SAN ANTONIO FIELD TRIP
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Topics to be covered

1. Importance of water for life in the Southwest
   Acequia system (irrigation):
   dam, canal, aqueduct, fields

2. Spanish Institutions:
   (a) missions (spread of Christianity)
   (b) presidios (military and government)
   (c) towns (civilian settlement)

3. Historic precedents and the contemporary cityscape.

Painting of San Antonio in 1836 by George Nelson
## ITINERARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Depart UT, corner of 23rd Street and San Jacinto Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Arrive at Espada Dam—Stop 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:40</td>
<td>Depart Espada Dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45</td>
<td>Arrive at Ashley Street canal crossing—Stop 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:55</td>
<td>Depart Ashley Street stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Arrive at Espada Aqueduct—Stop 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:20</td>
<td>Depart Espada Aqueduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:25</td>
<td>Arrive at Mission Espada—Stop 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Depart Mission Espada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15</td>
<td>Arrive at Mission San José—Stop 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>Depart Mission San José</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45</td>
<td>Arrive at the San Antonio city hall parking lot—Stop 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:50</td>
<td>Visit the Spanish Governor's Palace (We will enter as a group, but once inside will take individual self-guided tours.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10</td>
<td>Walk around the Plaza de las Armas, San Fernando Cathedral, and the Plaza de las Islas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>Depart city hall parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Arrive back at UT, corner of 23rd and San Jacinto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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3
The San Antonio Missions

Adán Benavides

The basic premises of the missionary enterprise on the northern reaches of Nueva España are well-known to even the casual observer of what is now the U.S. Southwest: the Spanish government and the Hispanic church sought to convert the native peoples. At its simplest level, conversion was in the view of the latter a religious experience; but to the former, it meant the acculturation of the New World natives to the Spanish way of life. In practice, however, the goals of the two Hispanic institutions were inseparable. On the frontier, the gobierno de indios was administered through church clerics. In contemporary times, the positive and negative effects of the conversion process have been brought into sharp relief as we approach 12 October 1992.

Between 1718 and 1731, five missions were established along the upper San Antonio River: San Antonio de Valero ("The Alamo"), San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción, San Francisco de la Espada, and San Juan Capistrano. In the latter year, the three last-named missions were removed from east Texas and, with their property and supplies, reestablished along the San Antonio River. These changes followed the recommendations of the Rivera inspection which streamlined the presidios along the frontier of New Spain. Franciscan friars from the Apostolic Colleges of Querétaro and Zacatecas administered the Texas missions. Following the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 from New Spain, the Querétaran Franciscans assumed responsibility for the Jesuit missions in the northwestern interior provinces and thereby abandoned the Texas field. Thus in 1773, the Zacatecan Franciscans assumed the jurisdiction of the five San Antonio missions—four were added to the one of San José which they had had since 1721.

The proximity of the five San Antonio missions occurred because rivalry among the various Coahuiltecan Indian bands prevented their congregation in fewer missions. In 1745, they were described as being more than 200 tribes, speaking twenty different languages or dialects. A Franciscan friar produced a confessional manual in Coahuiltecan for use in the missions (Mexico, 1760). The mission populations were never very extensive (see table 1). At their population maximums, the Indians at a single San Antonio mission have been estimated at 200 to 350 individuals. In the early years, European diseases took their toll among the mission Indians in epidemics (of smallpox and measles, for example) that also affected the Spanish village and presidio. Following the 1770s, the mission populations were not significantly increased by neophytes.

In the early 1790s, however, descendants of older Indian converts (as well as other agregados) acquired a share in the mission buildings and fields following the "secularization" of the missions. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, secularization was an empire-wide attempt to lessen the financial burden of the Spanish Crown, which significantly supported the missionary enterprise. In this process, the diocesan or "secular" clergy assumed the administration of the former mission congregations from the "regular" clergy—clergy like the Franciscan friars who followed specific rules (regula) of a spiritual order. In Texas, secularization involved property and land grants which were further legalized under the Mexican regime in 1824.

