# **Dr. Jones' Contribution**

Her research important link in chain of health and nutrition

By DON C. MATCHAN (PART ONE OF TWO PARTS)

This is the story of a remarkable woman whose success-studded career of more than 40 years has not ended yet; a woman whose ancestry may be traced back to Queen Victoria and 55 preceding generations; a woman who flabbergasted her old-line southern family by refusing to marry the man selected by her mother, and who, instead, enrolled at Peabody College for Teachers, transferring later to Vanderbilt University, Nashville, and after working to accumulate additional money, became a Yale student, graduating in 1920 with a Ph.D. (one of the first women) in physiological chemistry and nutrition.

Born June 12, 1884, in Nashville, Tenn., Martha Richardson Jones was a normal, buoyant youngster who loved people. She had the run of the family estate, and almost from the time she could walk she lived on warm cow's milk, fresh from the udder, and freshlylaid eggs which she herself gathered and induced an adoring mammy to prepare. This, actually, is what she later found to be the reason for the malnutrition which started showing itself when she was eight years old. She suffered constantly from colds, sore throat, discharging ears. And by that time she had lost all her "baby" teeth, plus three of the new six-vear molars.

Then other effects followed: her onceround face was becoming long and narrow, broad dental arches were starting to shrink unevenly, the roof of the mouth became "vaulted," sinuses shrank and changes occurred in the tympanic, facial and headbones. These physical changes wrought personality changes—the outgoing child resented being "different," and through the teen years became self-conscious, withdrawn.

She was her father's favorite child. A brilliant attorney and flower connoisseur, she felt he understood her. He died when she was 11, and there was not the same relationship between mother and daughter.

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Although she says she has "always maintained I never got a single beefsteak out of my ancestry," she does consider it a heritage to which she wants to "measure up." The lineage on her mother's side was traced to Sir William Aston, a first-cousin of Queen Victoria. Her mother's grandfather was Nicholas Davis, a first cousin of Robert E. Lee and of Jefferson Davis, and a "crony" of Henry Clay. Her father's antecedents traced back to Peter Jones, founder of Petersburg, Va., a great-grandson of Abraham Woods who came to the New World in 1620 at the age of 10, and became prominent in colonial affairs.

Every male member of the family old enough to carry a gun fought for state's rights," she recalls.

#### HER MISSION

Perhaps it was the genes from some of these self-reliant, determined ancestors that was responsible for the sudden decision one day in 1913 that she would "go to college." Her hope-chest was being prepared, she was engaged to be married. But something in her revolted, and she was possessed with a conviction she must search out the errors in her own early years-the errors causing malformation in dental arches and facial bonesso that others might perhaps be spared. This was her mission. To this her life has been dedicated, and to this end she intends to bequeath her earthly goods when her span is completed. "We're all instruments in God's hands," she says, "and we pretty much make our careers."

When told by Daughter Martha that she intended to enroll at Peabody, "today," (this was 11 a.m. in the morning), her mother asked what she expected to use for money. (The family fortune had dwindled to a shadow of its one-time size.) And Martha replied,

'I'll get a job.'

This, too, just wasn't done in respectable southern families. The girls went to finishing school, then married. But Martha wanted college, not finishing school, because she had decided her career was to be other than that of a wife and mother.

Thereupon Martha R. Jones went into Nashville, presenting herself at the registrar's office. She was told registrations had long since closed-in fact, the semester was half over!

"I'll make it up," she insisted.
She then found herself in the office of the dean. When she told him she wanted to take mathematics, physics and chemistry, the dean laughed outright. But the young lady was adamant in her determination to start. Under the impact of this determination, the dean became serious and without further comment okayed her registration.

She took four years of courses in two years' time. She took all the math offered, plus all the nutrition offered at Peabody. When that school closed to await new buildings, she transferred to Vanderbilt and continued the intensive training, including electrical engineering. Toward the end, she "gathered up the loose ends," the courses she didn't likelanguages, history, etc.—and in a single year received her B.A. and M.A., in 1915.

