting station which became known as Station WFAA, the first newspaper-owned radio station in the Southwest.²⁶

On March 10, 1926, it was announced that G. B. Dealey and associates had purchased stock control in the News from

²⁵Acheson, op. cit., pp. 256, 268.

²⁶Dallas Morning News, Oct. 1, 1935, sec. 3, pp. 12-13.

the Belo heirs for \$2,725,000 (its value has since doubled). Then the elder Dealey began to groom his youngest son, Edward Musgrove (Ted) Dealey, to take over the editorial position while another son, Walter, handled the paper's business as vice-president. At Walter Dealey's death in 1934, the younger Dealey, who had seen long service in the editorial department, became vice-president.²⁷

G. B. Dealey and the News reached their golden jubilee in Dallas journalism in the autumn of 1935. In celebration of the occasion, a giant 152-page special edition, one of the largest yet produced, appeared in which the history of the city and of the News was elegantly told. It might well have been a fitting climax for Dealey's career and a cue for retirement--he was then 76 years old--but he had no such thought in mind. He continued to publish the News with all the vigor and progressiveness of old. In 1936 he mobilized

²⁷ Other important changes in the career of the News: Alonzo Wasson replaced Luther Clark during the 1920's as editor-in-chief. He was followed by James Quayle Dealey, brother of G. B. Dealey, and a notable educator and social scientist. After his death in 1937, J. Q. Dealey was succeeded by J. J. Taylor. Managing editors during the period were D. Prescott Toomey, Grant A. Briggs, George McQuaid, John E. King, and Harry Withers. Withers and Lynn W. Landrum served on the Journal as editor and managing editor respectively. DeWitt McMurray edited the Semi-Weekly Farm News (since 1894). The Texas Almanac and State Industrial Guide, first published at Galveston in 1857, had an irregular career after the Civil War but was continuous since 1925. During the period, it was edited by Tom Finty, Jr., Frank A. Briggs, and Stuart McGregor, its present editor. Acheson, op. cit., p. 305.

the forces of the News for publicity during the Texas Centennial, and continued to engage actively in programs for civic betterment.²⁸

Edwin J. Kiest's principle of a local newspaper for Dallas citizens bore fruit as the twentieth century progressed. Public support continued to increase after the Times Herald moved into the two-story building on Elm Street in 1903. For a quarter of a century the newspaper grew steadily along with the community as a whole, and finally the Elm Street building was crammed with reporters, salesmen, printers, and pressmen. On November 8, 1928, several members of the staff watched while the publisher turned the first spade of earth for a new plant at Pacific, Griffin, and Patterson Streets. As always, Kiest had waited until he had enough cash in the bank for a purchase and then proceeded with expansion plans.²⁹ A three-story plant was constructed on a foundation which

²⁸From 1935 to 1939 Dealey also became interested in the newsprint business. He encouraged his son, E. M. Dealey, to take the initiative in seeking a process of making newsprint from Texas pine. Dr. Charles H. Herty, the Georgia scientist who had perfected such a plan, was brought in. The News financially backed up the proposal to build a paper mill with a substantial subscription of the \$425,000 needed to match a government loan. A few months after the formal dedication of the Southland Newsprint Mill at Lufkin, Texas, the News became the first big daily to produce a complete edition on paper from Texas pine. Mott, op. cit., p. 784.

²⁹Kiest's successor continued his policy of cash for everything. Similar transactions were completed on all subsequent expansion projects. Statement by Tom C. Gooch in an interview, Nov. 20, 1951.

would support additional floors, and its architecture was of conventional design to permit additional expansion easily in the future. In 1929 when the Times Herald moved into its new quarters it had all the appearances of a metropolitan daily. Four of the latest and best presses in the old building were transferred to take their places beside six new Scott presses assembled for the event. The first press run in the new location was held August 13, 1929. The newspaper received the franchise of the International News Service in 1929 and its Associated Press wire facilities were expanded. A new dial telephone PBX, a rare instrument for the time, was installed. Then Kiest decided to expand to another field--radio. He supplied the money as well as considerable personal interest in the establishment in the early 1920's of Texas' first radio station, WRR. In 1924, Kiest purchased Station KRLD which had been launched by Dallas Radio Laboratories, and the news broadcasting unit became the second newspaper-owned station in Dallas.³⁰

