

THE

SPECIAL EDITION

DEDMON

Dedmon, Dedman, Dedmond,
Deadman, Deadmon, Dedmond

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LEROY DEDMON, EDITOR

In memory of my mother... Ruby Viola Dickson Dedmon 1912-2008

On Monday morning, July 14, 2008 when my sister, Ruth, went to awaken mother, she was unable to do so. I was at the tractor shed getting ready to mow the yard when Jane, my wife, came and got me. The announcement, "Ruth can't get your mother to wake up", was all I needed to hear to know what to expect when I reached the house. It was something we had expected but still found myself not very well prepared for it. When I reached her bedside, I only had to look to know for sure. If you had to write a script as to how it should be, there would be no way to ask for it to happen any better. She was reading a book on Sunday night when I looked in before I went to bed. I don't know what time she laid the book aside and placed the marker at her place. She turned out the light and went to sleep. Thus ended the final chapter of the book of her life. The story began and ended right here in the house where we are living. Her grandfather, John Marion Dickson, built the house about 150 years ago and is filled with a century and half with memories of the Dedmon and Dickson families. It is hard to accept on one hand, but on the other we knew it was going to happen.

When I retired in 2004 and moved here for "mom to take care of us", she was beyond 90 years of age. She was not in the best of health, but was still able to help with the garden and other chores around the house. Often she and I would wash and dry the dishes after Jane had cooked for us a meal. Until she became "bed fast" we would watch Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy and Who Wants to be a Millionaire almost every night. She amazed me as to how many of the questions she was able to answer. I refused to play SCRABBLE with her as I was not in her league. I am still in shock over her beating me in CHECKERS when I was in my teens. Those who know the Dedmons know that we are not good losers. *In fact, it has been said that we are not good winners.* I still have vivid memories of mom and dad playing scrabble with several unabridged dictionaries on the table and just dared the other to try to get by with playing letters that did not make a real word. They knew more three letter words with "Q" than anyone I have ever known. Mom was indeed a unique woman and admired by all who knew her.

Mother was not sick very much in her almost a century of living. In her later years she suffered a broken ankle and hip. She was past eighty when the first of these events happened. A couple of other times we took her to the hospital after she had fallen and lost a fair amount of blood. She was plagued with high blood pressure, but again she was beyond 80 before it began to be a problem. She retained her mental faculties, and we were amazed at her memory. Often it was easier to ask her questions about gardening, freezing, or canning than it was to look it up on the computer. After she became unable to walk we obtained a hospital bed and placed her in the living room. The Hospice workers were always amazed at her view of the flowers and bird feeders. Mother told me the move from the back bedroom to the front of the house with the view of the outside was what she needed. I knew she had become depressed and had reached the point of not wanting to eat. After we moved her, I wondered why we did not do it sooner. Of course, hindsight is always 20/20. It was amazing how her appetite improved, and she began reading again. For about the last two years of her life, my two sisters, Carolyn and Alma Ruth had to take care of her personal hygiene. I am confident that their care for her extended her life by many months.



MY MOTHER (The Virtuous Woman)

by Leroy Dedmon

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. (Prov. 31:10)

It is interesting that God used such a precious “stone” in comparison to a virtuous or worthy woman. Rubies are considered one of the four precious stones, along with the sapphire, emerald and diamond. Her parents, George and Pearl Dickson, could never have selected a more appropriate name for such a precious jewel as our mother. She had one sister, Edna, who passed away in 1985. Her father died when she was about seven and her mother married Olen Vess about three years later. Olen was the only “grandpa” we really ever knew. He had two girls when he married grandmother, Dorothy and Ola Lea. They later had two girls, Mary and Peggy. The six girls grew up as sisters since we really never paid much attention to the phrases ‘half’ and ‘step’.



Mom was born on January 8, 1912, in the house where she drew her last breath in the early morning hours of July 14, 2008. Her grandfather, John Marion Dickson built the original log portion of the house about 150 years ago. This is a picture painted by



my sister, Alma Ruth, and it is how the house looked when we visited our cousins, the Gilberts. Mom and aunt Edna inherited the house and

approximately 80 acres. Mom and Dad purchased Aunt Edna’s portion when they moved back here from Huntsville in the late ‘60s. They remodeled the house to its present state. The stone work, (the porch foundation, the fireplace, and flower beds) were done by mom’s hands.

Our mom was a worker and truly “a keeper of the home”. I guess we took for granted all the things she did for us. We always had food on the table and clean clothes on our backs. One of my favorite things to do was to go with dad to buy chicken and hog feed. I would get to pick out the sack, knowing that it might be my next shirt.

Mom was a disciplinarian. To my knowledge, she never said, “You just wait ‘til your father gets home and he will take care of you.” She just took care of matters as they arose. Her “whuppings” were with what was called switches. I don’t remember her using a belt or paddle. I developed a sincere hatred for the weeping willow tree and the hedge in our back yard as they served for the “weapons” used to make sure the rod was not spared. I suppose that explains why none of us were spoiled. (Well, maybe one!!!) One out of five ain’t bad... The dilemma that I faced most often was when she sent me to obtain the “weapon of choice” when I was to receive my just reward. I certainly didn’t want to get one too big, but if it was too small, I had to make another trip to get a more suitable one. On one occasion, I decided to take her a tree limb, thinking she would never use that on me... Don’t try that at home, Folks!!!!

