

An illustration of a man in a brown suit, a flat cap, and round glasses, smiling and holding a camera. He is standing in front of a zoo enclosure with a lion. He is holding a notepad and a pen. Three children are looking at him: a boy in a blue shirt, a boy in a grey shirt and cap, and a girl in a blue dress. The background shows a hazy landscape with mountains.

A BRAVE Little Mormon Girl

By Elizabeth Stitt
(Based on a true story)

Will Helen have
the courage to
share her beliefs?

Thou must open thy mouth at all times, declaring my gospel with the sound of rejoicing (D&C 28:16).

Hurry up! I want to see the lions,” Billy said, tugging on his sister’s sleeve.

“I’m coming,” Helen said. She jumped off the bench and grabbed Billy’s hand. They trotted off to see the lions.

When they reached the lions’ cage, they saw a man holding a camera and a little notebook. Children were gathered around him. A lady introduced the man.

“Children, this is Mr. Maier,” she said. “He is an author visiting from New Jersey.”

An author! Helen liked meeting new people, especially famous people from far away.

“I travel from place to place and write about what I see,” Mr. Maier told the children. “Do any of you have a question for me?”

Helen raised her hand high in the air. Mr. Maier asked her to come to the front of the crowd. Helen scooted through the crowd until she stood near Mr. Maier.

“What are you writing about today?” Helen asked.

“Today I’m writing about Utah,” he said. “Why don’t you tell me about yourself?”

Helen felt her heart start to beat faster. What could she think of to tell a famous author?

“Well, I’m 10 years old,” Helen said. Then she paused. Surely she could think of something more important. “And I’m a Mormon,” she added.

“A Mormon?” he asked. “Tell me more.”

“Well, my great-great-grandfather was Brigham Young, one of the prophets of our Church,” Helen replied. “And this Church is the true faith.”

“Is it really?” he asked.

“Yes, it is,” she said. “What is your religion?”

“I don’t have a religion,” Mr. Maier said.

Helen was surprised. “Why not?” she asked.

“I don’t know,” he answered. “But maybe you can pray for me so I can be blessed too.”

“I can do that,” Helen said.

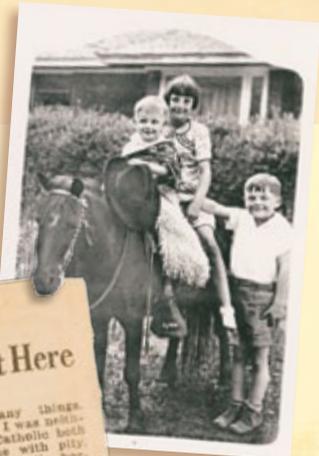
Then Helen got an idea. “Why don’t you get baptized in the true faith?”

Mr. Maier smiled. “That’s kind of you,” he said. “I think I would like to learn more about this faith first.”

When Mr. Maier returned home to New Jersey, he wrote a newspaper article about Helen. He called her a “zealous little Mormon girl.” He meant that she was enthusiastic and devoted to her faith. Mr. Maier was so impressed with Helen that he wrote to her and sent her copies of his books.

A few years later, Mr. Maier passed away. When Helen was older, she received permission from Mr. Maier’s family to have his temple work done. Thanks to Helen, a young man was baptized in the temple for Mr. Maier in the “true faith.”

Helen at age 8 with her brothers Billy (standing) and Russell.



Salt Lake Visitor Writes About Child He Met Here

There are so many things for a child to pray for that memory won't hold them all. So ten-year-old Helen Cannon, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Tenney Cannon, Jr., 1924 Tenth East street, just can't remember whether or not she has prayed for the nicest man she ever met after he asked her to. She rather hopes she did, since he wrote about her in an eastern newspaper and sent her such a friendly little letter with the clipping.

Quite a while ago, Helen doesn't remember the date, she met and talked with a man "who was awfully interested in children" at the zoo one Saturday morning. Recently she received the clipping of a story about his experiences in Salt Lake written by Marcus Maier, High-Town, New Jersey columnist.

"Yesterday I visited the Salt Lake zoo," said the article in part, "and there I met a young boy, an ardent Catholic and Helen Cannon, a zealous little Mormon girl.

We talked about many things. When I confessed that I was neither a Mormon nor a Catholic both children looked at me with astonishment. I suggested that a prayer on my behalf, waited to heaven from the lips of so fine a pair of children might be efficacious.

"Little Helen looked dubious at first, but she rather hoped she was a great-great-granddaughter of Brigham Young himself. Just to look at her makes one think of that grand old man with increased respect. There was no shoddy maverick strain in that great family. Then her beautiful face lighted up with inspiration. "Why don't you get baptized in the true faith? You could do that" this very afternoon while the Elders are in the Temple," she urged.

"God bless little Helen," Maier concluded in the article.

And Helen emphatically declares that she will never forget Mr. Maier. She doesn't remember the Catholic boy's name.

An article about Helen's story appeared in a Salt Lake City newspaper.



ILLUSTRATION BY BEN SIMONSEN