



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

## Meet the Originals

*Texas Originals* is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Henrietta Chamberlain King. Then, answer questions about it.

### Henrietta Chamberlain King 1832–1925

Henrietta Chamberlain King helped build one of the nation's largest ranches and established institutions now central to life in South Texas. Born in Missouri in 1832, King moved to Brownsville with her family as a young woman. There she met her future husband, Richard, an unschooled riverboat pilot with dreams of establishing a cattle ranch on the Santa Gertrudis Creek.

When the newlyweds settled on land southwest of Corpus Christi, King proved equal to the challenges of running a ranch. She took charge of the housing, health care, and education of the ranch hands and their families, all while raising her own five children.

Following her husband's death in 1885, Henrietta assumed ownership of the King Ranch, now a half-million-acre spread that was half a million dollars in debt. With her son-in-law Robert Kleberg, she steered the estate out of the red, expanded its holdings, and oversaw the development of pioneering techniques in cattle breeding, irrigation, and land management.

Over the next four decades, King donated land for the towns of Kingsville and Raymondville. She also gave property for what became Texas A&M University-Kingsville and the Spohn Hospital in Corpus Christi.

When King died in 1925, her ranch comprised more than a million acres. At her funeral, two hundred King Ranch vaqueros circled her grave on horseback, tipping their hats in a gesture of respect and farewell.

**Check for Understanding:** Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Henrietta Chamberlain King. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Where did Henrietta and Richard King establish their ranch?
2. How large was the King Ranch when Henrietta died?

**Going Further:** Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Taking a Position.** Of the many things that King did for her ranch and community, which do you think made the most impact on Texas?