The missions were independent pueblos that included the mission compound (chapel, convento, plaza, perimeter dwellings, workshops, and storerooms), fields irrigated by a dam and acequia system, and a ranch of sizable proportions for loose livestock. During the nineteenth century, the mission compounds deteriorated: stones from the walls were sold and used in newer constructions, the chapels were sometimes used as livestock pens, and domes, roofs, and towers fell (except Mission Concepción's chapel, which has remained intact). In the twentieth century, the mission compounds received extensive reconstruction by the WPA (especially Mission San José), maintenance by both the Catholic Church and the State of Texas, and, more recently, support from the National Park Service. The latter has linked the four lower missions into a National Historical Park. The chapels at all four of the missions, moreover, are now active churches and those of San José and Espada are again administered by the Franciscan Order.
Table 3.7, Population of Texas Missions, 1731-1774.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places and Dates of Existence or Establishment</th>
<th>1731</th>
<th>1739</th>
<th>1740</th>
<th>1750</th>
<th>1760</th>
<th>1769</th>
<th>1770</th>
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<tr>
<td>M. S. A. de Valero 1718</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>126</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Purísima Concepción 1731</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>178</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M. San José 1720</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>*150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. San Juan Capistrano 1731</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>198</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M. S. F. de la Espada 1731</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>174</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Espíritu Santo 1722</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>*50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Rosario 1754</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>*50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. S. F. Xavier 1746-55</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M. San Ildoñez 1748-52</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Candelaria 1749-56</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>2,003</td>
<td>2,033</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>926</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X = Mission was not established at that time. * = Estimates. Sources: See Tables 3.2-3.5.

Graph 3.2, Population of Texas Missions, 1731-1774.

Aqueduct? What aqueduct?

Note that the Menchaca map of 1764 on the previous pages (full map and an enlarged section) shows a dam [stop 1], an acequia [stop 2] as part of the Mission Espada [stop 4] irrigation system, but no aqueduct [stop 3] over Piedras Creek, which is also not shown.

The first written description of an aqueduct here dates to 1772 and was provided by one Fray Saenz, who noted a:

"…conduit of lime and stone of thirty eight varas [105.5 feet]; six [16.6 feet] in height; with its diamond point, and two arches, which allow the currents of said creek to pass…" (Cox 1999:321)

This is clearly a description of the present aqueduct.

The disparity between the map of Menchaca and the description by Saenz has led to speculation that the present aqueduct was built sometime between 1764 and 1772, and that prior to then a less permanent aqueduct, something not unlike the "flumes" or “canoas” (hollowed-out split tree trunks supported by a wooden framework) common in northern New Mexico, was used.
Mission San José Today

Grist Mill was built when inhabitants began to eat more wheat than corn.
Operational 1794 and 1809
Reopened 2001

Granary was a warehouse and surplus storage.
Completed ca. 1755
Restored 1930s

Convento provided a residence for the missionary and lodging for visitors.
Completed ca. 1755
Addition ca. 1780s
Modified 1859-1868

Church was second permanent church built by mission inhabitants.
Completed ca. 1782
Restored 1930s

Spanish Colonial Bookstore

Indian Quarters
were homes for the families entering the mission.
Completed ca. 1755
Restored 1930s

Workshop foundations

Religious Gift Shop

Bastion gave protection against Indian attack.
Reconstructed 1930s

Indian Quarters
(open to the public)

North

18
6 Spanish Governor's Palace
105 Plaza de Armas - San Antonio, Texas 78205
210-224-0601 - www.spanishgovernorsparkle.org

The City of San Antonio purchased the historic property, traditionally known as the Spanish Governor's Palace, in 1929 and completed the restoration in 1930 during the formative years of historic preservation in the United States and during the height of the Spanish Colonial Revival movement of the 1920s and '30s. The restoration resulted in structure that was larger than the original building and incorporated an embellished, even romanticized, interpretation of the lives and activities of the families who lived here. This interpretation, although not historically correct, has now become part of the site's 260-year history. Plaques embedded in the walls in each room illustrate this early interpretation.

