

Follow Your



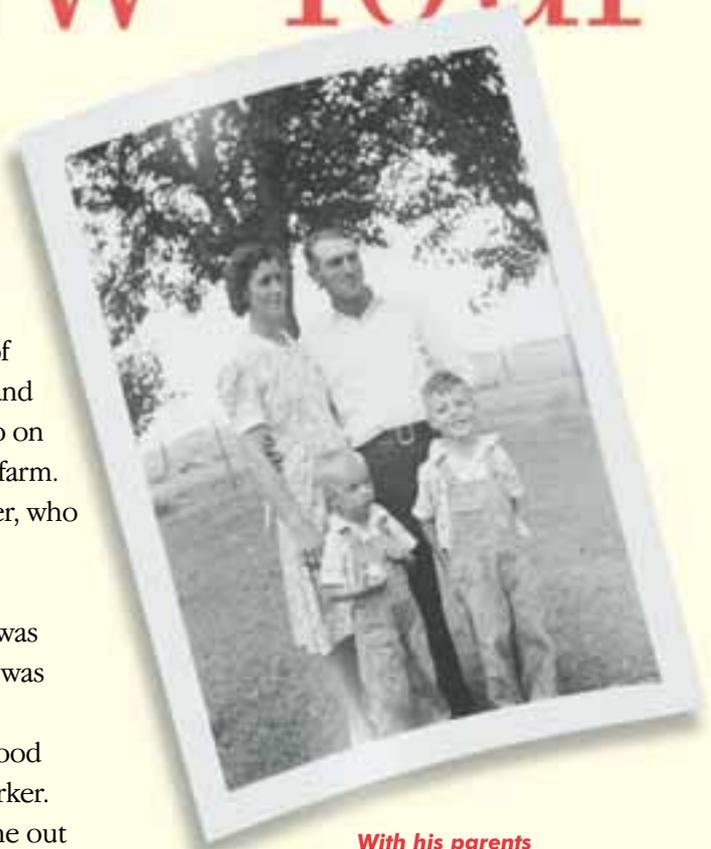
From an interview with Elder D. Rex Gerratt of the Seventy, currently serving in the Philippines Area Presidency; by Callie Buys

Our leaders were mighty men in the faith of the Lord; and they taught the people the ways of the Lord (Jarom 1:7).

When I was a little boy my father was not a member of the Church. He was born and raised in Iowa, then traveled to Idaho on a freight train to work on his uncle's farm. There he met and married my mother, who was a member of the Church.

Later, my father decided that the Church was good for our family. He was baptized the same day I was, when I was eight years old.

My father was a good man and a hard worker. He always took me out to work with him on our farm, but he never asked me to do anything that he didn't do right alongside me. My younger brother and I thinned and hoed beets and cut seed spuds (potatoes) in the summer. In

