

Letters to Aunt Laurie From Nephews and Nieces

NAUGHTY BOY CALLED 'RED' TO POOR STRANGER

FIRST PRIZE

Dear Aunt Laurie:  
When I first went to school I started into the second grade, although I was just 6. I had studied at home with my mother.

I entered in the middle of the year so everyone was acquainted but myself.

When I entered a little boy hissed loudly "So, Red."

Everyone stared me through and through.

Poor little me, with my firey red hair and blue apron, standing there growing redder and redder.

"What is your name?" said the teacher, a tall woman with eyeglasses.

Then a sudden lost feeling came over me and I realized for the first time that I was alone. Dear mother was gone, gone.

Oh, the inexpressible lostness that swept over me. "Olivia Fern Sanderson," I answered her in a scared voice. I had never realized before how terribly a woman could look at you until I turned my eyes to the teacher's face.

She showed me my seat and I sat down with the eyes of the room upon me.

Next came a spelling match. I was busily absorbed in thinking about my lonesomeness when "the terrible boy" who called me "red" nudged me.

"Youse turn, redhead," he said in an audible whisper. I stammered out "W-w-what word?" "Kitten."

I began c-a-t" bravely, "i-n," and those long rows of children burst out laughing.

I took my seat in disgrace and bowed my head on my desk and cried long and softly.

After school a dear little girl with soft eyes put her arm around me, saying: "I love you, little girl."

And then "the terrible boy" threw an apple to us, saying: "That's fer red."

It was then I began to see a little happiness ahead.

BEULAH BRODE.  
Hermosa Beach.

WENT HOME TOO SOON AND GOT LOST IN BIG CITY

HONORABLE MENTION

Dear Aunt Laurie:  
When I was about 6 years old mamma promised me that I could go to school. I looked forward for the day to come.

At last when it had come I was full of excitement because some of my little friends had told me of the jolly times they had. The schoolhouse was just three blocks away. Upon arriving it did not seem such a jolly place, for the teachers, although they were kind, looked very gravely at me.

After mamma talked with the teacher a while she told me to be sure and wait for her at noon. Because she never trusted me out on the street alone, being in a large city. I soon made many acquaintances and the teacher treated me very kindly. When recess came the teacher told us to go outdoors and play. Another little girl had just commenced school that day and she was also inexperienced about school ways. She told me she thought it was noon and I, being hungry, thought probably it was. So we started toward the gate of the schoolyard, thinking mamma would be coming. But after waiting a while she failed to appear.

My little friend, whose name was Marjorie, said she knew the way home. So I said, "All right, let us go."

We started on our journey home and soon we saw a man with a monkey, so we stopped to watch him do tricks. Going on farther we saw some dolls in a store window, so we stopped to admire them. But all the time we were on the wrong street. We walked and walked, never stopping to think where we were, until who should we meet but my mamma, doing some shopping downtown. Mamma immediately took Marjorie home and warned me that if I wanted to go to school I must obey her and not be impatient.

Your niece, MAMIE FELDMAN.  
2234 Atlantic avenue, Long Beach.  
L. B. H. S., H. J. C. No. 2.

