

Kleberg—La Puerta Ranch, Agua Dulce

Minerva King Patch—The h. K. brand that was used by the firm of R. King, Jas. Walworth & Mifflin Kenedy was an established brand in 1857 and became known by the old timers as Henrietta's brand. It was selected as the brand for the R. King Co. in 1860. The brand was finally turned over to Capt. & Mrs. King's son Richard King at the La Puerta Ranch.

The house had been lighted by gas from its own carbide plant. The kitchen and dining room were in an outbuilding. Pine and cypress from this building were utilized when a new interior kitchen was installed in the main house. Wicker furniture. Upstairs, rugs were made from deer and impala skins. Cowhide rugs on the first floor. An octagonal attached house at the rear of the dwelling contained a cistern. Episcopla Bishop James Steptoe Johnston used to journey to Agua Dulce to conduct special services at the ranch house. Maids and a gardner who liv at La Puerta are descendants of families who were employed by Captain King. Their dearly loved grandmother Mathews lived with them much of the time and Minerva combed and brushed her beautiful gray hair while they had long conversations.

The ranch was its own self-sustaining community. Meat—beef, lam, mutton, and poultry were butchered there. The meat was hung to cool in a small screened house, then cut for cooking and put on ice. 100 lb. blocks were ordered probably from Collins, Texas. Later ice and groceries were ordered by phone from Corpus Christi. There was always a garden for fresh vegetables. At one time the Kings had an English gardener who not only tended the vegetable garden by kept the yard beautiful with shrubs and flowers There were cooks who kept the good and hearty meals ready all hours. The original house was destroyed by fire in 1900. One cook was a negro man named Walter Rem and his wife Millie was Minerva's nurse. Another cook was Sarah Almaguer and her husband she called "my old man" He was assigned the duty of making mayonnaise and had only a fork for a beater so it took a lot of time. The laundress was always busy with keeping linens and clothing washed and ironed. Catholic priest came for the Mexican workers.

It was at their grandmother Matthews where Lizzie and Richard were married.