

The devil and Miss Arngrim

Nellie Oleson planning to mend her nasty ways

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LOS ANGELES— Sometimes Alison Arngrim gets a kick out of being recognized as Nellie Oleson, the resident shrew of the NBC series *Little House on the Prairie*.

But sometimes the price of fame can be a real pain.

"I've been getting recognized a lot more lately," said the slimly attractive blonde during a recent NBC-sponsored interview session. "Most of the time, people will come up and say, 'Hello, Nellie, how are you?'"

"But some people get very upset. I was once at

a fair when a child came up to me and kicked me quite forcefully in the behind.

"And then there was the time a woman came up to me in a restroom and said, 'Oh, you're vile, you're evil, you're horrible, and I love you.'"

SUCH INCIDENTS ASIDE, Miss Arngrim truly enjoys being the dose of vinegar that spikes the apple-pie Americana of *Little House on the Prairie*. She has even incorporated jokes about the character in the standup comedy routines she performs in various Los Angeles clubs. "Nellie Oleson," claims the actress who plays her, "is the kind of girl who'd use a microwave oven as a birdcage."

The joke is not much of an exaggeration. During her six years as the daughter of nosy Harriett Oleson, Miss Arngrim, now 18, has teased cripples, mocked the poor, humiliated her father, faked illness and injury, blackmailed other kids, and in general behaved much like a frontier-era ancestor of J.R. Ewing.

"It's great to get up in the morning and know you're gonna beat people up all day," Miss Arngrim said with a mischievous twinkle in her piercing blue eyes.

"I make friends with people who like the show, and with people who don't like the show — be-
See 'LITTLE HOUSE'S' on Page 9C."



Alison Arngrim enjoys being the dose of vinegar that spices up the apple pie in *Little House on the Prairie*.



Miss Arngrim, relaxing during time off the set. Some say she has behaved in the show like a frontier-era ancestor of J.R. Ewing.