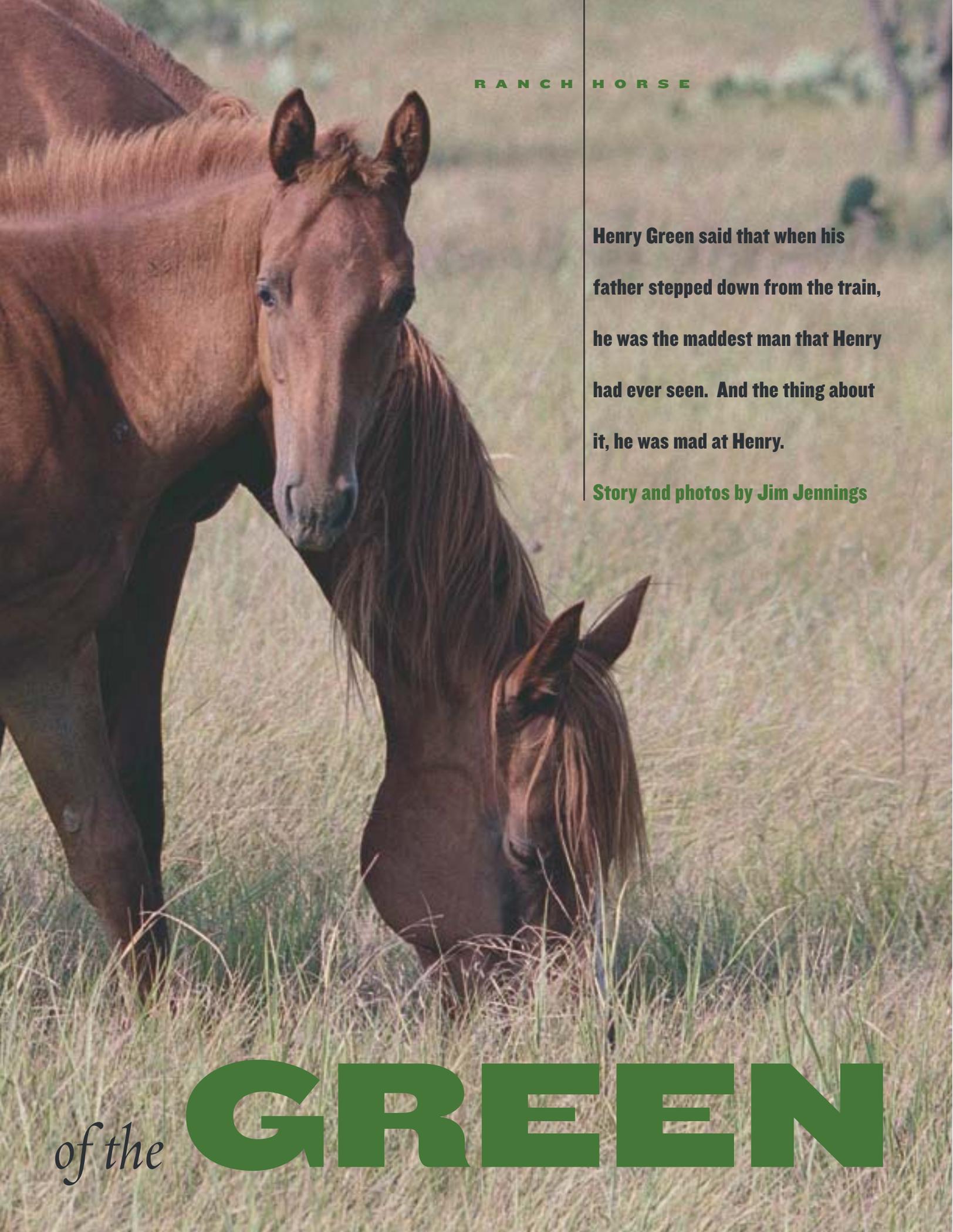


*The* HORSES



R A N C H   H O R S E

**Henry Green said that when his father stepped down from the train, he was the maddest man that Henry had ever seen. And the thing about it, he was mad at Henry.**

