



Student Name:  
Class Period:  
Date:

## Meet the Originals

*Texas Originals* is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Sarah Horton Cockrell. Then, answer questions about it.

### Sarah Horton Cockrell 1819–1892

In 1847, Sarah Horton Cockrell began married life in a tent on Mountain Creek Lake, a few miles west of the fledgling town of Dallas. Over the four decades that followed, she played a pivotal role in the young city's economic development.

Cockrell was born in Virginia in 1819 and moved with her family to Texas in her early twenties. In 1847, she married Alexander Cockrell, a businessman who purchased the last remaining building lots of the Dallas settlement.

The couple moved to Dallas, where Alexander opened a sawmill and a gristmill. Sarah kept her husband's business records and handled his correspondence and money, since Alexander was unable to read or write.

In 1858, after Alexander was killed in a gunfight, Sarah took over—and soon expanded—the family's business enterprises. She built one of the city's first hotels. She bought a flour mill at a time when flour milling was the city's major industry. In 1872, she raised funds to open the first iron bridge over the Trinity River, thereby connecting Dallas to major roads south and west.

Along with her sons, Cockrell amassed a large and diverse portfolio of Dallas real estate. By the time of her death in 1892, she owned almost a fourth of the city's downtown. She is now remembered as "Dallas's first capitalist."

**Check for Understanding:** Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Sarah Horton Cockrell. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. How did Sarah Horton Cockrell expand her family's business ventures?
2. How much real estate did Cockrell own at the time of her death?

**Going Further:** Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Creating Connections.** Cockrell was an integral part of raising funds to build an iron bridge over the Trinity River. Why were road systems so important to the development of major cities like Dallas?