INTRODUCED TO POLITICS

Then she worked a year, on an assignment of reorganizing the culinary departments in state institutions in Tennessee. Through an older sister she was introduced to the president of the Board of Control of State Institutions of Tennessee. Her first task was to study diet at a state prison. Here she learned for the first time how politics and lust for money can infiltrate public institutions.

"I found the inmates were getting beans and water and combread," she recalls. "A beautiful big vegetable garden was being used for a piggery operated by the officials. Clabbered buttermilk from the prison farm also was going to the piggery. I wasn't popular, the superintendent tried to frighten me out of making a factual report, telling me my life was in danger. He killed himself not long afterward.

But Miss Jones instituted a new diet forthwith, and became the idol of the prison population. (They sang an "Ode



to the Angel Lady" in her honor.) And besides giving the men proper food, her program, utilizing the prison farm products that had been going into the privately-owned piggery, saved the state \$3,000 a month.

She then went into other institutions, including three mental hospitals, where she recalls, "we had tearing down fights!"
The same things were happening in all the institutions-politics was "rampant." Attendants at one place went on a strike and two doctors and Miss Jones found themselves working night and day caring for the 700 patients.

The upheaval didn't last too long, however. The people with "connections and the individuals who had been profiting at the expense of public and in-mates, finally were able to undermine the Board and it was ordered dissolved.

BACK TO SCHOOL But in that year the young scientistcrusader had saved enough to return to school. And it was to be Yale, nothing less. Here was a recently-established nutrition course in the department of physiological chemistry.

Wonderful things were happening in the field of nutrition-little things, detectable only by their absence, were being discovered. Yale was leading in this field.'

And at Yale were what she believed the best professors . . . It was July, scholarships had been awarded for the coming year, but without a scholarship she wouldn't be able to swing it. A letter to Yale-and yes, a miracle!-a week later came word she had qualified for a fellowship. This, together with her savings and a \$40-a-month loan from a sister now working, was enough. And she found herself in New Haven that September, 1917.

"From the beginning the way was easy at Yale," she says. "One worked in the department of physiological chemistry for the sheer joy of accomplishment. Prof. Lafayette B. Mendel set the pace. He lived, worked and thought on a high plane and lifted his students up. He was a wonderful man, had a photostatic mind, never forgot a page of anything he read. His seminars attracted many outside people. He was so fine, honorable. He never let a student spend a second year in his department unless he was going to get a degree. He just told them in his gentle way that it would be to their advantage to go into something else. Prof. Mendel had been a pupil of Dr. Chittenden, first to receive an honorary Ph.D. at Yale 100 years ago (Dr. Jones received an invitation to attend a luncheon commemorating that event

this spring.)

In 1918-19 Miss Jones again received a fellowship, and in addition was named assistant in the department of physiological chemistry, a post never before held by a woman. Before the year ended, she was holding down a second assistantship. The year of 1919-20 she again was named assistant to Dr. Mendel, and her attention now had to be directed to her thesis on "Carbohydrate Metabolism in Rabbits.'

Since I was preparing to work with babies and it was common practice to feed them sugars in formulas, it was important to know how quickly and completely the various sugars are assimilated," she explains.

During her last year at Yale, she was awarded the Boston Alumnae Fellowship by the American Association of University Women, enabling her to complete her work at Yale. Sixteen years later Dr. Jones submitted the story of her life for the A.A.U.W., out to raise a million-dollar scholarship fund. Her story was chosen for the purpose, reprinted widely. It was titled Rabbits, Puppies, and Little Brown Babies. By this time she had clinically proved the relationship of nutrition to tooth decay, and her article made due note of same.

In 1920 she had her Ph.D. from Yale, and a Sigma Xi key for scholarship. And now came the next step-a connection where she could conduct nutrition experiments based on her own experience, to see if I could produce in animals what had happened to me.

