On April 17, 1854, Elijah Elgin platted the original town-site for the city of Rockwall. In 1855, the first store – Heath & Jones General Merchandise – was established two blocks south of the current square. In that same year, the first Masonic Hall was built in the downtown area. Over the next few years, a corn-grinding mill was built and a number of stores cropped up in the city.

In 1873 the state legislature established Rockwall County, and the city of Rockwall became the county seat. In 1886 the Missouri, Kansas and Texas line reached Rockwall and the city became a central shipping point for local crops like cotton, wheat and corn. It was at this time that the downtown area as we know it today began to take shape. Clapboard buildings were replaced with brick structures, and the more seedy establishments such as saloons and gambling halls were replaced with respectable businesses. Many people from surrounding communities moved to the booming city, and by 1890 the population of Rockwall was approximately 1,000.

From those origins, the downtown area has had periods of prosperity and decline. Today’s downtown Rockwall is experiencing a period of revitalization as more specialty shops and boutiques move into the storefronts. As you experience the past through this historic walking tour, we hope that you will see the vision for a thriving future for Rockwall’s historic square.