

**1718 San Antonio Founding Families and Descendants
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Narrative/Script

**Timeline and History of the naming and founding of San Antonio
First Spanish settlement, Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo), Presidio de Bexar
(Spanish Governor's Palace and the Villa de Bexar (community/settlement))**

Naming of San Antonio

The Bible does not mention people or places in the Americas, so when the New World was discovered in 1492, Europeans did not know if the native people were human. In 1498, Pope Alexander VI issues three Papal Bulls decreeing the native people are human, they should not be enslaved, and the word of God should be brought to them. Spain and the Catholic Church agreement is known as the Patronato Real, which implemented social and religious ethical codes between Spanish and Native people. Laws were passed over time to carry out this agreement concerning temporal and spiritual matters. The King of Spain, Felipe II, held a grand council, and he issued the *1573 Ordinance of Discovery and Population*. From this time forward, Padres and a few military men explored and settled the land with their families, craftsmen, and artisans in place of the encomienda system. In 1691, the Spanish Crown issued the Entrada Instructions, which required the explorers to name all the rivers, trees, and plants, and for one padre and one commander to consult with local elders about the location of the missions. In this manner, Spanish exploration and settlement of San Antonio took place over time.

**La Entrada / First Contact
1718 Expedition Arrival**

The First Report describing the "Place called San Antonio" was recorded during the 1691 entrada into Texas by Governor and Commander, Domingo Terán de los Rios, on his way to the newly formed East Texas mission of San Francisco de los Tejas.

While here, Father Damien Massanet's diary states, "On the 13th of June 1691, our royal standard and camp moved forward in the easterly direction. We marched five leagues over a fine country with broad plains - the most beautiful in New Spain. We camped on the banks of an arroyo adorned by a great number of trees" of many kinds...we found at this place the Rancheria of the Indians of the Payaya nation. This is a very large nation and the country where they live is very fine. I call this place **San Antonio de Padua** because it was his feast day."

In 1709, another expedition under Capitan Pedro de Aguirre, with 14 soldiers from the Presidio del Rio Grande, arrived in San Antonio with Franciscan missionaries, Fray Isidro Felix de Espinoza and Fray Antonio de Olivares. Fray Olivares named the springs of San Pedro

Creek—"Aguas de San Pedro." Upon seeing the river, Olivares wrote in his dairy, "This river, not having been named by the Spaniards, we call it the "Rio de San Antonio de Padua." Thus for the first time, they were formally named, and thereafter known as San Pedro Creek and the San Antonio River.

In 1716, Domingo Ramon and Father Isidro Felix de Espinoza led an expedition and returned to the San Antonio area on May 14th, where they said mass in honor of San Isidro; "We arrived at the spring on level land which was named San Pedro. This is sufficient to support the town. We entered a beautiful amenity of walnuts, grapevines, willows, elms, and other variety of trees, more than a quarter of a league from the San Antonio River. We were able to cross the river, which is large, but not deep, as it reaches our stirrups. We arrived upstream to look for a resting place and we found a good one, because it had a nice camping area with good trees and pasturage. We found the source of the river. Here, with the estimate of twelve Spaniards, hemp nine feet high and flax two feet high are found. Enough fish were caught for everyone and nets were used in the river with ease." Today the source of the San Antonio River is known as the Blue Hole Spring, and the mass was held in the camping area known as Brackenridge Park at Mira Flores.

On May 1, 1718, the expedition led by Don Martín de Alarcón, Governor of Coahuila y Tejas, reached the San Pedro springs area. His entrada numbered well over 72 people including 35 soldiers, six chaplains, mule drivers, livestock handlers, a blacksmith, craftsmen, artisans and the soldiers with their families. Many of the families were soldiers that married Xarame women and other local native from the Rio Grande area at Mission Solano. Many of these intermarried people were not included in the expedition journal, but their names appear in birth and baptismal records of Mission Valero. The expedition had six droves of mules needed to transport supplies, equipment and household goods, 548 horses, 200 head of cattle, 100 sheep and an assortment of other livestock.

Upon the arrival of Gobernador Alarcón, the Misión San Francisco de Solano was officially transferred from the Rio Grande and was renamed by Fray Olivares as the Misión San Antonio de Valero. Fray Mezquia wrote in his diary, "The mission of Fray Antonio de San Buenaventura y Olivares is near the first spring about half a league from the high ground and adjoining a small thicket of live oaks, where at present he is building a hut."

This 1718 contact between the arriving Spaniards and the indigenous people of Yanaguana occurred when Governor Alarcón, with his soldiers, joined by Fray Olivares and a Solano mission scout, met with the Payayas and other Coahuiltecan people.

"On May 1, 1718, ..."

Governor Alarcón, his soldiers, Fray Antonio Olivares, and a mission scout who came with him from mission Solano, who meet with the Payayas and other Coahuiltecan people, make signs of friendship and give gifts.

