

AUNT ORIOLE

By Dortha Jones

What a beautiful and lovely person she was. She had such a wonderful personality. Her hair was such a pretty color. I remember it was red when she was younger, but age changed it to a reddish blonde. It always looked like she had just come from the beauty shop. Not a hair out of place. Her clothes were beautiful and of the best quality. When I would compliment her for all her good looks, qualities, clothes, etc. she would say "Yes my girls know what I like and they are so generous and good to me always. They keep me in clothes. Birthdays, Christmas, and anytime."

She was so kind and sweet, I never heard her say a cross word to anyone. She wouldn't criticize someone, she would find something good to say about that person instead. She was so very appreciative to anyone who helped her in any way. She was a very proud, intelligent, and understanding person. She seemed to always be up on all of the news. I know that she liked to read a lot.

After her husband Sam passed away, it was very lonely for her. Her little birds left the nest and she was alone, but they were all very good to come home when they could. She never let this being alone keep her from taking good care of herself. She never seemed to lose interest. I just get discouraged about herself. She always kept herself neat and pretty and was very health conscious. She ate the things that she knew was good for her. She kept in touch not only with her own children, but also with her brother, Vern and sisters, Bell and Merle, and their posterities. She loved them with all her heart and was so happy when she could go visit with them or when they came to visit with her.

I never knew Aunt Oriole very well, until I married Lyle. They moved into Uncle Will's and Aunt Melissa Jewkes' home, which was through the lot from us. There were several times when I saw a bent older lady going up the back steps of their house. I asked Oriole's girls who she was and they said it was their Grandma Boulden. Little did I know she would be my children's grandmother too in the future years. I was always sorry that I never got to speak to her or really get to know her before she passed away.

I believe the hardest that I ever heard Aunt Oriole laugh was one afternoon she walked in when I was scolding Pat. He was about 4 or 5 years old. He and Kevin Tuttle were like two peas in a pod. When Kevin wasn't 'own to our house Pat was up to his house. He had been up there most of the day. I called to him and insisted on him coming home. I scolded him and told him he had to stay home for the rest of the day. I went in the house and a few minutes later I went to talk to him and he didn't answer, so out I went and called him again. This time my voice wasn't so nice. He wasn't long getting home, but we went through this act of discipline and he didn't mind me and he wasn't very happy. He says again "Mom, Selma said me and Kevin could ride to the store with her and she said she would buy us some candy."

I sure did hate to give in to this, but I told him that he was to tell Selma to let him out at the gate when she came back from the store. "Ok", was his reply. Well this was the straw that broke the camels back and I hate to relate this again, yes he was gone. I had to yell this time much louder and I could feel the blood rushing to my face. "What is your alibi this time, when you promised faithfully that you would mind what I told you to do." He slowly walked to the house and with his head down low, he said, "Well mom, it was like this. I had my sack of candy and I went up to Ina's place and sit on her porch and was eating my candy, and I said to myself. Pat, would you like to go to Kevin's again? And I said," yes I would". So, I went to Kevin's house because I said I could." At this point Aunt Oriole, sitting there heard it all and she burst into laughter. When she could quit long enough to, talk, she said, "How could anyone scold a darn kid like that? " We continued laughing together, which was hardly the right thing to do in front of Pat.

After I had finished writing this story, Pat came in and picked it up and read it. He laughed and said, " Mom, I guess I never did tell you what gave me the idea of doing this that day." I answered, "no, you didn't." So, he told me this story. One time, I heard you talking in the kitchen. As I entered the room, I saw that there was nobody in the room but you. "Who were you talking to?" I had asked you. You replied, "No one. I guess I was just talking to myself." He then told me, "Well, I thought that if you could talk to yourself then I would do it too and that is exactly what I did that day." I guess one thing I learned from this incident is that you need to watch what you do and say in front of kids.

Here is another story I remember. My Father owned a farm up near the Milldam. He had a small orchard with cherries, apples, and apricots. We went to the orchard one summer day to pick cherries. There was a very large tree that was just loaded with cherries and it didn't take long to fill a bucket with them. I had brought all of the kids to help pick and I gave each one of them a bucket. Pete climbed to the top of the tree and sat on a limb. The other kids were picking on the lower limbs. I had filled my bucket and then I called to Pete, "Have you got your bucket full yet?" He was up where he wouldn't have to move much to pick them because the cherries were so thick. "Nope," Pete hollered back down. "Well, how come? The cherries are so thick up there that it should have only taken you a few minutes to fill your bucket." "Well," replied Pete, "I was doing what Aunt Oriole told me to do, fill your stomach first and then start on the bucket and my stomach wasn't full yet."