SCHOOL BUILDING BURNED THE VERY FIRST DAY

HONORABLE MENTION

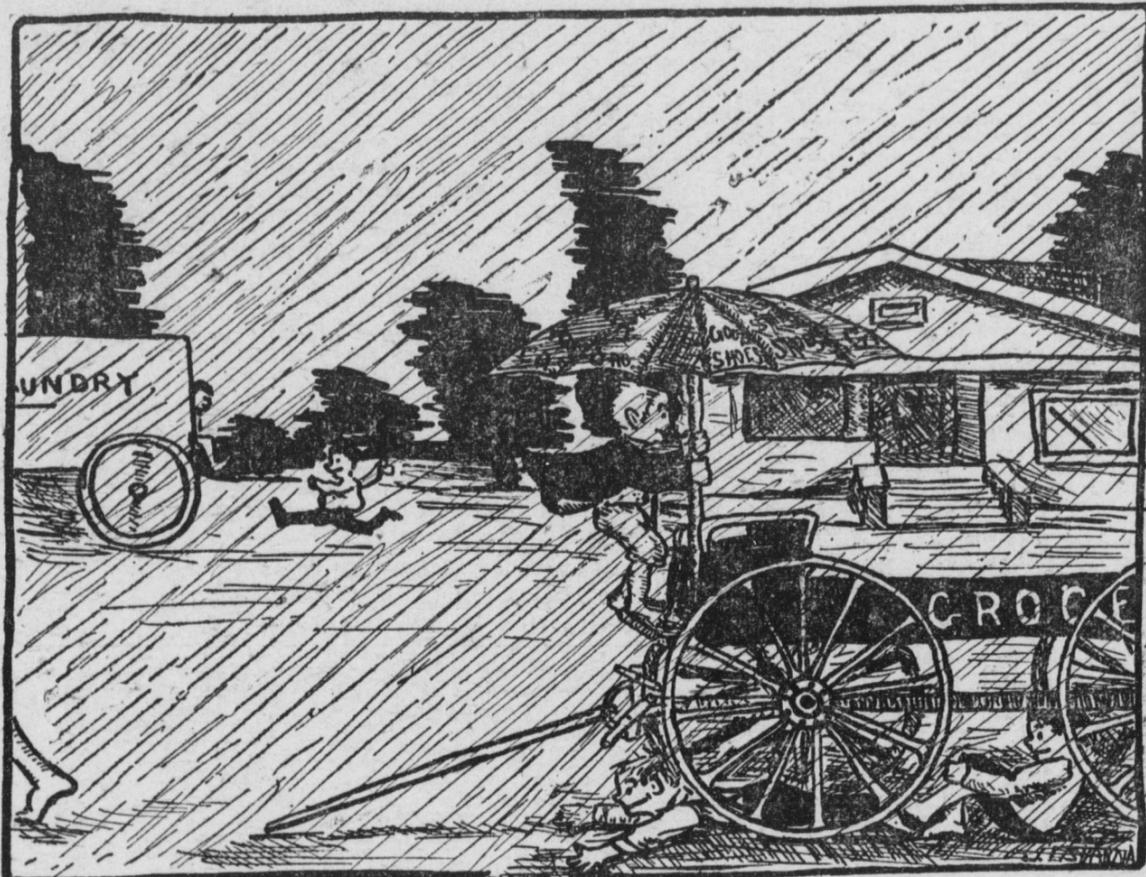
Dear Aunt Laurie:  
How well I remember my first day at school, as though it were yesterday.

Mamma had said a week before that I should go to school on the next Monday.

When at last the day came (it seemed an age to me), I was up bright and early, did my chores, ate my breakfast and was dressed a half hour before it was time to start.

Oh, how slow that half hour went!

"Summer Showers"



Special Prize Drawing, John Oshanna, Brawley

Helter, skelter, down they come,  
Raindrops shining in the sun.  
See the children put to rout,  
Hear their merry laugh and shout!

Yet, no sooner do they gain  
Shelter than the sudden rain,  
With its pelting, pattering drops,  
Slackens suddenly and stops.  
By Ada P. Campbell, in the "Housekeeper."

And when we did get started, how slow that boy seemed to walk.

When we reached the schoolhouse the boy took me to the principal's office. After the principal had showed me which room I was to go into, and had taken my name and address, I ran out to play the remaining ten minutes.

When school took up I went to my room and was very well pleased with my teacher. She took our names and addresses and wrote them in a big book, and then she gave us little slips of paper and told us to give them to our mothers.

Then she began to read us a story, but while she was reading it the gong sounded three times and the teacher ran to the door. She told us all to go to the windows, which were about five feet from the ground, and lifted us out one by one.

After I had been lifted I saw that the building was on fire.

I wondered why she did not take us out by the door, but I found out afterward that it was the old, unused room across the hall that had caught fire by the chimney breaking right under the floor, and the hall was so full of smoke that we could not go out that way.

I then went home and told the sad news. Your nephew,  
EDGAR HULL.  
Pinchot, Cal.; Pinchot school district.