Under the management of Kiest and Gooch, the Times Herald continued to ride the crest of prosperity. Even the depression and nationwide economic collapse did not seriously affect the paper's growth, and during the New Deal days, increased circulation and advertising suggested that additional facilities would soon have to be provided. On the occasion

³⁰Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 7.

of his seventy-fifth birthday in 1936 Kiest commented on the development of the state and his own newspaper during the past forty years:

. . . it does not seem a long time, nor remarkable that we are where we are today. I had seen the Dakotas, Nebraska and Kansas develop, and I knew that the same spirit would develop in Texas.³¹

Five years later, with the clouds of war in Europe hanging heavily overhead, Edwin J. Kiest died, proud of having realized his dream of owning a newspaper. He had built up his enterprise from a tiny circulation of 2,100 in 1896 to 93,219 in 1941.³² But his career had been equally distinguished outside the newspaper field. He served several terms as president of the park board,³³ as president of the State Fair Association, and as a regent of Texas Agriculture and Mechanical College. Although he had little formal education, he received honorary doctor of laws degrees from Southern Methodist University and Texas A & M. His Easter egg hunts for children and his interest in the Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children were cherished philanthropies until his death on August 11, 1941.³⁴

³¹Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 7.

³²Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals, 1941, p. 913.

³³Kiest Park, a 248-acre plot in the southwest section of the city, grew out of this interest. It was dedicated in memory of his wife.

³⁴Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. H, p. 11.

At Kiest's death, Tom C. Gooch, his long-time chief of staff, became president of the Times Herald, and seven other key employees³⁵ of long standing shared in the will of Kiest, a widower with no children. Under Gooch's leadership the Times Herald continued publishing under the established policies of Kiest. The change in ownership was hardly noticeable. Gooch and his associates had absorbed Kiest's principles of newspaper production and set about to reaffirm them in the area of expansion.

Dallas, the Metropolis; the
Decline of Newspapers

Dallas . . . a phenomenal city in a phenomenal state . . . it daily faces the sun rising over an ever-expanding world of its own creating. Against this background [it is] blown along by sheer exuberance and joyous animal energy of the people. . . .³⁶

This observation by a traveling salesman in 1941 summarized the character of Dallas and its citizens during the period, 1906-1942. The city had an unprecedented growth in which its population increased from less than 90,000 in 1906 to nearly 300,000 in 1942.³⁷ Dallas expanded its

³⁵John W. Runyon, first vice-president; D. A. Greenwell, vice-president and treasurer; Allen Merriam, editor; Clyde A. Taber, general superintendent; B. C. Jefferson, associate editor and chief editorial writer; Albert Swinsky; and E. K. Mead.

³⁶"Dallas," Atlantic Monthly, CLXV (October, 1940), 454.

³⁷U. S. Bureau of the Census, Eleventh Census of the United States, 1930: Population, Vol. II, p. 442.

industries in several directions. Plants for food processing, for making wearing apparel, metal fabrication and agriculture implements were opened. The coming of the Federal Reserve Bank and taxing of out-of-state insurance companies gave further impetus to business. Highways spread outward to accommodate automobiles and skyscrapers grew upward to house the city's swelling business population. After 1930, oil made the city a leader in petroleum financing, drilling supplies and geophysical research.³⁸

The rapid expansion and growth of Dallas gave rise to a booming publications business and at the same time decreased the number of newspapers in operation. Approximately sixty periodicals were in publication in 1906, the majority of them newspapers in the daily, weekly, semi-weekly, semi-monthly and monthly field.³⁹ Only a few ever gained much influence or importance. By 1940 the number had dwindled to fifty-six with only thirteen of them newspapers. The figure continued to drop thereafter. Of this number, four were dailies, seven were weeklies, one was semi-weekly and another was semi-monthly.⁴⁰

The ease with which daily newspapers could be established in the late nineteenth century was noticeably lacking during

³⁸Dallas Times Herald, Aug. 28, 1949, sec. D, p. 1.

³⁹Dallas City Directory, 1906, p. 6.