I am very sure that I will be out-voted by 4-1 on this account, but I still believe I took some of the “rod” that should have been shared by my younger siblings. Being the oldest of the bunch, I was held responsible for the misconduct of the younger. I think that may be the reason I have often sympathized with the prodigal son’s elder brother. Of course, I am slightly exaggerating, but it sounds good to me when I tell it. I love my siblings as if they were brothers and sisters.

As far back as I remember, mom would go the barn twice a day to milk the cow. She also worked in the yard and garden. She truly had a “green” thumb. When I get to thinking that I have done a good job with plants and flowers, I only have to see pictures of what she did to realize what an amateur I am. She really was a professional. I know she enjoyed working in the garden. In fact, she helped plant the garden after she was well in her nineties.

Her memory never ceased to amaze me. When I first began our family research project, I thought she had given me all the family names she knew. Boy was I wrong!! When I would get an inquiry from some family researcher, I would only have to mention a name to which she would think a bit before she gave me a dozen more names to go with it. I can only hope that if I am spared to live until I reach 96 that my mind would equal hers. But before you say it, I already know; if it is, it will have to improve.

When mom would say, “I just don’t know why I am still here”, I would always respond by saying, “We don’t know all that you know yet, so we still need you”... and that is the gospel truth.

Ruby Dedmon, 96, Ringgold

Ruby Viola Dickson Dedmon of Ringgold died Monday, July 14, 2008. She was 96. She was born Jan. 8, 1912 to the late George and Pearl Dickson and was a lifelong resident of the North Georgia area. She was a member of Hickory Grove Baptist Church, where she was the church clerk for many years as well as being involved with the Bible School and Sunday School classes. She had a passion for gardening, flowers and enjoyed reading. She was preceded in death by her husband, Gordon Lee Dedmon; sister, Edna Murray; and son-in-law, Don Smith. Survivors include her two daughters and son-in-law, Carolyn & Claude Price of Ringgold, Ruth Smith of Gurley, Ala.; three sons and daughters-in-law, Leroy & Jane Dedmon, Tommy & Diane Dedmon, all of Ringgold, and Bill & Connie Dedmon of Bowdon; sisters, Dorothy Petty of Ooltewah, Tenn., and Ola Lee Bates, Mary and Peggy Lunsford, all of Ringgold; 13 grandchildren; 14 great-grand children; three great-great-grand children & several nieces and nephews. Services: Wednesday, July 16, at 1 p.m. at the chapel with Melvin Wright and Mike Lusk officiating. Burial: Lakewood South Memory Gardens. Visitation: Tuesday, July 15, after 5 p.m. and prior to service on Wednesday, July 16. Online guestbook available at www.wilsonfuneralhome.com. Arrangements by Wilson Funeral Home, Ringgold, Georgia.



Ruby

Who can find a virtuous woman? Ruby is her name;
She did not seek for wealth or worldly fame,
Her goal in life was very simple, love God and family.
It was a lesson we all learned, she taught us well you see.

She loved to make a garden, grow lots of healthy food,
Or read a good book when she was in the mood,
I remember the teacakes that she made for us,
Often they were waiting when we got off the bus!

She made clothes for her children to wear,
They weren't fancy, but we didn't care,
The rest she would order from the catalog each year,
She could really pinch a penny, money was very dear.

She never interferes or gives unwanted advise,
She may give you her opinion, but you'll have to ask her twice.
The spouses of her children say, this Ruby's genuine,
Because, you see, your Mother-in-law is not as good as mine!

Life's a road we all must travel, her journey has been long,
Her children call her blessed, they think she's very strong,
To lose her would be most miserable and cruel;
This Ruby is a treasure, she's a precious jewel!

by Ruth Smith
her daughter

All Your Children

Here are all your children in one place.

Enshrined behind glass within a frame.

A picture's like a word, a sign, a name.

Symbolic of a much more complex grace.

Years of memories lie behind each face.

A wild sea no blessing can contain:

Years and years of love, of joy, of pain.

Of mysteries no heart can hope to trace.

Here are all the objects of your love.

A frozen section cut away from time.

A summit between dreams and memories.

Which you need only look this way to climb:

An icon for domestic reveries

Through which a thousand answered prayers move.

(A poem written by Alma Ruth and was included in a book given to mother after dad passed away.)



We Love You Mother

Leroy and Jane, Carolyn and Claude

Ruth and Don, Tommy and Diane

Bill and Connie



A Wash Day to Remember

It was laundry day, so I went to the wash house,
Calm and peaceful, nothing was stirring, not even a mouse,

Suddenly there was a noise, sort of a chatter;
I jumped and turned around, what was the matter?

I looked upon the shelf that encircled the room,
Then quickly I searched and located the broom.
There sat a furry little squirrel just fussing at me!
“Get out,” I cried, “this is not the place for you to be!”

I slapped at him, trying to send him out the open door;
He ran around the room, I tried to hit him some more,
he barked as he ran around and around the shelf,
“I’ll get you, just wait and see”, I said to myself!

Whap, whap, whap! my broom I did swat,
He scampered and barked, I was really getting hot!
When he saw I meant business, he decided to flee,
“Don’t come back,” I said, “you’ll answer to me!”



*The above poem was written by my sister, Alma Ruth.
The story was true and happened to my mom, so
after she told Ruth about it, Ruth wrote the poem.*



Mom at her 95th birthday.

