

The Bandera PROPHECY

August 24, 2022

Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On this day in 1882, Ben Ficklin, the county seat of Tom Green County, was washed away.

In 1868 Maj. Benjamin F. Ficklin had purchased 640 acres on the South Concho, near the spring from which nearby Fort Concho hauled its drinking water. There he built the headquarters for his San Antonio-El Paso Mail line.

In 1873 a town was laid out a mile upriver from the site and named for him. The community became the county seat in 1875 and had some 600 inhabitants by 1879.

Heavy rains the night of Aug. 23, 1882, swelled Dove Creek, Spring Creek, the Middle Concho, and the South Concho, already high because of a wet summer, out of their banks. The water roared down on Ben Ficklin at midmorning Aug. 24 and destroyed the town.

On the flat, only the courthouse, the jail, and two houses remained standing. Up the hill, 15 houses and the schoolhouse remained. Sixty-five people were drowned. The town never recovered.

San Angelo became the county seat in 1883.