⁴⁰The fourth daily was the Daily Commercial Record.

this period. Outside of the Dispatch and the Journal, only two dailies were established. The Dallas Metropolitan was begun in 1906 but published only three years. The Dallas Morning Reporter was published for a short time in 1913.⁴¹ Another newspaper adventure was the Daily Comet which lasted for only sixteen days during the State Fair. In its brief existence it made a considerable splash with multi-color advertising and photographs, mostly concerning the Fair and expounding the merits of the Mergenthaler linotype.⁴²

A number of weeklies came into existence but most were of a homogeneous mixture of straight news and news of interest to the trades. Some exceptions were the SMU Times, a college publication established in 1915 and succeeded in a few weeks by the SMU Campus; La Tribuna, an Italian language journal (1914);⁴³ the Dallas Craftsman (1924); the Dallas Gazette, a Negro paper (1927); and the Community Press (1932). The Advance Weekly was begun in 1928 and the Dallas Jewish Examiner published a few months in 1934. Others entered the field but lasted only a short time.⁴⁴ Many other periodicals appeared in semi-monthly, monthly, quarterly and annual

⁴¹Texas Newspapers, 1813-1939, Historical Records Survey, WPA Program, I, 51-64.

⁴²Dallas Daily Comet, Oct. 27, 1915.

⁴³Changed to Texas Tribune during World War II.

⁴⁴Texas Newspapers, 1813-1939, I, 51-64.

editions with the makeup of a newspaper, but they were clearly performing the function of the magazine and trade journal. They slowly pushed out all but the best newspapers founded on a sound financial basis.

Departmentalization a Reality

The practice of segregating the news and news features into departments and sections was one of the outstanding characteristics of newspaper progress during the period. The growth of the city and the increased demand for more detailed coverage in diverse fields necessitated completely new techniques in the editorial department. Specialization was needed to capture the wider reader interest. The largest step taken in this direction was the development of the modern sports page. This newspaper phenomenon began to appear in the second decade of the twentieth century. Greater interest in football, baseball, golf, and basketball demanded greater coverage and the sports editor, with a staff of reporters, entered the scene. Minor sports were given attention and a unique style of writing with abbreviated and colorful jargon came into being. During the 1920's the sports department became a recognized fact. Sports editors such as Horace McCoy of the Journal, Jack Procter of the Dispatch, George White of the News, and Jere Hayes of the Times Herald were well known for their special columns. Coverage grew so rapidly that it not only included local

items but many happenings in the world of sports which the news feature and picture syndicates supplied.

The handling of local news became a separate function as did that of wire news from the press services. Along with this growth came the new, crisp styles of news and headline writing and attention to attractive arrangement of type. Society news matured rapidly as the emphasis on the woman increased. From scattered items about weddings, teas, and social gatherings, the function grew to include all news about women, about the home, the garden, food, and about fashions. As a department it came into being in Dallas newspapers during the 1930's and 1940's. It was distinguished by a different format with subdued type, abundant pictures, and syndicated columns of interest to women. Special assignments were given for coverage of women's clubs, weddings, engagements and outstanding social events.

The emergence of Dallas as a cultural center underscored the need for special coverage of the arts. For many years such news was delegated no definite place in the newspaper. But by the 1920's the trend toward departmentalization was more in evidence. The Dallas Morning News pioneered in the field and its amusements critic, John Rosenfield, came to be nationally famous as the bellwether to Texans of artistic taste.⁴⁵ Special writers were employed in many cases to

⁴⁵"Rosenfield of Dallas," Newsweek, XXX (Aug. 18, 1947), 56.

handle amusements news and extensive coverage was given to the theater, art, books, opera, concerts, radio, music, movies and nightclubs. Many events highlighted the amusements page trend. The "talkies" appeared in the 1920's, and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra played monthly concerts with chamber music in between. The Oak Cliff Little Theater produced Shakespeare and other works of durable content. Musical extravaganzas were booked at the State Fair Auditorium. The Dallas Art Association arranged periodic exhibitions of renowned artists, and the Dallas Grand Opera Association offered seasons of opera. Music clubs throughout the city were formed and the Civic Federation became a foremost cultural agency.⁴⁶

During the period, few readers put down their newspapers without perusing the comics. The "funnies" expanded from a page or two of black and white characters to sixteen pages in color for Sunday editions. Black and white strips were carried in the daily editions. Thousands read the comics which featured animals at first, but later turned also to such human characters as Mutt and Jeff, Hairbreadth Harry, Elmer, Dumb Dora, Dick Tracy, Blondie, Li'l Abner, and others.

