



Jessie Margaret Herring and C. T. Herring

lay just west of the Indian nations.

While in Ft. Worth, the Colonel met Miss Elizabeth "Birdie" Smithey, a native of Missouri. They were married on September 23, 1889, in Vernon, Texas. They had no children; however, "Birdie" Herring did adopt a niece, Imogene Smythe, who became Mrs. Jay L. Taylor in 1927.

"By the late 1880s, Colonel Herring realized much of the good grazing land was controlled by the Indians north of the Red River," Coney said. "During that period he ran cattle out of Oklahoma and Kansas all the way to the Canadian border. During the drives, he continually lost several head to marauding Indians when they stopped for the night. Since he'd become a good friend of Comanche Chief Quanah Parker the Colonel decid-

ed it would be better to make the Chief a partner and stop the loss of cattle and horses. Tales are told of cow-hands seeing Herring and Parker riding together, inspecting their herd.

"In 1884, Herring leased 41,667 acres from the Comanche, Kiowa and Apache tribes of Oklahoma. Eventually, he leased about 175,000 acres of that land. He also moved 3,000 head of cattle into the Indian Territory in 1884. By 1895, the herd had grown to some 20,000 head on

the land bordered on the west by the North Fork of the Red River. Herring and Parker had become more than partners, they had become friends and it's reported they worked together even after Oklahoma became a state."

"Also, Parker often ate at the Colonel's house," Janie continued. "Elizabeth was known for her fine biscuits and Quanah particularly liked them. The Chief enjoyed listening to Elizabeth play the piano and the story goes that he offered the Colonel ten Paint ponies for Elizabeth. Although a handsome price in the Chief's opinion, the Colonel politely declined his offer."

By 1888 the Indians were banished from the Panhandle and that began the real influx of cattlemen into the region. Herring was well established as a leader when the Fort Worth and Denver came through Potter County and made Amarillo the railroad center for the area's cattle industry. People arriving from the East had never seen such large expanses of land and prairies. Huge ranches were formed here, many still existing today. The Colonel purchased the Herring Ranch from two brothers named DeGraffenreid, who lived on Big Creek in a dugout outside of Stinnett. The ranch had the



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Hauling supplied to the LS Ranch Headquarters.