

Walter Thomas West was born October 11, 1911, the middle child and only son of Clyde and Rachel West of Trinidad.. Walt and his two sisters, Vivian and Audrey, grew up in and around Trinidad. Now, Vivian West Smith lives in Kremmling, Colorado, and Audrey West McDonald lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Walt grew up in a close-knit family; while attending Trinidad High School, from which Walt graduated in 1930, he worked for his grandfather at the Crask and West Tin Shop. Walt also worked at the Trinidad Creamery, and that job really paid off - it was then that he met Ruth Furu, to whom he was married in 1936.

Walt and Ruth left the country for a try at city living soon after they married - they moved to Pueblo, where Walt was employed by the C & W Railroad as a breakman. They stayed in Pueblo for four years, but the call of the peaceful country life was too strong in them; they soon moved back near Trinidad, to the home and land which they loved and worked for the next 36 years. Walt continued to work for the C & W Railroad at the Allen Line, and there he established many life-long friendships. But Walt was the happiest on his weekends, doing the job he loved best: Ranching. Walt loved working with animals and working the land, and when he retired from the railroad in 1976, ranching became his full-time occupation.

During this time of growing and changing for Walt, his family was growing and changing also, ever larger and closer together. Ruth and Walt were blessed with three sons - Tom, Eric, and Tim - who shared their parents' love of the land and of ranching. Walt and Ruth formed a working partnership with their growing sons, and the West Ranch was born. As the boys grew and married, the West Ranch also grew, almost as if to accommodate the new lives. Tom and Judy, and then Eric and Mariea, moved to West land near Hoenne, while Ruth and Walt, and later Tim and Lewana remained on the Northfork. Soon, Walt and Ruth had acquired two beautiful grandchildren - Kit and Marika children of Tom and Judy. And even though the four families were divided by almost 40 miles, the business and their mutual love for the work they were doing, the animals for which they