



• Rush's Appaloosas master the "cantankerous" Bison when it's branding time on the Wichita Wildlife Refuge.

brought the longhorns to Mexico in 1521. Coronado and others who took cattle along on their explorations in the Southwest were responsible for their spread. Those that escaped were the basis for the wild herds which later developed. Longhorns reached their peak of popularity for beef in the 1880's. An estimated 10 million longhorns were drained off the Texas ranges and driven northward to market between 1866 and 1890. Many of these trail herds passed close to the Wichita Refuge. Ranchers, viewing the lush grasslands of the Indian Territory, may have been instrumental in the eventual opening of the land to settlement and statehood. After the introduction of better strains of beef cattle in the southwest at the turn of the century, the popularity of the longhorns dwindled. In 1927, the Forest Service was hard-put to round up animals for the proposed Wichita herd but eventually found 27 suitable longhorns. An old story . . . ?

Many breeders who like Appaloosa horses also like spotted dogs, spotted cattle, and even spotted poultry. Some of the Longhorns have spotted coat patterns that rival a well marked Appaloosa. Frank Rush believes that a lot of Appaloosa horse owners may be interested in wanting Longhorn cattle. He reports that they will be available at the annual auction at Meers in September.