A letter to my mother: (2002)

When I look back, I always remember those “little things” -- like coming home from school and finding freshly baked tea cakes! Yum!

I remember you reading to us from those story books we loved -- Sometimes you had to change the ending so Tommy wouldn’t cry! I wonder what happened to those books?

Everyone always said that I didn’t get many whippings, (I honestly don’t remember any) but I know the reason -- all you had to do was whip one of the others and I would cry!

I remember how hard you worked -- If it was too cold to work outside, you made quilts or sewed dresses for Carolyn and me. Some of the prettiest ones was made from flour sacks! I also remember you did without so we could have more.

Mother, Your memories help me to see where I came from and why I am the way that I am --

Thank you for all the “little things”! I love you,
--Alma Ruth (Daughter)

A Mother’s Love Determines How

A mother’s love determines how
We love ourselves and others.

There is no sky we’ll ever see

Not lit by that first love,

Stripped of love, the universe

Would drive us mad with pain;

But we are born into a world

That greets our cries with joy.

How much I owe you for the kiss

That told me who I was!

The greatest gift - a love of life -

Lay laughing in your eyes.

Because of you my world still has

The soft grace of your smile;

And every wind of fortune bears

The scent of your caress.

I love you mom,

-Leroy (son)

To "His" Mother"

"Mother-in-law", but oh, 'twas you
Who taught him to be kind and true;
When he was tired, almost asleep,
"Twas in your arms he used to creep;
And when he hurt his tiny knee,
"Twas you who kissed it tenderly;
When he was sad you cheered him, too,
And so I'd rather speak of you...
As Mother.

"Mother-in-law", but oh, 'twas you
Who taught him to be kind and true;
When he was tired, almost asleep,
"Twas in your arms he used to creep;
And when he hurt his tiny knee,
"Twas you who kissed it tenderly;
When he was sad you cheered him, too,
And so I'd rather speak of you...
As Mother.

"Mother-in-law" they say, and yet...
Somehow I never shall forget,
How very much I owe
To you who taught him how to grow,
You trained your son to look above,
You made of him the man I love.
And so I think of that today,
And then, with thankful heart I say
Dear Mother,
Love Jane
(daughter-in-law, Leroy's wife)

THANK YOU GRANDMOTHER

Grandmother has been a great influence on my life in many ways: reading, my love of history, coin collecting, etc. The greatest of these influences is my love of growing things. This has stuck with me all my life, and continues to be a very important part of my life now.

When grandmother and grand daddy moved back to the valley from Huntsville, I was six or seven years old. Most of my memories from that time are of grandmother and me in the woods, scouting for plants for our wildflower garden. From grandmother, I learned about a flower called "Indian Paint Brush" and a plant she called "Pitcher Plant, because the seed bulb and the base resembled a water pitcher. I also learned that it was better to move certain plants at certain times of the year. This was when I learned that my grandmother was one of the smartest people I knew.

We soon expanded our gardening to another part of the yard, where we build a small pond to landscape around. I got to look through seed catalogs and gardening magazines looking for ideas with grandmother. Then I got to help her and grand daddy with the actual planting.

When one of her magazines sponsored a contest for young gardeners, grandmother entered me in it. This was so neat to me because this was my very own garden, although I'm sure that she really did most of the work, I don't remember all that I grew, but the knowledge I gained from that experience is deeply ingrained in me.

As I grew up, I got to spend a lot of time with my grandparents, and much of that time had to do with growing things. I helped plant, weed, and harvest the gardens. I learned to drive the tractor and helped with the plowing. And, of course, the most fun had to be picking blackberries with grandmother.

For many years after I became an adult, I didn't have time for growing things. I was busy working, and just generally being a grown-up. I didn't realize how much I missed it until I met Becky. She soon had me planting flowers, trees, and bushes. I realized that not only did I know how to do these things, but also really enjoyed them. We now have a small vegetable garden in our back yard that we put a lot of time and sweat into. Much of our family time revolves around our garden. Taylor now also has the gardening bug. He always helps me dig, plant, water, and harvest. Many times, the first thing he wants to do when I get home from work is go out with me to see how the garden is doing.

This love for growing things has been passed down from grandmother, and is now being nurtured in Taylor, and will hopefully continue to be passed on to his children. Ken (*Carolyn's son*)

GRANDMOTHER

I can not think of a better word to describe Ruby Dickson Dedmon, my grandmother. God must have been thinking of her when he made grandmothers.

I sometimes think about her and the life she is living and the life she has already lived. My childhood is filled with so many memories of her that I could not possibly write them all down in one page. I don't know what year they moved to the valley, but my first recollection of grandmother's house was that one room where they had moved everything they had in that one tiny space and I can remember thinking to myself, "are they going to live here?" Why would anyone want to live way out here in the middle of nowhere? Knowing that just to get here you had to cross over that dreaded spot on the road... THE BLUFF!!!! I just knew that if I didn't hold my breath and scoot all the way over to the other side of the car that we would surely fall off.

I can't remember how things changed after that, I just know it did. Sometime after that I can remember that I couldn't wait for school to be out because I knew that as soon as I could get there I would be at grandmother's house. I didn't even care that they didn't have air conditioning or a color TV, or even a TV that would just barely pick up one station. I just knew I couldn't wait to get there.