Here is another little story, Pat told it to me. One day I was out back of our house and Uncle Sam Jewkes, Aunt Oriole's husband was leaning against the back fence and was waving to me to come over. He said "Pat, I will give you and your friends 5 cents a bird, for all the birds that you can kill in my lot with your B-B guns. They are getting to thick around here." I fell for this offer mighty quick. When we were ready to start our job, we walked slowly around the trees and grass, sneaking and grazing up and around to find a good shot. Suddenly Aunt Oriole came out on the porch and called to us. "You boys take your guns and leave our lot. I would imagine that you are looking for birds to kill. I don't want you to kill any of the little birds." It seemed that Uncle Sam hadn't told her what he had offered us. Pat said his salary was about 30 cents before he got Aunt Oriole's instructions.

Aunt Oriole had a cute sense of humor. I loved to hear her tell a story, she made it so interesting and she added a little spice to it now and then. Those days, when we lived only through the lot from each other we were such good neighbors. We would visit each other a lot. When the ladies in our neighborhood would have a birthday and we would take pot luck and a gift and go to have a party. They were all so friendly and loveable. Aunt Oriole would always bring a fluffy lemon pie or some choice cookies. We all enjoyed it so much. Here is a list of the ladies who would always come: Maggie Childs, Francis Taylor, Ella Stilson, Geneva Jewkes, Alice Childs, Hilma Peacock, Essie Tuttle, Pearl McCall, Phyllis Humphrey, Velma Huntington, Della Taylor, Hazel Wayman, Oriole Jewkes, and Dorothea Jones. Hazel Wayman always wanted to come as she was the life of the party. Her jokes were hilarious. She lived out east of the town.

The Jones family and the Boulden family had a family get together going over the years. I know when Lyle and I were married they had these Ucre parties. Each family took their turn entertaining and boy did they ever have big feeds. They always enjoyed themselves just being together as a family. It wasn't a very popular card game, but they all knew how to play it well. Everyone but me. I played but I never understood or got the hang of it. I never got very much enjoyment out of it. I guess in time I really could have mastered it. Those who always attended were: Vern and Gertrude Boulden, Sam and Oriole Jewkes, Merle and Ray Jeff, Bertha and Louis Jones, Dorothea and Lyle Jones, Pete and Bell Jones, Rio and Leo Nielson, and ~illie and Minks Miller. They said that Grandma Mitilda Boulden liked to play when she was living. Then I guess other members could play if they were interested.

Aunt Oriole was a very good cook. She always would make special cookies of her own recipe or a fresh lemon meringue pie to take to the pot luck parties. How I loved to climb their upstairs steps in their kitchen when I was a girl. It was when Aunt Melissa lived there.

One time I went to visit Aunt Liss, as we called her. She said to me, "Hello, Dortha draggle tail." I said, " No, I'm not. Dortha draggle tail, I am Dortha soft head." She sure got a kick out of that so after that she would call me Dortha soft head. Anyway, I loved going to visit Aunt Oriole when she lived

there. She always made me feel welcome. Her house was so nice and homey, clean, and neat. Her beautiful red geraniums in her east kitchen window added to the touch that makes it home.

When Kelly was a baby, one day Grandma Jones came up and said, "Let's take the baby and go see Oriole for a while." We hadn't named him yet so they said to me, "Have you picked out a name yet?" "Well," I replied, "We thought of Kelly Carlyle Jones, which would make his initials K.C. Jones." They all said that was a good name and not to change it, so Kelly Carlyle Jones it was and when he got a few months older, Hazel Marie loved to come and carry him around and tend him. He was almost as big as she was, but she loved him and Kelly loved her.

Aunt Oriole loved her family. She had 4 beautiful and lovely daughters and one son Vern, yes 4 daughters and they each had a brother. He married Paula Jones. Her family was her lifelong jewels and her interest of life. She was very proud of them all and loved them dearly. They were her pride and joy. They all loved their mother and she raised them with love and kindness.

I loved Aunt Oriole very much and she told me many times on beautiful birthday cards that she loved me. I felt that she was a very special person in my life. Since she has been gone and Pat, lives close to her old house (until it was destroyed), for a long time, every time I went over there, I could clearly see Aunt Oriole in my mind and so many memories would seem so real. I just wish it was reality and I could visit with her and tell her what has taken place since she has been gone.

When we get up in the golden stages of our life it is really I hard to collect our thoughts and put them together on paper. I did the best that I can at 88 years of age. My thinker has been thinked out and my get up and go has got up and went. But I'll say, that it was a real pleasure having Aunt Oriole as an Aunt, a neighbor, and as a wonderful friend. I'll never forget the kindness that she showed to us. She was always interested in us and in what we were doing. All you girls are very special and choice. We will always have your mother's memories to cherish and to be thankful for.

Sincerely,

Dortha Jones