SHE JOINS U.C. STAFF "Dr. Mendel's students filled chairs in universities all over this land," she said. "But this was not for me. I knew what I wanted, and I wrote five universities describing what I wanted to do and asking whether they had open, or could make such a position for me. The only reply came from Dr. William Palmer Lucas (who died in February, 1961) of the department of pediatrics, University of California Medical School, San Francisco. He wired me, 'no such position exists here, but it can be made. He then wired me an appointment." And here she worked until 1928 when she went to Hawaii to set up a clinic under Queens Hospital which became worldfamous.

In California she soon got a feeding experiment on puppies under way, as

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were studies on human babies.
"It was not long before it became apparent that a most amazing thing was happening to the puppies," she relates. "They were getting fat but their bones were becoming soft. The teeth looked all right. A control group of puppies fed in the same way, but with a single known difference, behaved differently. They had normal-appearing bones, and teeth ravaged by decay. Here was demonstrated for the first time the unlike behavior of bones and teeth (enamel.) Such a suggestion was rank heresy, but the fact remained. Here, apparently, was one of nature's choicest secrets . . . I believed it had to do with the well-being of all animal life. The study of this phenomenon was to become my life work. More than seven years were spent in California studying this phase of the problem in puppies and babies.

The findings on the teeth of the dogs were presented at a meeting of leading scientists in the field of dentistry in Washington, D.C., in 1928. It was generally conceded they were interesting, but they have no clinical significance because such conditions do not occur in man.

"Exception to this conclusion was taken by one man," Dr. Jones continues. "He estimated that 'half the world' was suffering from the same type of tooth decay that had been produced experi-

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mentally in the dogs. He said it was endemic in Hawaii and in large regions of the Orient.'

DENTAL CENTENNIAL SPEAKER

(Six years later, in 1934, Dr. Jones was invited to be a guest speaker at the New York Dental Centennial, and her theme remained the same, supported this time by imposing data accumulated during the preceding six years in Hawaii. As reported by The New York Sun of Dec. 5, 1934: "Dr. Martha Jones has come all the way from Honolulu to cause a turmoil in the dental profession. In her very quiet, very scholarly, very ladylike manner she is propounding such revolutionary theories about diet as it affects tooth decay, that the greying hairs of conservative dentists . . . are practically standing on end. Dr. Jones believes the crude juice of sugar cane is good for teeth. She thinks dental hygiene has esthetic value, but that teeth can be dirty and still healthy.

(". . . The gist of her theory is that good teeth depend on the degree of alkalinity in the diet, that unless the diet contains more alkalines than acids, decay is likely to occur. And these are the things Dr. Jones said make a diet alkaline: tuberous vegetables such as turnips, suveet potatoes, etc.; roots; leafy vege-tubles; fruits. Most alkaline are the leafy vegetables, and the thinner and greener the leaf the better. Turnip tops, beet tops, spinach and kale are among the liest . . .

("Dr. Jones has worked out a rule-ofthumb for the average American in a temperate climate to give the proper amount of alkaline. For every serving of meat, or egg, or bread, (all of which are acid) she recommends two servings of fruit or vegetables. And of the fruit and vegetable servings, let every fifth one be of the leafy variety. Grains such as rice and wheat are acid and should be counter-balanced by more alkaline.

("That perfect teeth actually can be controlled and produced, Dr. Jones does not for a minute doubt. All her research points that way . . . Children in Hawaii, for some reason, were being born with teeth that were decayed. Dr. Jones explains it by the heavy grain diet on which the workers are now living. She points out that once they were noted for their beautiful teeth, but that was when they lived on indigenous food, largely made up of sweet potatoes, fruits, vegetables and molasses or sugar cane. It was a heavily alkaline diet. But there has been a change to grains since rice is one of the cheapest foods. There is now considerable beri-beri as well as markedly increased tooth decay.