I can remember the late nights that grandmother would sit up with us reading stories or playing cards or telling us some of her childhood memories. I don't think she ever cared that she had to get up early the next morning to cook grand daddy's breakfast before he went to work. Maybe she was just enjoying our company too. The next day she would be up before any of us and if she wasn't in the house she would probably be in the garden. I just hoped that she would leave me something to pick.

And who could forget picking those blackberries. We knew that if we picked them that she would be making us a cobbler for supper or that we would soon be having buttered biscuits with homemade preserves or jelly. It wasn't until later that Kenneth and I realized that the lady down the road would buy them from us. I can't remember how much we got per gallon, but we picked enough to go to Chattanooga to see Foreigner in concert. I don't think I ever picked any blackberries after that summer.

I guess out of all the spankings that I got as a child, I can remember that one "pat" my grandmother gave me. It was just a little pat but it left a big impression on me. I don't think I ever bit my brother again. When I think of grandmother, I think how lucky I am to have known such a wonderful and loving person. I just hope that I can give my own granddaughter just half of the memories that my grandmother gave me. I love you grandmother, Gwen (*Leroy's daughter*)

My Mother

My mother is and has always been a remarkable woman. How many ninety year old women would still be able to use a row tiller and plant a garden?

She's been many things in her life - a cook - and a very good one!! You could always count on mama to have a very delicious meal on the table. People would drop in and.... "wallah"... in no time "dinner's ready". She used to make wonderful chocolate squares of cake when we came home from school, nice and warm from the oven. Yum!

She has also been a seamstress. I guess we would have gone naked if she hadn't made most of our clothes.

She has always been my advisor. She always knew the right thing to do, and she still does. I still call and ask her about things. She never says, "you are an idiot", but she probably thinks it.

She has always been a "great" grandmother, having a houseful of grandkids so much of the time. I don't know - - but they loved to stay at grandmama's.

She's been a carpenter and a stonemason. She's built stone walls, fireplaces, chicken coops - - whatever needed building, if daddy couldn't do it right... then no problem - - super woman could!

I could go on and on but everybody knows this woman of all trades. They know she has high principles and great character.

She has truly been a lot of things in her life, but most of all, she has been a mother -...my mother. I love you mama,

-Carolyn (*daughter*)

My two sisters, Ruth and Carolyn, were faithful to care for mother the last year of her life. Ruth would come and stay for several days or even a couple of weeks. Carolyn would come to the house 3 or 4 times each day. I am very sure they extended mom's life by several months with the care they gave her.---Leroy

MY MOTHER

There is so much that could be said concerning the memories of the Dedmon house over the past fifty-five years. I have an idea that perhaps I can sum it up by the acrostic of M-O-T-H-E-R.

M- Stands for mistakes or memories. From my perspective the two words are basically the same. As I allow my mind to return to the days of yesteryear, to the exciting days of my childhood, I have memories of mistakes Mom made. Among the mistakes was the shortage of “hickory tea”, as I remember it being called. Don’t misunderstand, I was not particularly happy with the servings of it that I got, but trust me, I didn’t get all that I was entitled to. I don’t know if you just didn’t have the physical endurance to whip every time that I needed it or whether I was just good at pulling the wool over your eyes. I have a sneaky suspicion that you were aware of a lot more of my behavior than I thought. However, let us just let bygones be bygones.

O - Is for others in my life. I must say thank you for bringing me into a large family. It is because of my siblings that I learned to cope in a trying world. There were times I admit, that I did not comprehend fully the value of those people who looked out for me in my developing years. I realize now that having Leroy, Carolyn, Ruth and Tommy to tell me what to do and what not to do and what time to carry out the appropriate conduct, prepared me for the world and how to be successful in it. I am still not exactly sure how their telling you the things I did that I wasn’t supposed to do, helped me any, but I suppose I will continue to think about that.

T - That is for “Thank You”! Thank you for everything. Thank you for loving me, caring for me and thank you for loving my family. Thank you for your love for Connie and for being the best mother-in-law anyone could have. Thank you for being a wonderful grandmother for Kym, Brian and Craig. How about those great grand younguns? Thanks.

H - How about the “H” for hugs. Hugs heal hurts. I had a few. I appreciate the hugs that healed those hurts. I don’t remember, but I am sure when Tommy cut off my thumb, you hugged me that day. The hurt went away I am sure. By the way, did Tommy get a whipping for cutting my thumb off?

E - Is for “even though”. Even though you cared for me, love me and provided me with a good home and brothers and sisters too. Well, even though you provided a good place to grow up, it wasn’t always pleasant, but I love you anyway. No matter how you try, no matter how you look at it, some things just should not have happened I realize that you must have had my best interest at heart, but how could you have given a sweet little boy a dose of “Castor Oil”? I suppose that you wanted me to learn that school was important, and perhaps that was a way of teaching me that some things were worse than school. Mom, that castor oil was awful.

R - The “R” is for respect. Every boy should respect his mother, regardless of how old he gets. This fifty-five year old has a lot of respect for his mother. If he should ever begin to lose that respect, guess what. Castor Oil might help. - Bill (4/9/02)

I LOVE YOU MAMA

To say that Mama was the greatest influence on my life would be a big understatement. I’m positive that my beliefs and outlook on life were shaped by her. I remember discussing politics with mom from a small boy and throughout my life. She stayed current on world events through reading newspapers and books.