**Story and photos by Jim Jennings**

*of the*

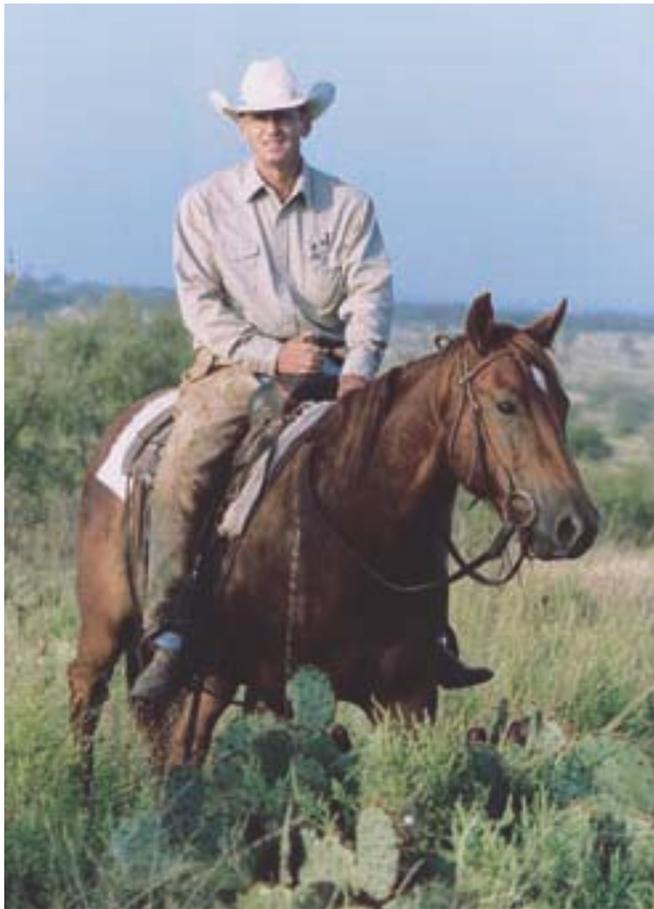
**GREEN**

THOMAS GREEN WAS A CONFEDERATE VETERAN WHO, IN 1885, lived and ranched in central Texas, near Hillsboro. He also was running some horses – mares, colts and geldings – on the open range in Stephens County, about 150 miles northwest of Hillsboro. The land on which Green's horses were running actually belonged to the Texas Emigration and Land Company through an old agreement with the state dating back to the 1840s. But it was open range, and pretty well anyone who wanted to was grazing it. Caring for the horses was an old cowboy who lived in a dugout not too far from Albany, the Stephens county seat.

But now the old caretaker sent word to Green that the TE and L company was selling off the land and it was being fenced. The open range days were quickly coming to a close. Green sent his son, Henry, who had just graduated from Trinity College, to round up the horses and sell them, and return with the money. Henry got the horses gathered, and sold them, but he liked the area around Albany so much that he spent the money on leasing some land. He then wrote his father and told him what he had done.

A few days later, the old caretaker rode into Henry's camp with a sheet of paper in his hand. It was a telegram from Henry's father, telling Henry to meet the train in Albany the next day. His father would be on it.

"He finally convinced his father to ride out with him and look at the land," Billy Green said of his grandfather, Henry, "and the farther they went, the more his father calmed down. Finally, he offered to help his son stock the land with cattle.



**Billy says he's raising ranch horses. Even those who might end up in the cutting arena, like this 2-year-old son of Hickorys Lowenbrau out of a daughter of Sonitalena, start out roaming the pastures and working cattle.**

The land my grandfather leased, and then bought, is the land our family is ranching on today."

Billy is William Henry Green III, named for his grandfather and his dad. The ranch is the W.H. Green Cattle Company, and it was recently named the 2002 winner of the AQHA/Bayer Best Remuda Award. The Green remuda is one of the best.

## The Horses

"I GUESS MAYBE THE FACT THAT MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER HAD all those horses here has stayed in the blood of my family," Billy says, sitting across the dinner table from his uncle, Bob Green, who nods in agreement. Bob, like Billy's father, inherited a part of the ranch that Henry established, but it's Billy who has carried on with the horse breeding. Billy's father died in 1994 and left Billy his part of the ranch, on which he runs about a thousand mother cows and another 2,000 stockers. He also has 15 broodmares and says, "I've always liked horses, and I've always wanted to raise them."

