

**Porciones 71 and 72, Hidalgo County**

By

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The shared borderlands between Mexico and the United States gave in to many land grants that were transmitted over to many individuals by the Spanish Crown in the mid-eighteenth century. Mostly all of these land grants were associated with the Rio Grande Valley due to the abundant water supplies that settlers needed to live off. In the separation of these land grants, numbers and names assigned many of the individual blocks. In establishing these blocks, many of the important families in South Texas were the ones that were able to receive land, as well as the colonist fighting in the frontier.

In trying to determine which portion my land belonged to, it was necessary to research who settled on it in the past decades and centuries. In order to determine this, a legal description of my land was needed to evaluate past dated documents that matched up. During my research, it was clear that my family was the one that owned the property in the most recent decades. My family has been living on the same property for about five decades now, so it was no surprise to see a long list of family relatives on documents that related to the same legal address. The only difficult part was trying to determine which relative was the one on the legal description.

Currently, Maricela Santillan, my biological mother, was the owner of *El Cahon Lots 1, 2, and W20 Lots 3 Block 3 City of San Juan, Hidalgo County, Texas (legal description)*. What was interesting was how this land was granted to Maricela Santillan. It was recorded in document as a Gift Deed by Maria L. Santillan, Maricela Santillan's Mother. The date that was recorded on the Gift Deed was said to be January 21, 2008. The legal description in the deed indicates that the Grantor was Ms. Maria L. Santillan and the official Grantee was Maricela Santillan. The permanent home address is 421 W. Mesquite St. San Juan, Texas 78589 Hidalgo County.

Before Maricela Santillan owned the property, the land was under Gilberto and Maria Santillan. The date in which they bought the land was on August 04, 1961. In the Warranty Deed it claims that Gilberto and his wife Maria Santillan bought the land for ten dollars and other good and valuable considerations. The legal property description in the search report came out as *El Cajon SUBD 1-3 0003*. The official Grantees on this document were Gilberto Santillan and wife Maria Santillan, my grandpa and grandma. The official Grantor's on this deed was Francisco Santillan and wife Elvira G. Santillan, my great-grandmother and great-grandfather.

Francisco and Elvira G. Santillan were the previous owners of this land. The land was first handed over to them on February 08, 1955 by Gilberto and Maria Santillan. What was ironic is that my grandparents, Gilberto and Maria Santillan, have a history or the Search Result Report as selling and buying the land over repletion of 3 different times. Gilberto and Maria were the official Grantors of *El Cajon SUBD 1-3 0003* in 1955.

On January 07, 1955, Maria and Gilberto bought the land for the first time. As the time line keeps regressing back, from my perspective, it seems to be that my grandparents couldn't afford the land so they bought it then sold it to their parents and when they were able to manage it again, they bought it back from my great-grandparents later on. The Grantors before the Santillan's ever got the land were John Elbers and Helena Janssen. The document indicates that Helena Janssen was a widow and executrix of the estate of Ubbe Janssen. The official Grantees were Maria Santillan and Gilberto Santillan, and the Grantors were John Elbers and Helena Janssen.

The following decade before Helena Janssen and John Elbers received the land, John Box was the Grantee in April 18, 1946. The official Grantors were H L Wilson and Nancy E Wilson.

It is really interesting when you find a friend who used to own your property before your family received it. John Box is a close friend to the Santillan's and what's fascinating is that the Box family has to relatives that are married to two of the Santillan relatives. Not such a big world after all. In this time frame, the legal description shifted a bit from *El Cajon SUBD 1-3 0003 to El Cahon SUBD 10-13 0006*. The reason for this shift is because H L Wilson bought a whole serration of lands ranging to an estimate of about 12.78 acres of land in Lots 16, Blks 6 and 7 of the Hammond and Fernandez Subdivision of porciones 71 and 72, Hidalgo County, Texas. The streets that were named on the El Cahon Subdivision were Chaparral, Leopard, Antelope, Buffalo, and Mesquite, which is still the name of the street that I live on. On the warranty deed, it illustrates that the property description changed to the terms *Multiple Tracts*. The reason for this is since the land was by a single owner and divided into many blocks, it was necessary not to characterize it into one single address. The map indicates three blocks going horizontal and three blocks going vertical. During the research over my land grant, this is where it got difficult to find the previous owners of the land. At this point my land was divided into different sections and the single property was owned by different people. It was important to research every owner and see where they had bought it from.

The day before H L Wilson and Nancy Wilson received the land, it was owned by John Elbers and Ubbe Janssen. The warranty deed indicates that H L Wilson and Nancy Wilson were the original Grantor's in 1946. It's really confusing that there are many relapse in the owners buying and selling their land to the same people. The land was passed on to friends of the family, bought back, and then sold to a third party of friends of the family. This porcion property seemed to get shifted between three main families which were The Santillan's, The Box's, and The Wilson's. As the Search Result Report indicates, the Wilson's owned the land for the first time in

the late 1940's but before they bought the land, it belonged to H W Bennett in November 1909. Since this was towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, the legal land description was named Porcion 71 & 72. H W Bennett was named the official grantee in the warranty document but the Grantor's were named Louisa Box, Lina Box, John Box, Josephine C Box, Porfirio Cavazos, Myona Box De Cavazos, David Bravo, Emma box De Bravo. So far, I have only been able to go back to the end of the nineteenth century. Because the land is subdivided into more blocks, with a lot more owners, it's becoming extremely difficult to find for past owners.

### *Citations*

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