

**Herron, Roy B. *Things Held Dear: Soul Stories for My Sons.*
Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.**

Tennessee State Senator Herron, an attorney of Dresden, decided to present his family legacy to his three sons and share that with the public. Residents of his hometown and Weakley County will readily recognize many individuals mentioned. This reviewer recognizes the names of his Martin neighbor Larry Carter, Dresden businessman, Ricky Finney, UT Martin English Professor Walter Haden, and State Representative Mark Maddox of Dresden.

Values constitute a central theme in Herron's life and book. He relates complimentary and uncomplimentary accounts of members of his immediate family and other adults who helped shape his life and character. While there is much to admire about his father, Herron includes details other authors might leave out. Clarence Herron drank heavily after being severely wounded in World War II. In fact, he lived in great pain the rest of his life. Understandably the son loved his father and writes with compassion of his father's pain. A particularly moving moment was the description of his father's return home immediately after his honorable discharge from the Armed Forces.

Early Mr. Herron taught his son about hunting. The coverage of their first duck hunt to Reelfoot Lake shows a ten-year old boy miserable because his toes were cramped in boots too small for him. Fortunately, hunting companions made Roy comfortable, and with hunting basics understood, Roy Herron looked forward to many other duck hunts with his father.

Herron paid tribute to friends and coaches who increased his athletic abilities and boosted his personal self-esteem from then onward. Certainly notable here was his beloved Boy Scout Master Gwin Crawford. This man whom everyone called "Granddaddy" was not really kin of the children in the community.

Predictably Herron developed a love of the U.S. flag and its meaning. Since he definitely learned about the Civil War from a definite Southern viewpoint, the Confederate flag meant much to him, too. In the 1970s his understanding of those two flags took on newer significance. His African American friends UTM fraternity president Wendell Wainwright from Fayette County and Emmett Edwards of Tipton County shared their views with him on civil rights. Consequently, in the late 1970s Herron removed a small but offensive Confederate battle banner placed near a public drinking fountain in the Weakley County Seat, where he grew up.

Author Herron provides many warm and intimate incidents about his family. Particularly moving are accounts of the late years of his mother and of the death of his father.

Readers will find plenty of warmth and pathos to maintain interest in Herron's first book.

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Herron, Roy and L.H. "Cotton" Ivy. *Tennessee Political Humor: Some of These Jokes You Voted For.* Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000.

The authors are well known in Tennessee, especially in the Western District. Their fame stems from their having served as state senator and state representative, respectively. They are also known for their humor. Their sources were their own experiences, the major newspapers of Tennessee and the Tennessee State Library and Archives. At times they even found information in Washington, D.C. They also obtained help from UT Martin graduates Emmett Edwards and Nelda Rachels and UT Martin English Professor Walter Haden, who read the book's early drafts.

Herron and Ivy selected political humor that follows the grand tradition of humor and tall tales begun by David "Davy" Crockett. According to Herron and Ivy, they harvested "the best pearls of humor...found in Tennessee politics and government." Early they explain their choices are based on good taste. For instance, they soften "offensive language by substituting dashes." They generously provide photographs of many Tennessee raconteurs.

Herron and Ivy begin by focusing on governors and U.S. senators. They first mention the campaigns of brothers Republican Alf and Democrat Bob Taylor, competing for the governor's office. The authors quickly cover the "pet coon feud" between Senator Estes Kefauver and Memphis "Boss" Crump, during which the former claimed he was not the latter's "pet coon." In exchanging barbs Governor Gordon Browning alleged Crump insisted on correct spelling of tombstone names for "an honest election." Naturally the authors highlight the 1986 gubernatorial campaign pledge of House Speaker Ned Ray McWherter: "Swear me in, give me a cup of coffee, two vanilla wafers, and I'll be ready to go to work."

Among the best political stories one concerns a faithful southwest Tennessee Republican. He insisted in the 1950s that President Dwight D. Eisenhower appoint him ambassador to Britain. Instead, as "consolation,"