Founding of Mission San Antonio de Valero; Friar Quotes diary/first mass; _

Governor Alarcón, through the native translator, informs them that he has come with Fray Olivares in friendship to establish a mission for them. Both Governor Alarcón and Fray Antonio Olivares, having presented gifts, extended inviting gestures to these indigenous people to participate with them in an **Acto de Posesión** for the establishment of the Misión San Antonio de Valero.

Expedition diarist, Father Francisco Celiz, wrote "On the first of May 1718, Fray Antonio San Buenaventura y Olivares, established Misión San Antonio de Valero on land which had been founded by the governor 'about three- fourths of a league down the creek' from the presidio."

Olivares and Natives ceremonially "pull weeds and throw rocks in all directions."

Founding of Presidio de Bexar Soldiers and the Founding of Villa de Bexar; Community

The Father Celiz diary continues, "**On the 5th of May**, the governor, Don Martín de Alarcón, Governor of Coahuila y Tejas, in the name of his Majesty, took possession of the place called San Antonio, establishing himself in it, and fixing the royal standard with the requisite solemnity, the father chaplain having previously celebrated mass, and it was given the name of Villa de Bexar. This site is henceforth destined for the civil settlement and the soldiers who are to guard it, as well as the site for the mission of San Antonio de Valero." Both the villa and the presidio were named in honor of Juan Manuel de Zúñiga Sotomayor y Mendoza, IX duque de Bexar, who was the father of Baltasar de Zúñiga Guzmán Sotomayor y Mendoza, II Marqués de Valero. The Marqués de Valero approved and ordered the important 1718 founding of Mission San Antonio de Valero, the Presidio de Bexar, and the Villa de Bexar."

. Regarding San Pedro Springs, Celiz wrote, "... in this place of San Antonio there is a spring of water which is about three-fourths of a league from the principal river. This spring location is the very spot on which the Villa of Bexar was founded. It is easy to secure water here, but nowhere else."

Three formal cheers are yelled out,

"¡Viva España!" Quick loud response by all: "¡ Viva !"

"¡Viva El Rey!" Quick loud response by all: "¡ Viva !"

"¡Y Viva San Antonio de Bexar!" Quick loud response by all: "¡ Viva !"

That Summer, The soldiers began their settlement to the East side of the Arroyo San Pedro where they build enough stone structures to house the padres and military men, as required the 1691 Entrada Instructions for protection of the settlement. Similar structures and jacales and sufficient corrales for livestock were later built. Since they intended to establish a lasting settlement, the civilian population was awarded land titles of Solares for homesties, Ganados Minor for agricultural fields, and Gandados Mayor for cattle ranching. The civilians and

soldiers cleared land and planted large plots with grains and vegetables for the soldier-settler families as they began to develop their new home sites.

That Fall, Local natives and soldier families also would celebrate the baptism of the first baby born in the Villa de Bexar: In the year of the Lord of 1718 in this mission of San Francisco Solano located in San Antonio de Valero, I Fray Miguel Nunez, of the School of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with permission of Padre Fray Antonio de Olivares, minister of this mission, anointed with holy oil the Xarame, Antonio Barreiro, son of Nicolas the fiscal and his wife, Francisca, with the godfather, Engineer Don Francisco Barriero.” The first time the civil settlement is specifically mentioned in the baptismal records was on July 6, 1719, parents and witnessess, all were from the **Villa de Bexar** and both men were presidio soldiers.”

Mission Valero and Villa de Bexar Prosper; Add more people from 1718 Descendants

Over the next 13 years, the population at the Villa de Bexar and Mission Valero grows. Spanish written records refer to the original soldiers and their families who settled San Antonio as “Los Primeros”. According to Spanish law, they were awarded Carta Executaria de Higualdia, titles of Hidalgos, for their bravery of being the first people to establish San Antonio. In 1722, the people began the construction of San Fernando Cathedral. Spanish records show us that many of the people donated cart loads of stones, grains, and the people donated funds and labor. The cathedral was completed in 1737. Just before the 16 families of the Canary Islanders arrived, San Antonio was seven separate communities of five missions, Villa de Bexar, and Presidio de Bexar, and each community had their own governmental administrations and mayors. By February 1731, the missions’ birth, baptismal, marriage, and death records tell us there were as many as 2,100 people living in the general area of San Antonio. The number of people is a conservative estimate, and the people listed in the church records only talk about the settlers, who came from Coahuila and Saltillo area of Nueva España, and the native people, who came to the missions to live a Catholic way of life. Thousands of other native families were living, and continued to live, in their villages nearby. The native population, with their knowledge and skill of buffalo hunting, helped the mission rancheros with cattle operations to feed the growing population. Upon the arrival of the Canary Islanders, they became part of the Villa de Bexar community. They established a town council, and official Spanish administrative records tell us the new immigrants renamed the Villa de Bexar to the Villa de San Fernando de Bexar. Over the decades, the missions were so successful, the people could feed themselves and supply 9,000 to 15,000 head of cattle for the American Revolution War.

