

## **School Boys**

*09-05-2016 by Harry Zirkelbach  
Stars and Sun date 34535*

It is likely that every child has retained some first-day school memories.  
Some of those moments may be distasteful.

So it was with Steve born in Dobravka, Czechoslovakia, immigrated to New York with his parents, he's 6, the whole family speaking Russian and German, no English. Taken to school from the family farm by mother, with little explanation, no understanding of English. Bored. Suddenly he's attentive. Other children, one by one, march to the blackboard, put chalk to the surface. He can do that, volunteers. Confidently, he scribbles all over the chalkboard; is interrupted when the irate teacher whacks his knuckles, shouting meaningless words. Hostility visible, he goes home. Mom is no ally; she punishes him in words he can understand. Takes him, hand held tightly to prevent his escape, returns him to school. He sits there hours secretly telling himself.  
"I'm not going to like school".

It was not all that different in another nearby city. That boy, family's delight, is enrolled in School at the age of five. Once there accepting silence the first few hours, the boy returns home, tells his mother he quit. Brutality aside, he is returned, again hand held tightly so no escape, and in words this son and teacher understand, it's agreed, he will continue First grade in 1927. His thought,  
"I better like school; there's talk of years of this punishment."

In both cases, compliance not gracious. Mom insisted.

For both. eventually extremely enticing at times. You listen, understand. Not bad. Doesn't mean permanent agreement at all times. Especially when things had to be memorized, The alphabet and numbers are simple enough.

Yet Spelling didn't make sense always. Sure dog is reasonable as "dog", but cat seemed better represented as "Kat". And that lengthy explanation of the pronunciations of "c", too abstract for a young mind.

At the same time, numbers were always true, no complex variation of any number. Arithmetics, later math, captures the mind.

The same minds failed to approve pseudo, Hors d'oeuvre, to/too/two, yes Catsup also, where even today Del Monte spells the sauce CATSUP; Heinz using KETCHUP same ingredients, pronunciation.

Both boys grew to be adult friends. The former, a leader. The latter, that student who made the top of every class look so much better; both learn to spell potpourri.

And Now, a word from our sponsor.

**Hi, I'm Honest John, Esquire.**

**When attended school,  
were you struck with a ruler, eraser or worse,  
disappointed in classroom,  
thought you deserved a higher grade,  
or were kept off the Cheer Leader Squad for any reason;  
you may be eligible for compensation,  
though that teacher dead, the school closed.  
Special Insurance and School Board funds have been made available;  
call now, before others.  
This is a free call, and we'll share any award with you.  
Call SEE-MOR-CASH, now.**

**If we win your claim, you are immediately eligible  
for a paid appearances on our next ad campaigns.  
Some acting experience valuable.**

**Thank You. God Bless.**