It was probably those family genetics that caused Billy to drive over to Seymour to a ranch cutting one day in 1983. He had never been to a cutting, so he thought he would go see what it was all about.

"There was a man there by the name of Glen Bruton, who worked for the Four Sixes Ranch. He won the cutting on a 4-year-old yellow stud, but he was going to have to sell him. The Four Sixes didn't want one of their cowboys riding a stud. I bought him."

The stallion's name was Golden Three Bars. He was by Gold Finger Bar out of Lemac Jan by Dan's Sugar Bars, and Billy quickly decided that he was the best horse he had ever ridden.

"A friend of mine, Jim Trammel, told me one time that if you could find one good producing mare, that would be the best thing you could have in the horse business. So I thought, 'Well, this is the best horse I have ever had, so I'm going to see if I can find his mother. She should sure be a good producing mare.'"

Billy found Lemac Jan and bought her. And he was right about her being a good producing mare. With six of her daughters in his broodmare band, she put Billy in the horse business in a big way. She produced some great ranch horses, and some of her foals made him a competitor in the National Cutting Horse Association.

"When I brought Lemac Jan home," he says, "I was still interested in cutting, and Doc Bar was the hot bloodline at the time. Carol Rose had Genuine Doc, and I decided to spend the money to breed her to him."

Billy named the resulting foal Genuine Jan. When the filly was 2, he broke her. When she was 3, he began to use her a little in the pasture, riding through some cattle and just generally giving her some experience. He realized early on that she had some talent.

"We were calving heifers," Billy says. "What we do is pull all the heifers up in a corner and cut out the heavy springers (cows about to calve), and put them in a trap to watch. I was riding this filly, and on her own, she started rating those cows. When the cow stopped, she would stop, and then she would turn back with the cow. I had never ridden one that would work a cow like that, especially a horse that young. Well, I had always wanted a cutting horse, and I thought I just might have one."

Not knowing a whole lot about cutting horses, Billy enlisted a little help from friends Tom Merriman and Lonnie Morris, both of whom rode Genuine Jan and helped Billy learn to ride cutting horses. Then, he sent her to trainer David Holdsford.



Henry Green, who works daily with his father, Billy, is the fourth in his family to carry the name. It was his great-grandfather, Henry, who established the ranch.



**Hickorys Lowenbrau is by High Brow Hickory and out of the mare that started Billy in the horse business, Lemac Jan. The 10-year-old stallion has earned more than \$70,000 in the cutting arena. Billy still uses "Lowenbrau" in competition, but he also uses him on the ranch to work cattle.**

Holdsford agreed that the mare was a good one, and entered her in the NCHA Classic/Challenge in 1992. Holdsford split seventh and eighth in the open competition, but Billy won the amateur division on her.

"In the meantime, we had been breeding Lemac Jan to some local stallions, but when we saw what she produced out of Genuine Doc, we knew we needed to be breeding her to some better horses. So the next year we went back to Genuine Doc."

In succeeding years, Billy also bred her to High Brow Hickory and Sonitalena, and the foals of both did well in the cutting arena. Then he took her to Haidas Little Pep. From that breeding he got Haidas Jan.

"She was another one of those that I could tell by riding her in the pasture that she was going to be a good one," Billy says. "We rode her on the ranch until she was about 4, and

then I took her down to Greg Welch's place. Greg didn't start showing her until she was 5, but she did really well. She's the best one we've ever raised."

Welch is a leading cutting horse trainer. Under his direction, Haidas Jan earned more than \$150,000 in NCHA competition. In 1999, she won the NCHA Bonanza Classic, and in 2000, she was reserve champion at the Bonanza and at the NCHA Super Stakes.

"She's retired now," Billy says. "We bred her to Snorty Lena, and she's got her first colt this year. Greg was showing Snorty Lena at the same time he was showing our mare, Haidas Jan, and he won over a hundred thousand on him. I've got her down at Tom Ryan's at Millsap, Texas. He and his wife take care of mares for people. I just couldn't make myself bring her back here and turn her out in these prickly

pear and cactus. Her colt is probably the best one we have.”