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("Dr. Iones cited the instance of a woman who had come to Hawaii from the Philippines. Her teeth had been absolutely sound until she arrived in Hawaii. There she changed from her native diet to the grains of the island. Her first child, born after her arrival in Hawaii, had what appeared to be good first teeth, but they soon began to decay. The second child was born with several of its teeth decayed. The third child developed first teeth that were almost entirely decayed. By then, the woman herself had developed several cavities.

("Diets of expectant mothers are allimportant, according to Dr. Jones, in development of the child's teeth. If the mother has a very alkaline diet, Dr. Jones believes the child's teeth will be strong and healthy. She cites the soundness of the teeth of Negroes in southern United States as another example of the effect of an alkaline diet on teeth. They eat much sweet potato and molasses, very alkaline, and turnip tops . . .") HEALTH CENTER CONCEIVED

But we're getting ahead of our story. Satisfied in her own mind that there was a connection between what she had found in nutrition-dental experiments with her puppies, and human beings, she conceived the idea of a "health cenplan—an infant feeding clinic to demonstrate the principles of nutrition as indicated in the puppy experiments. It was four years later-in 1928-and the work of God, she firmly believes—that the invitation came from The Queen's Hospital in Honolulu, and to Honolulu

she went.

"A study of the diet and teeth of children on Oahu showed that the puppies and plantation babies suffered the same type of tooth decay under amazingly comparable conditions," she reported. "All that seemed necessary was to reinstate the native foods in the diet.'

Dr. Nils P. Larsen, then medical director of Queen's Hospital, was highly

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skeptical about Dr. Jones' plans to establish a clinic, described them as "visionary," and "impossible." Shortly thereafter he left on a world cruise and Dr. Jones lost no time proceeding with her project. Permission was obtained from Ewa Plantation to set up a clinic in Pipeline Village. Cooperation was promised, but it "must cost the plantation nothing." Dr. Jones considered it "an

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ideal place for the health center. It was an isolated village of Filipino laborers and their families on Ewa Plantation. They were newcomers to Hawaii, yet their children already suffered rampant tooth decay. Adults were relatively immune. The infant death rate of the village exceeded 300 deaths per 1,000 live bitthe."

A vacant house was repaired and outfitted by donations of materials, money and labor. For nearly two months Dr. Jones had no "customers." The population just wasn't interested, it seemed, and besides-the house was reputed to be "haunted." So the wise woman from the mainland, realizing they would not come to her, went to them. She finally found a babe, about to die, whose mother agreed to let the child be taken to the clinic. The care was free. The baby lived. Another baby came, then another and another. With this encouragement, the plantation management exerted greater effort to help, and in six months every baby in the village was enrolled on a paying basis!

Dr. Jones recalls that upon return of the health director, Dr. Larsen, from his trip, she "narrowly missed an ignominus discharge," but was permitted to continue the health project "on your own.".

DEATH RATE PLUMMETS

At the end of the first 16 months of the center's operation, the infant death rate in Pipeline Village had dropped to zero for the preceding 12 months. Babies died as before on the rest of the plantation. The Pipeline Health Center was a success!

And with success came a change in attitudes. "Indifference toward the project changed overnight into enthusiasm, Dr. Jones says. "Financial support was obtained and plans made to cover the entire plantation. My own none-toocertain position was assured, with an increase in salary. Quickly the number of health centers was increased to four. Babies in surrounding villages were brought to the nearest center once daily and fed. Specially-prepared milk formulas, the composition based on years of research on babies and animals, were taken home for other feedings. Health programs coordinating related activities were worked out for school and kindergarten by principals, teachers and our

"A tuberculosis survey was made on ,000 school children. Prenatal conferences at which mothers were taught the rudiments of physiology, anatomy, and nutrition were held regularly, as well as baby clinics and social (knitting-