Mom’s influence in my life is also reflected in how I attempt to live my life in dealing with others. Although I’m sure I fall short many times, I strive to live by the Golden Rule, “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you”. Mom not only stressed this with her words, but more importantly demonstrated this by the life she lived.

Last but not least, she taught me to love others. Once again this was taught as much or more from example as by her words. I think it quite fitting, as well as comforting, to know that our last words to one another was “I love you, Tommy” and “I love you Mama”.

Tommy Dedmon

GRANDMOTHER

Dear grandmother, Thank you for all the things you did for me. I still have my doll house you made me when I was about 4 years old. I always enjoyed staying with you even though I cried when mama and daddy left.

Remember the summer I fed the chickens until they got fat? I also let them get out and they flew up in a tree and grand daddy got mad! I love you,

--Amy

(Granddaughter, Ruth’s daughter)

My Grandmother

When I think about my family, my parents, brothers, grandparents, aunts, uncle and cousins, I know that I am truly blessed and lucky to have been in the one I have. Time, like it naturally does, has moved on and my relationships with many of my extended family have been reduced to less than yearly attendance at family get-togethers. We've all grown older, moved away, and become involved in our lives. I'm always so happy to see all of my cousins grown up, most of them with children of their own now, and try to catch up in those brief hours we spend as a complete family these days.

But when I really think about my cousins, the true memories revolve around our Grandmother. Oh, the summers we used to spend at her house. Grandmama and Granddaddy were both so wonderful to open up their home to a horde of children nearly every summer that I can remember from my childhood. Grandmama especially. I hope we all realize how truly blessed we were to have someone as special as her to put up with us! When I look back on it, I'm sure we had to have gotten on her nerves sometimes, but I don't remember her ever letting it show. I remember at least one summer when she put a shelf on the back porch and a large cooler full of kool-aid was made up at all times for us to walk up and help ourselves. We thought that was so neat. Looking back, I realize it was an attempt to keep us from running in and out of her kitchen all day, but she never let on! She was so patient with us, settling our disputes, listening to our stories, and even playing with us. We could always count on her to sit in on a game of cards or scrabble on a rainy day, or tell us stories, or just roam the woods with us for fun.

When it came to roaming the woods, one of my most cherished memories of my grandmama is picking blackberries. Every summer she and I would spend days hiking through briars to find those sweet, delicious berries. She always teased me for eating as many as I ended up putting in my bucket! By the end of the day, our hands would be scratched and stained purple, but, it was well worth it when she would bake one of her blackberry cobblers for dessert. We also spent a lot of time working out in the garden. For some reason I don't understand, I loved the hours of painstakingly hunting for the blackberries, but hated picking beans in the garden! How I would whine about it! But again, she was always patient.

Since our family always lived nearby, I didn't "sleep-over" at their house as much as some of the cousins. But it would happen occasionally, and when it did I loved sleeping with grandmama. For as long as I can remember, my feet were always cold in the winter and it seemed like they didn't warm up until spring. (I guess that explains why I now live somewhere where it doesn't get cold!) I remember that grandmama always had the warmest, softest feet and she was always willing to rub "footsies" until I fell asleep.

There are so many wonderful things I love about my grandmother. She is so sweet and loving, so smart and interesting. I was nearly grown before I realized that everyone didn't have a grandmother like mine. What a wonderful thing to take for granted? How sad that every child can't have the experiences that my brothers, cousins and I had at our grandparent's house. --Suzi (*Carolyn's daughter*)

Dear Grandmother,

Some of my favorite memories from my childhood include time spent with you. I remember when you would tell us grandkids stories about when you were a child. Also, I remember you would fix popcorn, light the kerosene lamp and tell us scary stories. I always enjoyed the fishing trips we had at the little pond, even though we didn't catch anything. I thought picking blackberries and working in the garden was pretty fun too. I didn't realize at the time just how much you were teaching me, but hardly a day goes by that I don't use some of the wisdom you imparted to me. I love you very much. Thanks for just being you. Love, Steve (*son of Ruth*)

GRANDMOTHER DEDMON

When I was just a tot...
No matter how hot,
You taught me to hit...
Even though you never used a mitt,
You were good with the bat,
But more important than that,
You showed me how to love,
And how to wear a baseball glove..
I will never forget the days,
In the summer, we had fun always.
Love Always,
Gary Dedmon
(*Grandson - Leroy's son*)

Most of the articles and stories on the preceding pages were written by mother's children and grandchildren. They were written and compiled in a book by my sister, Ruth Dedmon Smith, presented to mother on her ninetieth birthday. Of course, there was much more material in the book, which I really plan to publish in its entirety before long. -Leroy

From the Mail Bag

The human tongue or pen can not express my deep appreciation to so many of you who sent cards, flowers, food, visits and e-mails following the death of my mother.



I am sure that some will be omitted, but I can assure you it is not intentional on my part. You can be assured that all of you helped us "walk through the valley of shadow of death". --Leroy

Leroy, I am so sorry for your loss. Your mom lived a long life. I know you will miss her greatly. My thoughts and prayers will be with you. Danny McBee. I am out of town or I would have tried to make it.

--Cousin Danny McBee (Dedmon Descendent).

(Danny has been a tremendous help to me in the family research project and this newsletter.)

Leroy, You have my sympathy on the passing of your mother. I will keep you and your family in my prayers.

