

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas  
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1837, pioneer Cumberland Presbyterian ministers Sumner Bacon, Amos Roark, and Mitchell Smith began the Texas Presbytery at Bacon's home.

Bacon, born in Massachusetts in 1790, traveled as a young man to Arkansas, where he was converted at a Cumberland revival meeting and decided to become a minister. Because he lacked even a basic grasp of grammar and spelling, the Cumberland Presbytery of Arkansas asked him to spend two years improving his education before applying for a license to preach, but he went instead to Texas as a freelance itinerant evangelist in 1829.

Since Catholicism was the legally required religion of the territory, Bacon did his preaching surreptitiously. In 1833, the American Bible Society commissioned Bacon as its first regular agent in Texas.

In the summer of 1836, he organized the first Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas near San Augustine. Due to poor health, Bacon's leadership in church activities diminished after 1837, although he did serve as the first moderator of the Cumberland Synod of Texas in 1843. He died in 1844.

Although Bacon was not the first Protestant to preach in Texas, evidence indicates that he was the first resident Protestant evangelist to maintain a continuous ministry in the new territory.