Lemac Jan's breeding to High Brow Hickory produced Hickorys Lowenbrau, a 1992 stallion that Billy is using in his breeding program today and still showing some. Randy Rollins broke the stallion, and then Welch showed him. As a 6-year-old, Billy showed him in the amateur division at the 1998 NCHA Classic/Challenge.

“Greg was doing so well with him I just couldn't stand it,” Billy says, “so I showed him in that same cutting I had won before. We were leading up until the last horse, but he went in there and beat us. We got reserve.”

Hickorys Lowenbrau so far has NCHA earnings of more than \$70,000. All of Lemac Jan's produce have, up to now, cumulatively earned more than \$250,000. Her grandsons and granddaughters have already earned more than \$63,000.

“It was never my intention to raise those kinds of horses,” Billy says. “We are breeding for ranch horses. I don't want a horse that I can't ride on this ranch. Part of our ranch is rocks and hills, and you've got to have a good-boned, stout horse that will carry you. I just wouldn't feel good about breeding something that wouldn't do that. But I've always felt that if you were going to progress, you need to breed to a stallion that's better than the mare.”

“I didn't have the money to go to the best stallions, but that mare (Lemac Jan) made up for it. A mare like that will make anyone look good. And it's been a big plus and a lot of fun to have these cutting horses. It's added a lot of spice to life, and I love it. To feel that horse move underneath you is one of the greatest feelings in the world.”

## The Ranch

ALMOST A DOZEN COWBOYS MOVE THROUGH THE DARK AS THEY catch horses and begin to saddle. Away from the light spilling from the saddle house door, only the occasional glow of a cigarette bobbing up and down can be seen. Breakfast was an hour before, and sunup is almost an hour and a half away.

Billy had originally planned for everyone to haul their horses to the backside of the pasture, but changed his mind. “I think we'll just trot back there,” he says. “It'll be good for the horses, and it'll be light by the time we get there.” Riding out with Billy is his wife, Liz, and his son, Henry –

he being the fourth in line to carry the name. Both Liz and Henry work very closely with Billy on the ranch. The three of them, along with everyone else on the cowboy crew, is riding a Green-bred horse. And several of the horses can be traced back to Lemac Jan.

The Greens run approximately 1,000 cows. In addition, most years they also buy and pasture about 2,000 yearling calves, called stockers, which they run throughout the winter. Their cows are bred to calve in the fall, and they wean and ship the calves in the late spring and early summer.

Grass is good on the Green ranch this year, but it's not always that way. They are coming out of about a three-year drought. This time last year it wasn't very pretty. As a matter of fact, conditions were so bad that some soil conservationists estimated that it might take the area two to three years to recover. But rains fell during the summer at just the right time, and now the Greens find themselves going into winter in good shape.

“The number of stockers we run really depends upon the condition of the pastures,” Billy says. “That's something I learned from my dad and my uncle Bob. If you don't stock all your country with cows, when you have a drought you just don't buy any yearlings. That way you may not have to sell your cows.”

“Normally, those stockers can really do good in the winter in this country. If it rains, there is something green here all winter. They can kind of hold their own through the winter, and when spring gets here, they will really gain.”

This morning they are gathering cows and calves in a 2,500-acre pasture. The calves will be branded and vaccinated, and the bull calves castrated, and then turned back out with their mothers. Also, dry cows, those that didn't calve this year, are cut out to be sold, which gives Billy a chance to work his horse. He's riding Hickorys Lowenbrau, one of his successful cutting horses. But he's also a good ranch horse. 🐾

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*The Best Remuda Award was created by AQHA and Bayer to recognize the outstanding foundation that ranch horses have laid for the American Quarter Horse industry. Nominations for the 2003 Best Remuda Award will be accepted until December 2. For more information, contact Dondra Lanham at [dlanham@aqha.org](mailto:dlanham@aqha.org) or (806) 376-4888, Ext. 411.*



Some of these horses have been shown in cutting, and some are still headed that direction, but all are continuously used on the ranch.