

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1894, a water-well contractor accidentally discovered the Corsicana oilfield, the first in Texas to produce oil and gas in significant quantities, while seeking a new water source for the city of Corsicana. Civic leaders of Corsicana needed a dependable water supply to promote commercial development. They contracted with the American Well and Prospecting Company to drill three water wells.

The drillers took the first well to a depth of 1,027 feet, where they encountered oil. The first modern refinery in Texas, operated by the J. S. Cullinan Company, opened at the field in 1898.

During its first century of operation, the field produced about 44 million barrels of oil; annual production peaked in 1900 at more than 839,000 barrels. The Corsicana field established the potential for commercial oil production in Texas; the industry has had incalculable effects on the state's subsequent development, public revenue, and culture.