

## TRIBUTE TO AND MEMORIES OF FATHER

by Dale

It is with pleasure that I pay tribute to my Father, James Alvin Criddle on the occasion of his 80th birthday. I am grateful that he has written his life history, and that I have had the privilege of sharing his history with him with the exception of his first 24 years. It has been a great experience for me to have shared these many years with him. I can never thank him enough for all that he has given to me and at this time I will try to record a few of the many experiences that I have had with Dad.

Father has always been an exemplary man. I was truly born of goodly parents for which I shall be eternally grateful. Who knows what kind of a person I would have been if I had not been raised in a home where the Gospel of Jesus Christ was taught and lived. I am sure that I would have gone the ways of the world in many respects if it had not been for the teachings and example of my parents.

Father taught me the Gospel both by precept and example. He didn't send me to church, but he took me to church. We didn't find excuses not to go, but it was just part of our life to go. We had a car to go to church in Cambridge in the summer, as far back as I can remember, but in the wintertime, I remember going to church in a sleigh. We had the three hour block plan many years ago as we would meet first in Sunday School, then a priesthood class, then Sacrament meeting. Many of the speakers for Sacrament meeting were invited to speak just before the meeting was to begin, so most of the talks were extemporaneous, but were inspirational.

Father taught me to be honest at all times. One lesson I have never forgotten was that as a young boy, I had a chore of feeding the pigs. One day, I was negligent, and when father came home, after

being away part of the day, I was asked if I had fed the pigs. Fearing punishment, I lied and said that I had. It was obvious from the actions of the pigs that they had not been fed, so I received one of the few strappings I remember and a lesson I have never forgotten.

My father taught me love by the interest and care he showed for me. When I went to the University of Idaho at Moscow in 1942, the United States was engaged in World War II. I wasn't sure whether I would be able to come home for Christmas, but Dad was determined to see me even if he had to put a barrel of gas in the back of the car and come. However, I was able to come home on the train. Starting at that time for the many years while I was away from home while in the service, mission, and college, he or Mother wrote to me faithfully every week while I was away from home. I have never forgotten when I left on the train while in the Service seeing the tears run down my Father's cheeks.

I was taught to work hard at an early age. As I remember now, I always had chores, bringing in kindling, wood, and coal at an early age. As soon as I was strong enough, I had pigs and calves to feed, and when older, there were horses to care for, and cows to milk and feed. When about 11 years of age, I always got up before light to get on old Darky and get the horses off the mountain while Dad did the milking in the morning. I had cows to milk every night and morning. Regardless of how late I stayed up the night before, the cows had to be milked regularly, usually at 6:00, night and morning. His favorite saying when we complained about getting up in the morning after being out late the night before was, "If you



dance, you have to pay the fiddler."

I was taught the facts of life, and the importance of living a clean life while milking the cows and working side by side with my dad. For this, I am grateful because many mistakes have been made because someone was not taught.

I don't believe the youth of today realize how hard we had to work in the "olden" days. Putting up the hay was a very strenuous task. I started early riding the derrick horse, then tromping the hay. Although small of stature, I felt I was doing a man's work when in high school. I weighed less than 120 pounds when I graduated from high school, but was able to pitch and stack hay all day alongside dad. Many days we would milk and do the chores, then pile hay all day and do the milking and evening chores, then go pile hay again in the cool of the evening until dark. We learned to keep on working even though we were tired.

My father encouraged me to gain an education, and helped when needed until I graduated from Brigham Young University. He always showed an interest in my school work and expressed encouragement and praise to earn A's in my classes.

Father has always practiced thrift and hard work. Because of these traits, he was able to keep his farm during the depression, and eventually became one of the more prosperous farmers in the valley. He taught us that we should learn to distinguish between our wants and needs. I remember that once while I was in high school, I was going to an evening athletic event and invited him to accompany me. I thought that he was coming, but all of a sudden he changed his mind. I didn't find out until later that he went to

his room to see if he had a dime for the adult admission charge, but not finding one, decided to stay home. How many of us have gone without something we wanted for the lack of a dime?

Father taught that we should love and appreciate our wives. He has told us that he didn't love one wife more than another, but because of losing his first wife, he was able to better appreciate his other wives. He has truly been an exemplary husband in this regard.

I believe that it has been a great opportunity for me to have been the oldest child in father's family. I have been able to share his many experiences, plus most of the other experiences related by brother and sisters. Having read most of their memories as written for this occasion, I am not repeating them as remembered by myself. Being the only member of the family to come back home to run the farm, it has been a special privilege for me to associate with my father all of these many years. I respect his wisdom and knowledge. He still enjoys going to the farm, and particularly enjoys driving my big four wheel drive tractor. He still knows the quickest and best way to work a field, fix the fence, or solve any of the problems associated with farming. His counsel and advice are appreciated and sought after. His ability to preach a sermon, give a funeral talk, or give counsel are truly inspirational.

It is with sincere appreciation that I pay tribute to my father for his great love and kindness, his exemplary example and teachings, his faith and testimony of the truthfulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and his help and advice. He has truly been



the most influential man in my life, and I thank him with all of my heart.

It is my sincere prayer that my father might enjoy good health and strength, an alert mind, and the comforts and necessities of life until the time comes that he might peacefully return to his Heavenly Home.