MOTHER AND CHILD

This is a reproduction of a photograph which appeared in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin back in the thirties while Dr. Jones was in charge of the Ewa Plantation's health center. Said the caption: "There's no fake about this. Beatrice Calivo, whose father is a laborer on the Ewa Plantation, at the age of 3½ months learned how to balance on her mother's hand, a believe-it-or-not achievement that aroused greatest interest at the plantation clinic under whose supervision Beatrice is reared. Photograph was taken when the babe was 4½ months old. Since birth she has thrived on a balanced diet recommended by the clinic's director, Dr. Martha Jones. A feature of the diet is a new food, a composition of sugar juice and poi, prepared at the clinic and used with whole milk. Beatrice is the pride of the famed clinic.

crocheting) meetings.

'Gradually enrollment of babies on a paying basis increased to more than 90 per cent of those eligible. The number at one time exceeded 300. The infant death rate at the center dropped to zero. These babies were larger, healthier, and had better teeth than their less fortunate neighbors. Health and morale improved on the entire plantation. Neighbors became more friendly. Ewa became the health demonstration and teaching center of the islands. Visitors-social workers, students, doctors, dentists and others interested in human welfare-became so numerous a public clinic was held for them once each week."

On the guest register were names of prominent persons from all over the world . . . (noted guests included the late George Bernard Shaw who was duly impressed.)

"Thus, the knowledge gained from the rabbits, the puppies and babies was

scattered far and wide," observes Dr. Jones.

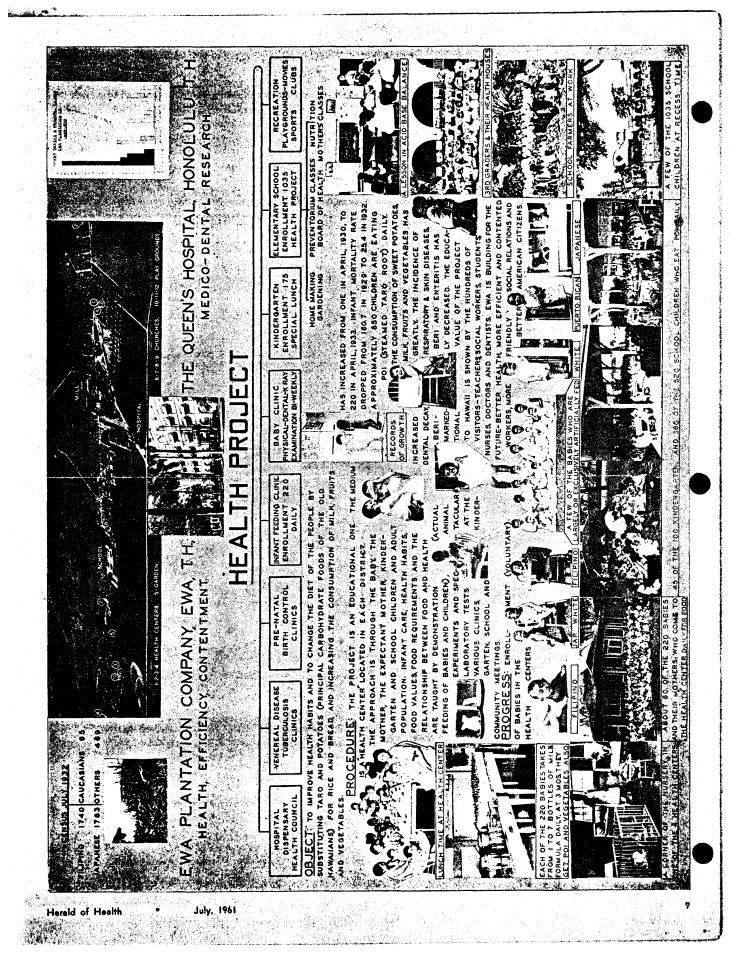
"The phenomena observed in the puppies were duplicated in the babies. The extreme nutritional imbalance that caused disintegration of the teeth seems to be the same in both cases. In milder form, it is perhaps the underlying cause of tooth decay the world over, and of many hitherto unsuspected related ills.