Newspapers reported doings of the business world faithfully, but the requirements of a faster, modern world

⁴⁶Dallas Times Herald, Nov. 25, 1951, sec. 7, p. 6.

demanded more complete coverage. Dallas newspaper publishers recognized this need and established departments to handle oil, automobile, industrial and mercantile news. The editorial page was soon distinguished from the rest of the paper by its different typography, opinion matter, and use of cartoons, features, and letters to the editor. Special pages were devoted at times to features of a general nature and to specialized articles on science, medicine, travel, and photography. Advertising became a most important revenue-producing agency of the newspaper and huge staffs were employed to handle the millions of lines of advertising. Business, circulation, and mechanical departments operated under supervisors with large staffs of workers. Photography departments were begun to satisfy the demand for more pictures of a local character. The entire change to departmentalization dispensed with the editorial jack-of-all-trades, and made specialized knowledge a premium requisite.

Editorials and Crusades

The period 1906-1942 was an era of editorial persuasion and crusading by Dallas newspapers. The swift-moving events which paralleled the city's position as a metropolis were fertile fields for the editorial talents of the News, the Journal, Dispatch, and Times Herald particularly. The Journal devoted itself chiefly to matters of a local nature while its

parent News handled weightier problems. The News successfully fathered the Dallas City Plan Commission and the Kessler Plan, which put into operation improvements from which modern Dallas emerged.⁴⁷ Always an advocate of improved agricultural methods, the News in 1927 conducted a "More Cotton on Fewer Acres" campaign to teach better farm practices. The News lost circulation for its uncompromising stand against the oil speculators of the 1920's and against the Ku Klux Klan which reappeared in the same decade.⁴⁸ It was constantly plugging away at reforms in government, at clearance of slum conditions, and all questions involving the city's progress. In matters of politics it was professedly Democratic although its attitude was somewhat right of center.

At the opposite end of the pole was the Dallas Dispatch. The Scripps paper was liberal in its political, economic, and social thinking. Since its appeal was aimed primarily at working classes and similar groups, it favored labor and fought against the large utility companies. A conspicuous service was performed by one of its editors, Glenn Pricer, who probably struck the most telling blows at the Ku Klux Klan. His "appeal to horse sense" campaign risked personal attack, financial loss for his paper, and social ostracism,

⁴⁷Texas, A Guide to the Lone Star State, pp. 229-230.

⁴⁸George W. Gray, "42 Pictures of Davy Crockett Help Run the Dallas News," American Magazine, CIII (February, 1927), 10, 11, 14.

and he could have very easily followed the Texas journalistic tradition of neutrality. But Pricer and the Dispatch chose the braver course and won their fight as the Ku Klux Klan was seen no more in Texas.⁴⁹

The Times Herald, with its huge local patronage, was consistently on the side of city progress. During the early years of the period it fought for good streets, elimination of slums, and improved health conditions. At the height of the wild economic surges of the late 1920's, the paper warned of business stress and strain, and promoted Dallas as an insurance center. It got behind city cleanup and improvement campaigns, fostered air transport patronage and fought the increasing crime wave. In the next decade it gave attention to improving water supplies, to campaigns of the Community Chest, city and county government, and traffic safety. It occasionally took no stand on controversial issues, but it avoided personal attacks on individuals. In politics it supported Democratic candidates for the presidency although it was friendly to the Hoover administration.

Advertising and Circulation

Within the twentieth century, newspaper and businessmen awakened to the possibilities of advertising and developed

⁴⁹Chester T. Crowell, "Journalism in Texas," American Mercury, IV (April, 1926), 477-478.

the means of making it attractive. Advertising of large department stores became interesting and instructive. The reader was kept informed on all the things that a modern world was creating for benefit and enjoyment. Consequently, the tendency was to print a larger percentage of advertising than news. And the growth of special sections devoted to business and other commodities gave the whole section not only to display ads, but to news stories about the advertiser and his product. By 1919 most Dallas newspapers had increased the number of columns from seven to eight as advertising was sold by the column inch. The Journal carried a large amount of the local patronage that the News with its state circulation could not obtain. But the volume of neither newspaper kept pace with the Times Herald. Kiest's paper, with its more localized appeal, took much of the advertising the News might have secured. Even so, national advertisers preferred to have the paper that would carry the message to the people of one locality rather than to a scattered circulation.⁵⁰ Newspapers hired national representatives to handle solicitation of the large advertising patronage. Advertising lineages ran into the millions and by the end of the period, the News and the Times Herald ranked high among the nation's newspapers in advertising business in