--Love, Melanie Malone

(Descendent of Mary Polly Deadman and Jacob Wolfe my 4xgreatgrandparents, sister of Mark Dedmon and his wife Hannah Bailey of Rutherford county, NC.)

Leroy and Jane,

Bill and I extend to you our deepest sympathy to you in the loss of you loved one, Ruby. While she lived to a ripe old age, it is still hard to accept live without our mothers. My parents have been gone for 15 years now and as time goes by, I miss their presence so much in my life. I understand your pain and loss. I read her obit on-line and not only do I share the Dickson/Dixon surname in my lineage, but I too believe in church, family and communing with God through nature. I love to read also so I feel a kinship and sisterhood to Ruby even though I never met her. She raised a nice son and had a very nice daughter-in-law too. God bless you in the coming days and provide comfort as you seek to adjust to your loss. Wanda Anderson whose Grandmother was Orleana Dixon. (I have found and visited her grave, but still have no leads to her people in the Ringgold area } When you can, lets correspond and compare some notes. --Wanda Anderson (*classmate*)

Leroy, We are so sorry to hear about the passing of your mother. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Please let us know when the arrangements are made for the service. --Kathy Crawford (Woodstock church)

Oh Leroy, I'm just so sorry for your loss. Know it's such a difficult and my prayers are with you and your family. Love, --Jackie Mae Bishop (*Deadman family*)

We have lost a great resource of family history and memories but I am sure that you have recorded much of it for the future generations. The loss of a Mother is a once in a lifetime occurrence and we grieve with you. Again we feel for you and your family at the loss of your dear Mother. -John Henson (*Dedmon Descendent*)

Hi LeRoy,

So sorry about the loss of your mother. You have our deepest sympathy. In Christian Love,

--J. C. & Ann Watkins (*friend and fellow minister*)

Leroy heard the sad news this evening, our heart felt love for you at this time, It's is a time all Sons hearts are torn by the fact the one that gave them life, has left them and gone on ahead., I have always consider you my friend and it's a privilege for Shirley and my self to be your friend. We have always held you in our hearts, and at this time we are touched and sadden by your grief. Today we are having our monthly meeting and pot luck, we will bring this to the attention of our senior group to see if we can bring the van up tonight, My self and Shirley and Jack Kyle have all ready said we were going to try and come when we found out the particulars. Again our sympathy to the family.

Love Jack & Shirley

(Super Seniors Woodstock church of Christ)

LeRoy, sure sorry to hear about your mother. That is a long life and I know you will miss her greatly. We will be thinking of you. Love, Faye and Tom Skipper

(Cousin to Jane Dedmon)

Oh my dear friend,

I am so sorry to learn of your mother's death. You and Jane, and your sister were really wonderful to your mom, and having the gift of dying at home, in the very house she was born in, is almost unheard of in these days of busyness and carelessness. Your love for her, and care of her is one of the quiet, steadfast things that make me so pleased to be called your friend. You and your family are in our prayers. We will see you tomorrow.

--Love, Sarah Glenn (*classmate*)

Dear Leroy and Jane,

I can't begin to express our sympathy and love for you at this time. Paul's mother died 2 years ago at the age of 90. That is also a wonderful age but does not take the pain of loss away that you are feeling now even though your Mom was 96. I guess it's kind of like your children will always be your babies even when they are 60 years etc. Nothing replaces a Mom. We will pray that the grief and pain will diminish soon. You will both be in our prayers in the coming days. May God bless you both. Always know that we will always love you both so much. You will always be a part of us and our family. With much love, --Paul and Debbie

(Paul Dotson was one of the elders at Woodstock where I preached for eleven years)



more mail

I am very sorry to hear the news about your mom. You always had wonderful stories about her in your sermons. I will say a prayer for you and your family. I truly miss seeing you and Jane. I hope you are doing awesome! I will try to call you later. In Health,

--Dr. Jon A. Wise (*friend and fellow Christian*)

Dear friend, Our LOVE and SUPPORT and obviously our PRAYERS are for you at this time. For many years I "thought" I was right in saying to others, "I UNDERSTAND" when they had lost their mother (or father). I did not, until I lost my own! We pray God's strength and comfort will surround you, Paul & LaDon Sain (*Pulaski, TN church of Christ*)

Dear Leroy - I am so sorry to hear of your Mother's passing, but what a wonderful life she must have lived and how fortunate, for you and her, that you have lived close to her the last few years. She will live in the hearts of all who loved her. With heart felt sympathy ~

--Amelia Lehman (*Dedmon Descendent*)

I'm sorry to hear about your mother. I know it is a terrible loss to you. We will keep you and family in our prayers. You have and always will be very dear to my family for the love and concern you have always shown. You gave a lot of instruction and care to Josh and Justin and to me too.

--Guy Hydrick (*Deacon, Woodstock church*)

Hey Leroy: I just heard about your mother. What a wonderful life she must have lived. Our condolences go out to you and your family. We are still around. E-mail us sometime. Tell my cousin Jane hello for me. Hope you all are in good health.

--Carolyn, LeGrand and Cathy (*Jane's cousin*)

Dear Leroy, I know that at her age, it is well for her to go be with the Lord! I also know you are going to miss her very much. My prayers will be with you and your family as you go thru the days ahead. Sincerely,

--Wanda Colvin (*Dedmon Family*)

Leroy, I am very sorry to learn of your loss. It is very hard to let our love ones pass on but our faith gives us comfort knowing that they are passing on to their reward and we will see them again in the future. God be with you and your family in this time of sorrow.