Research since then, however, has brought to light a different, more historically accurate account of the presidio and its inhabitants. Text panels in each room provide a comparison of the two interpretations.

Call to inquire about school tours, group discounts, or to reserve the courtyard for private parties.

HOURS:
Tuesday thru Saturday 9 AM—5 PM
Sunday 10 AM—5 PM
Closed New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Battle of Flowers Friday (in April), Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Call ahead for early closure days.

ADMISSION FEES:
Adults $4; Military/Seniors (60+) $3
Children age 7-13 $2; Children under 7 FREE

The Spanish Governor's Palace is owned and operated by the City of San Antonio, Downtown Operations Department.
6 PRESIDIO SAN ANTONIO DE BEJAR

The Presidio San Antonio de Bejar was established as the result of a rivalry between Spain and France in the early 1700s for dominance of the territory that is now a part of the southwestern United States. To guard against French encroachments into eastern Texas, military garrisons accompanied by mission churches were built along the Carava Real (Royal Road) from Coahuila in Mexico to Natchitoches in Louisiana. King Philip V of Spain ordered Don Martin de Alarcon, along with fifty soldiers, to build a mission and presidio at the headwaters of the San Antonio River and San Pedro Creek.

On May 5th 1718 Alarcon established the Presidio San Antonio de Bejar to protect the newly established Misión San Antonio de Valero.

(1) 1722 The Marquis de San Miguel de Aguayo, Governor of Coahuila and Tejas, abandoned the original site and relocated the Presidio to its present site in 1722. The Presidio, as envisioned by the Marquis, was to be a large square with pointed bastions at each corner. Based upon a letter from the Marquis to His Majesty in Spain, dated June 13 of the same year, 25,000 adobe bricks and 40 additional laborers were needed for the construction of the compound.

However, a tour of the region in 1744 by former Governor Tomas Felix de Winthuizen prompted Winthuizen to report that "a presidio as such did not exist, for only the poorly formed houses make up a square plaza, without any wall or stockade". One of these small houses served as the first home (and office) of the Captain of the Presidio.

(2) 1748 The keystone above the front entrance is marked with the coat-of-arms of Spanish King Ferdinand VI and the inscription "1749 as acabo" suggesting construction of this portion of the Presidio compound was finally completed in 1749 by new Captain Toribio de Urrutia.

The building traditionally called the Spanish Governor's Palace was the official Comandancia (residence and working office) for the Captain of the Presidio and now comprised four rooms: a bedroom in the original one-room "hacienda", an entrance, the family's main living area, and a separate office.

(3) 1763 The building was sold upon the death of Urrutia in 1763 to Captain Luis Antonio Menchaca who along with his son Jose Menchaca owned the building until 1834. During their residency a large dining room/kitchen was added to the rear of the bedroom and entrance and a room was added to the rear of the captain's office, most likely to enlarge his mercantile business.

Also in 1763, at the end of the French and Indian War and the elimination of the threat of French encroachment in East Texas, Spain's King Carlos III appointed the Marquis de Rubi to inspect the frontier presidios. Rubi's inspection resulted in the Royal Regulations of 1772 that ordered the capital of Spanish Texas be moved from the Presidio at Los Adaes, near Natchitoches in Louisiana, to the Presidio San Antonio de Bejar. Rubi's orders also stipulated that the Governor would move to San Antonio and take command of the presidio.

(4) 1804 The last captain to live in the Comandancia was Juan Ignacio Perez who purchased the building from Jose Menchaca in 1804. Perez also served as interim Governor in 1816. Perez and his descendants lived in the four-room residence through the late 1860s. The two-room office was also used as a shop by Captain Perez and later leased to other businesses.

By the late 1860s the surrounding neighborhood had changed from residential to commercial and the family moved to their ranch outside of town. They leased the building over the next 50 years as a residence and to various businesses such as a walled shop, a wholesale produce store, saloons, a clothing store, and a tire shop. A large room was added by one tenant behind what had been the family's main living area.

