

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas history

Rangers ambush Apaches at Hueco Tanks, now a State Historic Site

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On Jan. 29, 1881, a company of Texas Rangers ambushed a group of Guadalupe Apaches at Hueco Tanks, 30 miles east of El Paso.

Hueco, Spanish for hollow, refers to the hollows in the rocks that collect rainwater, which has long been one of the chief attractions in this arid land; around 1860 the tanks were capable of holding a year's supply of water.

Until about 1910, they furnished virtually the only water between the Pecos River and El Paso, and thus were a popular camping spot for Mescalero and Lipan Apache, Kiowa, Tigua and various other Native Americans.

An estimated 5,000 pictographs and a few petroglyphs are scattered in more than 50 sites throughout what is now Hueco Tanks State Historic Site.