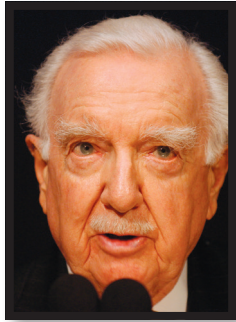


# WALTER CRONKITE

Walter Cronkite was a newspaperman and broadcaster who earned his reputation as “The Most Trusted Man in America.”



Walter Cronkite  
Photo by Bill Ingalls, NASA

Walter Cronkite was one of the first broadcast journalists on American television. His high journalistic standards and his ability to communicate complicated events to the general television audience made him a familiar and trusted figure to millions of American viewers.

Walter Leland Cronkite Jr. was born on Nov. 4, 1916, in St. Joseph, Mo. He spent much of his early life in Kansas City. Though he would go on to travel the world, Cronkite remained proud of his Missouri roots and always considered Kansas City his home.

In 1927, Cronkite’s family moved to Houston. He worked on the staff of the school newspaper, played piano, competed in various sports, joined the Boy Scouts, kept a paper route for the *Houston Post*, rode with cowboys at a local ranch, and even built his own neighborhood telegraph network.

He was inspired to become a journalist by a professional newspaperman who volunteered at his high school. Cronkite edited the school newspaper and won a state journalism contest. He then took a summer job with the *Houston Post* as a copy boy, delivery boy, and occasional cub reporter who wrote small summaries of social functions. After graduation, he enrolled at the University of Texas in Austin.



Cronkite at CBS.  
Photo by Thomas J. O’Halloran

Cronkite left college in 1935 to join the *Houston Press* full time. The next year he took a job at a radio station in Kansas City, where he met his future wife, Mary Elizabeth “Betsy” Maxwell,

an advertising copywriter from the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

In 1937 Cronkite went to work at the United Press (UP) telegraph news agency, eventually becoming bureau chief in Kansas City and a war reporter during World War II.

After the war, Cronkite took his first television job covering news in Washington, DC, for a group of Midwestern stations. In 1950, he joined the new CBS television network.

Cronkite anchored coverage of nearly every political convention and national election for the next 30 years. He also interviewed every U.S. president from Truman to Reagan.

In 1962, Cronkite became the anchorman and managing editor for the *CBS Evening News*, a position he held until he retired in 1981. His news program became the one most watched in America.

When Cronkite died in 2009, a large memorial service was held in New York before his body was returned home to Kansas City.

Walter Cronkite is considered one of the greatest television anchormen of all time. He won many awards for journalistic excellence. He was the first living person inducted into the Hall of Famous Missourians in the Missouri State Capitol. In 1981, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Perhaps Walter Cronkite’s greatest accomplishment was helping to create a set of journalistic standards for television news.

— Biography courtesy of  
The State Historical Society of Missouri



Cronkite interviewing military personal during the Vietnam War.



The Presidential Medal of Freedom