1915 In 1915 Ascensia Emilia De Zavala, early preservationist and granddaughter of the first Vice President of the Republic of Texas Lorenzo De Zavala, announced to the residents of San Antonio that the adobe building adjacent to City Hall was, in fact, the "Spanish Governor's Palace". Her 13-year campaign to save the historic property culminated in the City of San Antonio's purchase and restoration of the building in 1925-1932. Through Ascensia's efforts, the casa del Capitan, as it was referred to on all previous maps, would become a royal governor's palace.
Urrutia’s map of 1767

Menchaca’s map of 1764
¿Acequia o Arroyo?

Note that the maps on the previous page differ. Both show the San Antonio River. However, on the west side of the river, Urrutia’s 1767 map shows two irrigation canals and no arroyo, whereas Menchaca’s 1764 map shows an arroyo and no canal.

This confusion goes all the way back to the early explorations and the reason why this site was chosen for a presidio and mission.

On 5 April 1709, Fray Isidro de Espinosa, Fray Antonio de Olivaras, Captain Pedro de Aguirre and 14 soldiers left the Presidio San Juan Bautista on the Río Grande (south of present-day Piedras Negras/Eagle Pass) to reconnoiter central Texas. According to Espinosa’s diary, on 13 April:

"…dimos en una acequia de agua muy poblada de arboles que era suficiente para un pueblo, y toda llena de tomas de agua por estar alta la acequia y colgadas las tierras pusimosle por nombre el agua de S. Pedro." (Foster 1995:99)

"…we came to an irrigation ditch, bordered by many trees and with water enough to supply a town. It was full of taps or sluices of water, the earth being terraced. We named it San Pedro Spring." (Tous 1930:5)

Some scholars (Foster 1995:99, 302; Weber 1992:163) interpret this to mean that natives of the area not only were agricultural, but irrigated as well. Others (e.g., Doolittle 2000) argue otherwise, in part because no crops were mentioned. Most scholars (e.g., Almaráz 1989; de la Teja 1995) recognize it as simply a misidentification—Espinoza saw a spring-fed stream and thought it was an acequia; Urrutia did likewise, Menchaca didn't.

On another note, Isleños, or Canary Islanders who arrived in 1731 to found the civil settlement, are claimed by their descendants and one scholar (Glick 1972:29) to have built the first irrigation canal in San Antonio. In fact, however, construction on the first canal was carried out by presidio soldiers in 1718-19 (Castañeda 1936:96; Fox 1985:1).
A. Barracks
B. House of the captain
C. Guardhouse
D. Town square
E. Government building
F. Church

The Church of San Fernando before 1867 and after 1840s remodeling. Stereo view slide collection of Albert Steves. Source: the Witte Museum.
Table 3.6, Estimated Population of Texas Presidios and Towns, 1731-1774.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places</th>
<th>1731</th>
<th>1741</th>
<th>1748</th>
<th>1751</th>
<th>1756</th>
<th>1763</th>
<th>1769</th>
<th>1772</th>
<th>1774</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>E. Texas</td>
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<td>400</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>120</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Béxar</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>750</td>
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<td>Bahía</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>225</td>
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<td>300</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>425</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orcoqui.</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>105</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Totals</td>
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<td>2,075</td>
<td>2,265</td>
<td>2,145</td>
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X = The presidio or settlement was not established at that time. All of these numbers are estimates. Sources: See Table 3.1 and S1726; S1749; S1756; S1759; S1778; S1779; MAH1756; T3-T-2; T3-N-1.

Fig. 1—Principal plazas and surrounding blocks, San Antonio circa 1900. Sources: Corner 1890; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. 1892.

Fig. 2—Hispanic landscape districts in downtown San Antonio. Sources: Sologaistoa 1924; Federal Writers' Project 1938, 1939; Workers of the Writers’ Program 1941.

Star: Plaza de Armas, Cross: Cathedral, Dashed blue line: irrigation canal under Flores and Main streets, Yellow lines: side streets perpendicular to the old canal.
Suggested Additional Readings on San Antonio and its Cultural-Historical Landscapes