--Von Hamrick (*Dedmon Descendent*)

Leroy, Bill had called me with this news as well. I'm sorry for your loss of your mother. It doesn't matter what age they are, it is difficult to lose a parent. I plan to see you tonight.

--Steve Plemmons (*East Ridge church of Christ*)

Hi Leroy, I am so sorry to hear of the loss of your mother. I will keep you all in my prayers in the coming days. Love you, --Jennifer Turner

(*Friend, Morrison church of Christ*)

Dear Leroy and Jane,

Please accept my sincerest condolences. We love you both! Debbie and Phil Berry (*friends from Woodstock*)

Hola my friend, I am so sorry to hear about your mother passing away. I was not able to go because I just leaving to Venezuela and you know how it is at the last minute, but You also know that you got a friend here and the Hispanic congregation send their regards to you. We love you and Jane. See you soon brother.

--Rafael Uzcategui

(*Rafael is the Spanish preacher at Woodstock and a co-worker at the Gospel Broadcasting Network*)

Dear brother Dedmon, Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this time of your loss. brotherly, Bill Williams (*preacher church of Christ*)

Dear Leroy and Jane-

You know our prayers are with you and all your family at this time. We have been blessed to know you for many years, and we are sure your mother was a great influence in your lives. May God bless you as you face the coming days.

--James and Wanda (*Cedartown church of Christ*)

Leroy,

I'm sorry to hear that you have lost your Mother. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. May God be your comfort in the coming days!

—Carole Thompson (*Dedmon Descendent*)

(*Carole has been a tremendous help to me in proofreading the newsletters for several years.*)

Oh Leroy, I am so sorry to hear of your Mom's passing. What a wonderful thing to live one's life out in one single house. From all you say she was a great lady and she will be missed by many I know. Did you have 5 generations living? I think I remembered that but maybe only 4. Take care of yourself.

--Glenda Holcomb (*Dedmon Descendent*)

(*Thanks Glenda and it was 5 generations..*)

Leroy, Our prayers are with you and your family in the loss of your mother. You and Bill are two wonderful men so your Mom must have been a wonderful person. God bless you, Larry Acuff (*friend and fellow minister*) Sorry to hear of your loss - May God be with you and yours during this time --Gene & Dewain Davis (*friends*)

(*Gene was the songleader at Springfield, TN*)

Hi Leroy, I am sending a line offering my condolences for the loss of your mother. My mom told me about it and said she had sent Gary a card and would have sent one to you, but did not have your address. So, from my parents and me, we would like to take the time to let you know, you and your family are in our prayers.

In Christian love, Tim Winters (*Tim grew up in the Springfield congregation and was a teen ager when I left. He made a career change after he turned 30 and is now studying at Freed-Hardeman University*)

..and more



What a long life she had! God bless,
Sheri Gober (*Dedmon Relative*)

My thoughts, concerns, and prayers are with you and your loved ones, Leroy. It is comforting in times of the loss of our loved ones to know that we have a loving Good Lord in Heaven who calls us home unto Him one day. Nevertheless, it is always sad and heartbreaking to lose one's parent. May the Good Lord Bless you in your loss. Our lives here on earth are full of trials and tribulations and impossible to bare without the comfort and strength of the Good Lord. I am sure that the two of us have been in a little closer contact with Him in recent days. I am going to come over to the Villanow area again and then look up my Cousin Leroy Dedmon in order to share a few tales and laughs with. Take care, --Cousin Eddie Hightower

Leroy,
May God give you peace during this time of loss. Your friend and brother in Christ, --Charles Moffitt

Charles is a long time friend. While I was preaching at Springfield, TN, his wife, Linda, passed away at a young age. I was asked to preach her funeral. He later remarried and I was asked to "tie the knot".

Good Morning Leroy
I'm so sorry to hear about the loss of your Mother today. We know she is in a better place with the Lord. You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers. May the Lord bless you all
--Charlie and Barbara Walker (Dedmon Family)

It's no news -- you all have lost a great one! And I too am saddened for the void. A loving, hard working family person, a precious part of your history - but her love endures in your heart. Ruth has told me of the joy of being together with her brothers and sister, and mother, even though not in choice of circumstances. Love to you all, Joyce Carter.

Joyce is a member of the church of Christ at Gurley, Alabama. That is where I began preaching in 1960 and my sister Ruth still lives there. The members at Gurley were good to visit and send mom cards during her sunset years.

