

A Letter to Orval
(From Mary Louisa Powell Lowe)
[Punctuation modernized]

Dear son,

You wanted one to tell you all about your brother. If he was staying here at home to help his Dad and Mother. He has not left us so far, and is surely doing fine.

He is helping Dad with his work and helping me with [illegible]. He gets up and gets breakfast, as handy as can be most every other morning and it sure seems good to me. Sometimes he does the sweeping or helps me scrub the floor when it's raining, so he can't be doing something out of doors. If his pals would only let him be, he'd get along all right, but they pester him the whole day long, and sometimes half the night. It's Lee, first last and always, "Come Earl, lets go and play," and D.K. begged him for a week, "Come Earl, lets run away," and just because Earl would not go, that boy was awful sore. He said that he would not play with the coward any more.

Today Earl was out working as busy as could be. Dad had him making garden, and as usual here came Lee. "Come Earl, let's go and play," said he, but Earl kept right on going. Then along came brother Manny, say "Earl, what are you doing? Let's have a game of marbles, but Earl kept raking stones. "Go play a game with Lee," he said, then along came Tommy Jones. He followed right along with Earl and watched him work awhile. Then along came Shorty. "Hello Earl." You know his pleasant smile. "Let's have a game of cards. What say? I think you've worked enough for one day." So, "all right," said Earl, "We'll have a game of [sluff]" And that's the way they pester him. It happens every day from one to six are calling, "Come Earl, let's go and play."