'GRAINS AND GREENS'

"The metabolic fault may be the result of an imbalanced diet, unfavorable combinations of diet and climate, systemic disease and other causes. The dietary fault in both babies and puppies might be summed up as an imbalance between 'seeds' and 'leaves,' or between 'grains' and 'greens.' Nature has stored certain food nutrients in the seed, and others in the leaf of the plant. They supplement one another. In the plant kingdom all grain would be classified as 'seeds.' Fruits, roots, tubers, legumes and

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other vegetables would be classified as 'leaves.' The latter, however, vary tremendously in 'leaf' values.

'Among animal tissues, the lean muscle of all species has properties of seeds. The blood and vascular organs, as the liver, correspond to 'leaves.' Milk belongs to the 'leaf' group. Eggs, which are acid-producing as are grains and lean meat, belong to the 'seeds.'

"It has long been known that herbivora and carnivora both instinctively choose 'leaves' in preference to 'seeds,' and that neither can survive long on a diet of 'seeds' alone (grain or lean meat.) Yet, we choose for ourselves a diet containing a large preponderance of 'seeds'bread, cereals, meat, eggs. The price we pay is indicated in the 95 per cent of the children in our nation who suffer tooth decay and related ills.'

The health center demonstrated how Hawaii could solve her dental problem, and many of her health, social and economic problems as well. It proved the exceptional nutritive value of certain common foods (taro and sugar-cane juice) which heretofore had not been appreciated. It established a new standard and set a new pace for health work in the islands. It created new interests and aroused new hopes in the hearts of the plantation laborers and made them better American citizens," Dr. Jones continued.

But the ultimate benefit could not be realized because of a shortage of enough of the right kind of food.

SHORTAGE OF RIGHT FOOD

"Further progress was blocked by an insurmountable obstacle-food-a sufficiency for parents, children and babies of the 'leaf' varieties, necessary to correct the existing imbalance in the laboring population. To be completely successful, a demonstration must be conducted in a community where economic interests are benefited by the large-scale production of food for the working people.'

The press in Hawaii recognized her talents and in many different articles and editorials lauded her work. When it became known she was leaving, the Honolulu Advertiser paid her tribute in an article dated December 29, 1935, excerpts of which follow: "Dr. Jones' results attracted mainland and worldwide attention, and the Navy assigned Dr. G. N. Crosland to study under her the past four months of this year.

"Added to the tireless laboratory and clinical work she has done since February, 1930, when she quietly opened her little clinic at Ewa, Dr. Jones also has made innumerable lectures before medical and dental societies, parentteacher associations and civic organizations. Dr. Jones leaves behind her a fine clinic, now financed by the Ewa Plantation for the benefit of Hawaii's babies, and a real page in Hawaii's social historv.

Among her newspaper clippings Dr. Jones has one by a writer on a Hawaii newspaper who pointed up the need for publicizing the findings obtained by the work at Ewa Plantation's health center. Said the writer: "... The story told by Dr. Charles L. Wilbar about results achieved at the Ewa health project was in my opinion the most outstanding address of the annual HSPA meetingproof that infant, mortality can be greatly reduced by proper foods, and that correct nutrition is the most important factor in preventing sickness. The great question now is how to publicize the Ewa findings so that none shall remain in ignorance.

One of the concrete discoveries which might well be the basis of a new commercial industry is that cane juice boiled down in open copper kettles makes a palatable syrup containing iron, which element is lacking in maple and com syrups. Cane syrups made by the modern 'suchar,' or other semi-refining processes also lack iron. Foods must contain iron to make red blood."

(Ed. note: This problem would appear still to be a problem some 25 years later!) (To be continued)

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