

James E. (Jim) Irvine

August 21, 1918 – October 27, 2014

Funeral services for James E. "Jim" Irvine, 96, were held on Thursday, Oct. 30, at the First Christian Church in Wheatland with Pastor David Dick and Pastor Delbert Dick officiating. Interment will be in the family plot in the Wheatland Cemetery.

James E. Irvine "Jim", Wheatland, was born Aug. 21, 1918 on the Wheatland flats to James "Jimmy" and Bessie (Memmer) Irvine. He passed from this life Monday, Oct. 27. The Irvine family including younger sister Francel spent a few of Jim's earliest years in Hallick Canyon. From there the family soon moved to the Slate Creek ranch where they remained.

As a reminder of their Irish heritage, during the 1930s Jimmy built a rock wall around the house and yard using rocks that Jim and Francel hauled using a stone boat. The wall remains today.

In 1936, at age 18 he was the youngest cowboy to ride on the last roundup off the Laramie plains when the open range days were coming to an end. Previously Jim had only helped bring cattle home from the roundup. He started on the North Laramie with seven or eight saddle horses - one for his bedroll - and then worked and sorted on the west side of the plains. He helped gather and sort for about three weeks with the ranch crews. He recalled sorting about 5,000 cows - mostly branded - in three days at Big Springs. He remembered roping and "picking brands" on some that had blotchy or bad brands.

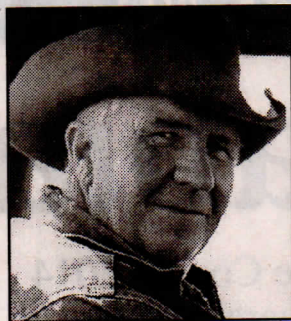
When riding with Francel, Jim packed a spoon in his chaps pocket and stopped at a sheepherders' wagon once in a while for something to eat. They would share a can of tomatoes or beans for a meal.

Jim was drafted into the United States Army, but a physical revealed a concern with his heart and he was not accepted. An excellent carpenter, Jim built Army barracks as a union member at Camp Pendleton in California before he was married.

On July 9, 1941, Jim married Ruth Margaret Chase in Cheyenne, Ruth's Aunt Vi and Uncle Frank served as witnesses. The newlyweds resided in Monterey, Calif., for a short time and returned to ranch in Wyoming the remaining 73 years of their marriage.

Jim and Ruth bought a place in 1943. Their son Glen Alan was born that same year and Sharon Carol came along in 1948.

In 1949, ever the mindful rancher, Jim gathered his cows into the calving shed as a three day blizzard set in. He spent all of one day shoveling



snow from the creek to give the cows a chance to drink one at a time. The snowdrifts were big enough to allow the saddle horse to walk on the granary roof.

Jim enjoyed riding a good saddle horse but didn't ride after he broke his pelvis in a horseback accident in 1973. His favorite mount was a gray horse named Pepper. "They say you only get one good horse, one good

dog and one good woman, and I've had one of each."

In later years, Glen joined the family operation and the ranch grew.

Jim enjoyed working with Glen and his family and was proud of the condition of the ranch and the quality of the cattle they produced as a team.

A passionate but patient card player, Jim never turned down the chance for a hand of pinochle or any card game.

He tended a productive garden, fed laying chickens, milked a cow and kept a nice yard. He had several special dogs in his life, and was rarely seen in his pickup without one.

Children were special to Jim. Each of the generations cherishes the memories of his silly jokes, his kind words and his gentle demeanor.

Jim was preceded in death by his father, Jimmy, on Sept. 8, 1969 and mother, Bessie, on Jan. 8, 1988, his sister, Francel (Irvine) Rietz, on Aug. 2, 2005, and his son, Glen, on July 30, 1994.

He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Ruth, Wheatland, his daughter Sharon (Les) Longwood, Lemmon, S.D.; daughter-in-law Mary (Sumnick) Irvine, Wheatland, grandchildren and great-children, Duncan (Brady), Curran and Logen, Wheatland; Jason, Wheatland, and children Shaya, Cheyenne, and Chase, Casper; Amanda (Neal) Sorenson, Cole and Chance, Arvada; Laura (Jared) Lahr, James and Ella, Morrison, Colo., Carrie (Jeremy) Stadheim, Pitch, Kyan, Kinley, Stone, Rainn, Reeder, N.D.; and Erin (Luke) Stadheim, Cora and baby girl on the way, Reeder, N.D.

Memorials can be given to Slater Hall, Palmer Canyon Fire Rural Fire Department or the charity of the giver's choice in Jim's memory.

Serving as pallbearers are Duncan Irvine, Jason Irvine, Neal Sorenson, Jared Lahr, Jeremy Stadheim, and Luke Stadheim.

The Gorman Funeral Homes - Platte Chapel of Wheatland, Wyoming is in charge of the arrangements.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.gormanfh.com