⁵⁰ Ralph H. Parker, "History of the Dallas Morning News," Unpublished Master's thesis, Dept. of History, University of Texas, 1930, p. 130.

their respective fields. They surpassed cities of greater population in their number of advertising lines annually.⁵¹

The second big source of newspaper income was circulation. Consequently, there was great development in this period in promotion techniques. The sensationalism of the Dispatch was designed as a means of street sales promotion. Posters, announcements, and front-page boasts were common. Dallas newspapers resorted to all sorts of devices in the competition for circulation--puzzles, guessing games, limerick contests, baby shows, prizes, and even cooking schools for men. As circulations grew, large fleets of trucks and carrier boys had to be employed. The newspaper learned the business of mass production in circulation techniques.

Crime and Crime News

The handling of crime news was a subject of much disagreement among Dallas newspapers. The News, the Journal, and the Times Herald maintained a conservative policy in printing such news, but none believed that crime news should be suppressed. G. B. Dealey once summarized this opinion:

Good journalism takes the mirror as its model--the mirror and not the lens. It reflects within certain limits of space, taste and legal responsibility, what happens instead of what ought to happen. Further

⁵¹ Editor and Publisher's International Yearbook, 1942, p. 21.

than that selection and rejection are for the reader and not for the editor.⁵²

Ordinary crime news was regarded as of minor importance by this group and no great emphasis was given even sensational crimes. Divorce and scandal news was printed only occasionally, and juvenile courts coverage was not even undertaken for many years.

The Dispatch was more liberal in its handling of crime news. Large, black headlines screamed the news of wrongdoing, and pictures supplemented stories which were detailed and colorfully written. It was believed that such handling would increase street sales and appeal to a large class of readers. As long as it followed this policy the Dispatch prospered until Andersson switched to a more conservative principle of newspaper operation in the 1930's. And yet during its career the Dispatch paid off on only two suits for libel, one in the amount of \$500 and the other for \$100.⁵³

News of crime was plentiful during the uproarious 1920's and 1930's. Large play was given to the famous Lindbergh kidnapping and the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann. The crime antics of such killers as "Pretty Boy" Floyd, "Machine Gun" Kelly and John Dillinger earned many headlines.

⁵²"The Newspaper, Its Revenue and Policies," a speech by G. B. Dealey to students of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, in 1915, University of Missouri Bulletin, Journalism Series 11, pp. 18-19.

⁵³Interview with Glenn Pricer.

The gang system of Al Capone was always news as was the crime spree of Dallas's notorious pair, Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker.⁵⁴

History in Headlines

The period, 1906-1942, recorded more world-shaking events than ever before in history. The news of a world at war and at peace, and economic upheaval were chronicled in the pages of Dallas newspapers. In 1907, Dallas's first skyscraper, the Praetorian Building (fifteen stories), was constructed. The next year, the big Trinity River flood drove 2,000 persons from their homes and caused damage amounting to \$2,000,000. In 1909 Admiral Robert E. Peary reached the North Pole, and the first transcontinental airplane flight took place. In 1912 the giant liner, "Titanic" went down in the Atlantic, drowning 1,517 persons. That same year, Woodrow Wilson was elected president at a time when trouble with Mexico and rumblings of a European war made the nation uneasy. Texas experienced two major tragedies in the Brazos flood which claimed 500 lives, and a Galveston hurricane which left twenty-two dead in 1913. The next year

⁵⁴Jan I. Fortune, Fugitives, the Story of Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, p. 238. Columnists and cartoonists teased the law unmercifully. A columnist wrote: "Clyde and Bonnie give Smoot Schmid twenty-four hours to get out of town." A cartoon depicted "Pretty Boy" Floyd surrounded by newspapers featuring Clyde and Bonnie, yelling: "I haven't had any publicity in weeks."

Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, and his wife were assassinated by a Serbian terrorist. A European war was begun. In 1915 headlines told of the tragic torpedoing of the liner, "Lusitania," off the coast of Ireland in which 1,198, including many Americans, were lost. Woodrow Wilson was reelected president in 1916, and General John Pershing led United States troops to put down the marauding general, Pancho Villa the same year. In 1917 the United States declared war on Germany. The Armistice of 1918 ended the fighting and a League of Nations was organized to insure world peace. The postwar period was hectic. A National Prohibition Act was passed by Congress and a Texas governor, James E. Ferguson, was impeached. The "Jazz Age" of the 1920's ushered in bootleg gin and "speakeasies," and mob murders in New York, Chicago and other cities were common. The election of Warren G. Harding as President in 1920 was news as was the reappearance of the Ku Klux Klan in Texas and other states. The decade of the 1920's saw the advent of the "talkies," and bad news came on "Black Thursday," in 1929 when the bottom fell out of the stock market and financial panic gripped the whole world. The decade of the 1930's was marked by a worldwide depression, by the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and his subsequent New Deal measures. In 1930 the famous East Texas oilfield strike was big news. Crime was on the increase as murders, kidnappings, and gangland warfare flared over the nation. A gas

explosion at a New London, Texas, school killed more than 500 school children. Across the sea Adolph Hitler began his march through Poland, and Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. American preparedness, lend-lease and military conscription highlighted the opening of the new decade, and with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the United States declared war on the Axis powers.

CHAPTER VIII

A DECADE OF ENTRENCHMENT

During the years, 1942-1952, the fact that the newspaper was now an enormous business and no longer a fly-by-night enterprise could scarcely be challenged. The Dallas Morning News and the Dallas Times Herald, possessing newspaper plants worth millions of dollars and employing hundreds of people, were impregnable buttresses to this fact. For more than half a century they had stoically watched the parade of less stable newspapers come and go, and emerged themselves as the sole survivors in the daily field in 1942. They became solidly entrenched, taking over circulations and patronage of less-fortunate newspapers and becoming justifiably complacent. Extraordinary men had built their businesses with a sagacious view toward the dollar and they had hitched their futures to that of Dallas. Many of the noteworthy improvements which built the city were made possible in large measure by their support.

On the whole, the years were full and profitable for the two newspapers. As in all wars, the thirst for news increased circulation. Shortly after the last war began, the News and the Times Herald absorbed the circulation of the defunct Journal, and when the conflict was over, they lolled

in the sunshine of economic prosperity. Despite rising costs and inflationary tendencies, they reached new heights of prosperity. The News by 1952 had a daily circulation of 165,041 and a Sunday issue of 174,942 copies. The Times Herald, with its local appeal, boasted 139,247 daily subscribers, and 138,409 for its Sunday edition.¹ Advertising lineages zoomed to unheard of proportions. The News ranked seventh among the nation's morning dailies in 1951 with 21,423,167 lines, while the Times Herald was seventh among afternoon dailies with 25,915,570.²

The period was distinguished also by further expansion of both newspapers. In March 1949, the News moved into a monumental new home at Houston, Young and Record Streets. The \$6,000,000 structure was called the "Showplace of Texas Journalism," and consisted of five acres of floor space, three stories high, with presses that printed 160,000 thirty-two page issues an hour. Scattered throughout the building were forty-two pictures of David Crockett, Texas Revolution hero, whose philosophy, "Be sure you're right, then go ahead," was the motto of G. B. Dealey throughout the publisher's career. The building was the culmination of a dream by Dealey, who realized as early as 1937 that the News

¹ Ayer's Directory of Newspaper and Periodicals, 1952, pp. 947-948.

² Editor and Publisher International Yearbook, Vol LXXXV, 1952, p. 284.

would soon have to move to larger quarters. But the dream never materialized for George Bannerman Dealey. Death came to the News publisher in March of 1946 at the age of 86.³ He had turned over the presidency to E. M. (Ted) Dealey six years before but had remained active as chairman of the board until the day of his death. The value of the News stock had doubled since 1926, and complete control was retained by the Dealey family.⁴ Under E. M. Dealey the expansion was carried out, and over the facade of the new building were carved the words that were to be a constant reminder of G. B. Dealey's ideals:

Build the news upon the rock of Truth and righteousness. Conduct it always upon the lines of fairness and integrity. Acknowledge the right of the people to get from the newspaper both sides of every important question.