THOUGHT RECESS WAS NOON AND SCAMPED HOME

HONORABLE MENTION

Dear Aunt Laurie:  
At home all was hurry and scurry. I was sitting quietly on a chair submitting meekly to the pains everyone was taking to clean me up, for I was to start to school.

I felt just a bit uneasy, not knowing what was expected of me after I was once in school.

In fifteen minutes I found myself walking along Landon street with my sister on my way to school, feeling very stiff and uncomfortable in my spotless new pinafore.

I was taken to the principal's office and after having answered a good many questions I was taken to a large room where there were many seats closely placed. In one of these I was asked to sit.

I wondered what would happen next when the door opened and a troop of children came in all flushed and panting from their morning's play. They

all looked at me very closely, making me feel quite embarrassed.

But at last their attention was drawn from me to their teacher, leaving me more comfortable. After saying "Good morning" we were sent to the blackboard to write a few words. We finally took our seats again and after a few more lessons a bell sounded.

Oh, how glad I was! The teacher told us that it was the recess bell, but I didn't know what that was, so when I got outdoors I immediately started to run home as fast as my legs could carry me. I was not looking very carefully where I was going, so the next minute I found myself lying flat on the ground, my new pinafore all soiled.

I picked myself up and when I got home I ran into the house calling, "No more school for me."

Mamma wanted to know how I got home so early. I told her we had recess and I ran home. When my sister came home I learned my mistake, and the next day I went back again.

I soon got acquainted with the other children and many were the times I was sent out in the hall for eating candy and being a naughty girl.

I have just completed the eighth grade, and very pleasant are the memories of my happy school days.

Your loving niece,  
PEARL JOHNSON.  
649 South Boyle avenue, Los Angeles;  
age 15.

DREW PICTURES ON THE BOARD

Dear Aunt Laurie:

The first day I went to school I felt rather queer. I was late and all the children were singing and I went to the teacher and asked her where my seat was and she told me that I was late. I began to cry, so she came and petted me on my head.

When we had our first five-minute recess I thought it was noon and started out to the buggy which we rode in from home, because we lived so far away from school.

When noon really did come my brother told me to go out to the buggy for lunch. One of my brothers and I sat in the front-seat and my other brother and my sister sat in the back seat.

We had for lunch some milk and some sandwiches, but best of all was a big ripe watermelon. Most of the afternoon was spent in drawing on the blackboard and singing songs. Your nephew,  
RAY S. MACE.  
Grade 3, age 9. R. F. D. 1, box 305E,  
Long Beach.

WENT TO THE WRONG ROOM AND THE CHILDREN LAUGHED

SECOND PRIZE

Dear Aunt Laurie:

I remember well my first day of school. Mamma brought me to school and left me with an older girl. I was already acquainted with a few little girls. Pretty soon the bell rang and I got in line behind some other children and followed them into the schoolhouse. It just happened that I got into the right line.

The teacher was very nice to us. About all she did that morning was to get acquainted and ask our names. Pretty soon the bell rang for recess. Then we marched out to play. I got acquainted with a girl that was my school chum for three years.

After recess, in marching in I got in the wrong line. It took me into the seventh grade room. I sat down in the first seat that I came to. I thought that I could take any seat or go in any room that I wished to.

By the time the children were in the room there was a boy with glasses pushing me out of my seat. I didn't think he had a right to. Just then my teacher came in and told the seventh grade teacher that I got lost. The teachers laughed, and so did the children. When I got to my room everyone was whispering and laughing. I was careful not to get into the wrong room the next time we marched in.

In the afternoon we spoke pieces and drew on the board.

ROSE WILLIAMS.  
Sawtelle school, eighth grade. Age 14 years. 310 First street.

TEACHER TRIED TO COMFORT LITTLE TIMID CHILDREN

HONORABLE MENTION

Dear Aunt Laurie:

I can well remember my first day at school. As I hadn't the least idea of what it was like I was anxious to see. Of course mamma had to go with me, as I was too timid to go alone. I remember wearing a little blue shirt and white coat.

Upon reaching the grounds I saw many little boys and girls like myself, all wondering what was to come next. Then we went upstairs to the kindergarten room and there were many children standing around a pleasant looking teacher.

Some were crying and the teacher looked as if she were doing her best