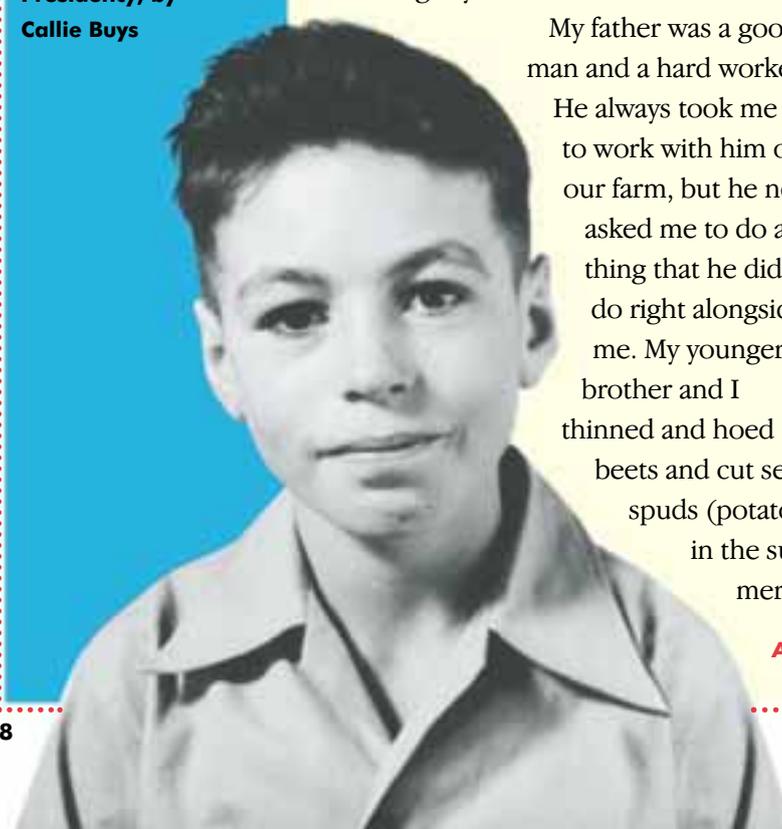


With his parents and younger brother

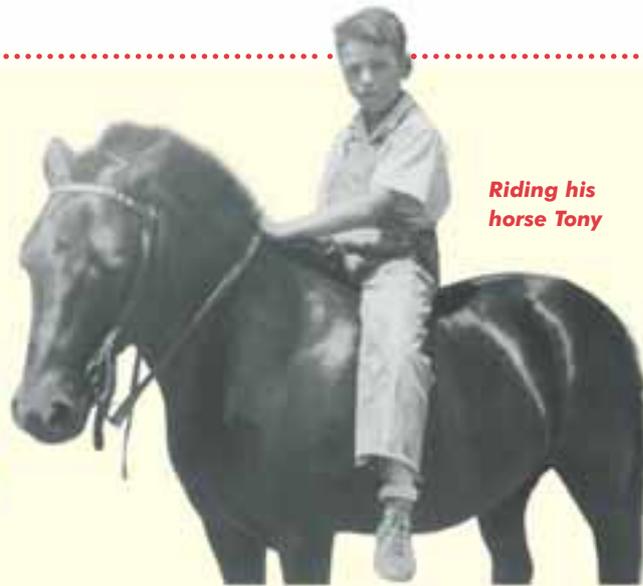
the fall, we picked spuds. When we were teenagers, we had a little herd of cows. That's where our dairy started. It was hard to leave our friends to go home and take care of those cows, but those chores taught us how to work.

My father loved the leaders of the Church and was very faithful in doing what anybody asked him to do, but he battled a problem with the Word of Wisdom

At age 10



Leaders



Riding his horse Tony

throughout his life. As a young boy, my father's problem embarrassed me. Later I realized that if I could be as good a man as my father, then things would be all right. However, I knew that I couldn't have my father forever unless he could qualify for the ordinances of the temple.

My father didn't always attend Church meetings because of his Word of Wisdom problem. It was hard for Mother to take my brother and me to church alone, but she was always faithful and she always held callings in the Church. She was a wonderful example. We were taught well in our home.

Many other leaders helped me throughout my life. One of my Primary teachers gave me extra help to finish my requirements to graduate from Primary. She also taught my class the Articles of Faith, and she taught us about the lives of the members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Little did my teacher know that one day she would be my mother-in-law—I married her youngest daughter!

I grew up with a wonderful group of friends. No matter where we were, we had the support of our friends. I also had wonderful bishops. I remember one bishop who decided that we should go to general conference, so he invited my father, my brother, and me to go to the general priesthood meeting. After the conference the bishop positioned us where we could shake hands

with most of the General Authorities. I have always remembered that experience. I have also always remembered the warm love of that bishop. He was a great friend to me, my brother, and my father for the rest of his life.

About 10 years before my father passed away, he overcame his challenge with the Word of Wisdom. How happy I was when my father became worthy to go to the temple! He went to the temple regularly before he died. When he went to the temple, I realized that if I lived right, I could be with my father and mother in the life hereafter.

Children, learn to love and be obedient to your parents. Also learn to respect authority in the Church and to respect your leaders. When we follow our leaders, we're not going to go wrong. ●



Elder Gerratt with his wife and family