

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 shirt. 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.”

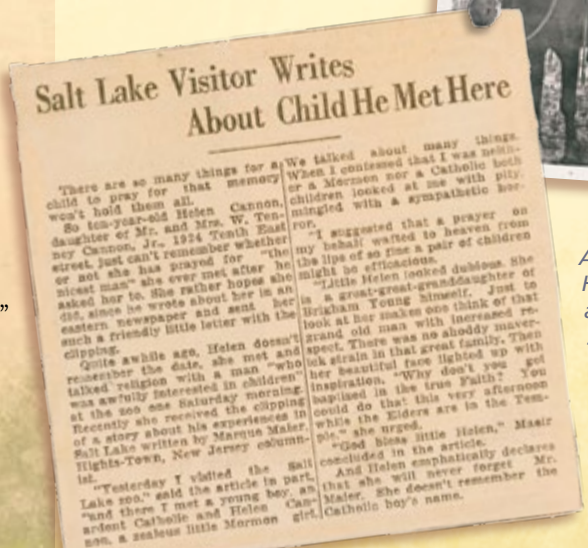
When Mr. Maier returned home to New Jersey, he wrote a newspaper article about Helen. He called her a “zealous little Mormon girl.” He meant that she was enthusiastic and devoted to her faith. Mr. Maier was so impressed with Helen that he wrote to her and sent her copies of his books.

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.”



ILLUSTRATION BY BEN SIMONSEN

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



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