

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On this day in 1885, English nobleman Joseph Heneage Finch died on his ranch near Big Spring, Texas. Finch was associated with the prince of Wales and his high-living social set in the 1870s. Exiled from England after going through a notorious divorce, he settled in Texas in 1883.

Though initially unable to gain the acceptance of the local cowboy-cattlemen fraternity, the earl won them over in time by his generosity with his liquor, by his being introduced formally at roundup by a prominent cattleman, and by his pleasant personality. He spent his waking hours partying, drinking and hunting, to the neglect of his ranch and stock.

Although mysterious and remote, he became a valued and respected member of the community, for the frontiersmen did not pry into one's personal life. On Jan. 13, 1885, after hosting a two-week party that was spoken of in awe for years, he unexpectedly died. His hard drinking had apparently caught up with him.

Finch was a colorful example of the "remittance man," typically a wealthy European who for various reasons was exiled, to reform or to perish, to the remote regions of the world, where he regularly received money (remittances) from home.