At the conclusion of World War II, the Times Herald prepared to expand its facilities to handle its mushrooming business. Gooch devoted much time and energy to the broadening of both the newspaper and radio properties. In 1948 two floors were added to the main building and two adjoining structures were purchased. The paper installed \$1,000,000 worth of high speed presses, and with the coming of television, established KRLD-TV, Dallas's first newspaper-owned

³"Dealey of Dallas," Time, XLVIII (March 11, 1946), 58.

⁴Steve Munger, "Newspaper Plant . . . Texas Size," Dallas Magazine (May, 1949), pp. 12-15.

video outlet.⁵ Not to be outdone, the News entered the television field by inaugurating services of WFAA-TV a few months later.

The rivalry between the two newspapers was always fierce, but it grew more intense as the balance of power grew more equal. Strong competition centered around struggles for the news "beat," for circulation, and advertising patronage. But both papers functioned under an unwritten gentleman's agreement to the benefit of the community. They shunned the sensational, and were reluctant to gain circulation by exploiting respected citizens in trouble with the law or plagued by scandal. There was an absence of attempts to uncover and print lurid or scandalous details merely for the sake of sensational stories, although a trend in the early 1950's toward wider play for crime stories was noticeable. A system of cooperation in handling of general news sources changed the old-school tradition of the "scoop" although both papers were known to employ ingenious devices to score a "beat" on the other.⁶ Backed by enormous resources, the News and the Times

⁵Kiest's policy of paying cash for everything and putting all future expansion on a cash basis was carried out by Gooch, Statement by Tom C. Gooch, personal interview.

⁶An example is the handling of a sensational murder trial in which each paper knew the other planned to issue an extra. The editor of the Times-Herald hit upon a plan to scoop his rival. When the jury returned to the courtroom, the reporter was to call his office without waiting for a verdict. There, thirty-five office people would call the courthouse, tying up its trunk lines to the bewilderment of the News reporter trying to call in the verdict. In this manner the lines were tied up long enough for the Times Herald to put its extra on the streets first. Rogers, op. cit., p. 172.

Herald have become so powerful and so firmly rooted as to constitute a bulwark against the establishment of another newspaper in either field.

The heart of the Dallas newspaper was, of course, in its editorial policy. As always, both were ardent boosters of any movement which would benefit Dallas, Texas, or the Southwest. The News, though rarely brilliant, occasionally risked financial ruin for a principle. Its record for consistency, though not perfect, was high. Under the editorial guidance of William B. Ruggles, it established itself on many major issues such as free-trade, a two-party system,⁷ states rights, temperance but not prohibition, no government subsidies for special groups, traffic safety, city planning, economy in government, civil rights and military preparedness. Many of these ideas were expressed in John Knott's famous cartoon character, "Old Man Texas," or the drawings of Cartoonist Herc Ficklen. The Times Herald took much the same position as the News on many controversial matters. On some debated issues it made no stand, but on problems of concern to Texans its arguments were sincere. Its chief fight was against the encroachment of states rights by the Federal government, particularly the offshore oil lands ownership, and against

⁷The News was ostensibly an Independent Democratic newspaper but its Republican sympathies were again evident in its support of Wendell Willkie in the presidential election of 1940 and of Thomas E. Dewey in 1944 and 1948. It rarely agreed with the Truman administration policies.

isolationism in both wars. An Independent Democratic journal, it found itself at sharp issue with the Truman administration on vital questions. In the fall of 1951 it went Republican for the first time by announcing for General Dwight Eisenhower for the presidency, although not certain what party the general supported. It took a middle-of-the-road stand on labor, and strongly supported modernization of the state's judiciary and penal code. In matters local it supported slum clearance projects, traffic improvement, better water supplies and other worthy movements. The page was edited by B. C. Jefferson, the paper's associate editor and a beneficiary of the Kiest will in 1941.

The editorial positions of both newspapers came in for some criticism during the period. They were sometimes accused of weak or vacillating policies on fundamental social and economic problems, while excessively emphasizing civic development and progress. Despite this criticism, however, both papers exuded a spirit of paternalism on questions of improving economic conditions and living standards. Although they may have been over-optimistic in their development schemes, they moved slowly and cautiously, and in news presentation never lost their balance or dignity. They sought to provide what they considered wise and conclusive interpretations of the news and to produce a newspaper that would fill the needs of the general reader--a panorama of news, features, and advertising at a nickle a copy.

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