Leroy, Our prayers are with you and your family in the loss of your mother. You and Bill are two wonderful men so your Mom must have been a wonderful person. God bless you, Larry (Acuff) *Larry followed me as the preacher at Bremen and was a classmate of Jane at Chattanooga Bible School in the eighth grade. He now preaches at Litha Springs GA.)*

Thanks for letting me know about your Mother. She had a long life I am glad. Thanks for counting me as one of your friends. Roger Lane (*Roger was an elder at Bremen when I preached there.*)

Dear Leroy and Family:
Our most sincere condolences to you and your family. We are sorry to hear about the passing of your mother. Wow, she was 96 years old. We can only wish to experience what it would be like to be 96 years old! My mother is 73 years old and is battling colon cancer. She would consider your mother's life a TRUE BLESSING and quite an INSPIRATION. We are thinking of all of you,

Jeff, Wilma, Kristen & Corey Dedmon
(*Jeff is our "claim to fame" in the baseball world. He pitched for the Atlanta Braves in the '80's*)

Hello Leroy, Their is nobody more sorry at the passing of your mom,, I lost mine just 3 years ago. I am also sorry to not keep in touch with you, I have been very sick. I have had a very bad time with Diabetes and having very bad pain from physical problems. You are right though, eye's do come in handy for reading. See how the good lord thought ahead , he gave us two in case one goes bad. I sure wish he would have given me two brains, the other never has worked right. I sure appreciate you remembering me, it is always so good to hear from you. I did not get to keep my mom that long , she was just 74. I have never got over losing her. She and my brother were all I had. But I am willing to accept that knowing she, and now your mother too, are with the most loving thing they could have. and that is with our Lord Jesus Christ, and of course all the ones who have gone before us.. Of course you are a preacher, you could tell it better than I.. take care my distant cousin, I will do my best to keep in better touch!

Your distant Cousin, Terry Smallwood
Thanks Terry, I didn't know about your mother. You have my belated sympathy and do keep in touch.)

Leroy, Sorry about your mother. She really lived a long full life. Charlie (*Charlie Lail was a classmate and friend from the first through the twelfth grade. He also was an usher in our wedding. He lives near Woodstock, GA and while I lived there we were able to "re-connect" our friendship. He is also very good to keep up with all our classmates and inform us of news concerning them*)

Leroy: So sorry to hear of the passing of your mother. I have no words to express my sympathy since I have not experienced such a loss but please know that you're in my heart and prayers. Connie (*Connie's father, Ted Prater, was an elder at Morrison, TN when I preached there. I also, performed her wedding ceremony to my good friend Marion Turner.*)

JUST A MOM?

A woman, renewing her driver's license at the County Clerk's office was asked by the woman recorder to state her occupation. She hesitated, uncertain how to classify herself. "What I mean is," explained the recorder, "do you have a job or are you just a.....?"

"Of course I have a job," snapped the woman. "I'm a Mom." "We don't list 'Mom' as an occupation, 'housewife' covers it," Said the recorder emphatically.

I forgot all about her story until one day I found myself in the Same situation, this time at our own Town Hall. The Clerk was obviously a career woman, poised, efficient and possessed of a high sounding title like, "Official Interrogator" or "Town Registrar."

"What is your occupation?" she probed.

What made me say it? I do not know. The words simply popped out. "I'm a Research Associate in the field of Child Development and Human Relations."

The clerk paused, ball-point pen frozen in midair and looked up as though she had not heard right. I repeated the title slowly emphasizing the most significant words. Then I stared with wonder as my pronouncement was written, In bold, black ink on the official questionnaire. "Might I ask," said the clerk with new interest, "just what you do in your field?"

Coolly, without any trace of fluster in my voice, I heard myself reply, "I have a continuing program of research, (what mother doesn't) In the laboratory and in the field, (normally I would have said indoors and out). I'm working for my Masters, (first the Lord and then the whole family) And already have four credits (all daughters). Of course, the job is one of the most demanding in the humanities, (any mother care to disagree?) And I often work 14 hours a day, (24 is more like it). But the job is more challenging than most run-of-the-mill careers and the rewards are more of a satisfaction rather than just money."

There was an increasing note of respect in the clerk's voice as she completed the form, stood up and personally ushered me to the door.

As I drove into our driveway, buoyed up by my glamorous new career, I was greeted by my lab assistants — ages 13, 7, and 3. Upstairs I could hear our new experimental model, (a 6 month old baby) in the child development program, testing out a new vocal pattern. I felt I had scored a beat on bureaucracy! And I had gone on the official records as someone more distinguished and indispensable to mankind than "just another Mom." Motherhood! What a glorious career!

Does this make grandmothers "Senior Research associates in the field of Child Development and Human Relations" And great grandmothers "Executive Senior Research Associates"? I think so!!! I also think it makes Aunts "Associate Research Assistants".

These articles are worthy of the space they occupy. I have no idea of their origin or if they happened. However, after fifty years of preaching, I have determined that preacher stories may not have happened, but they could have happened... -Leroy

MY DRUG PROBLEM!!

God bless mothers who drugged us! The other day, someone at a store in our town read that a Methamphetamine lab had been found in an old farmhouse in the adjoining county and he asked me a rhetorical question, "Why didn't we have a drug problem when you and I were growing up?" I replied, "I had a drug problem when I was young"

"I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions and community socials no matter the weather. I was drug by my ears when I was disrespectful to adults.

I was also drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card, did not speak with respect, spoke ill of the teacher or the preacher, or if I didn't put forth my best effort in everything that was asked of me.

I was drug to the kitchen sink to have my mouth washed out with soap if I uttered a profane four-letter word. I was drug out to pull weeds in mom's garden and flower beds and cockle-burs out of dad's fields. I was drug to the homes of family, friends, and neighbors to help out some poor soul who had no one to mow the yard, repair the clothesline, or chop some firewood; and, if my mother had ever known that I took a single dime as a tip for this kindness, she would have drug me back to the woodshed.

Those drugs are still in my veins; and they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, and think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin; and, if today's children had this kind of drug problem, America would be a better place.

~author unknown~