

The Gift of a Brother

In this article, published in December 1920, Newel K. Young honors the memory of his younger brother, Howard Spencer Young. Howard was born at Orderville, Utah on 30 October 1880. At the age of ten his parents moved to old Mexico where Howard lived until his untimely death at Colonia Dublan on 6 March 1912 of a ruptured appendix. He left a young wife and two small children.



Image is from a family group photo which is only known image of Howard Spencer Young.

Stepping Stones

By Newel K. Young

IV. THE GIFT OF A BROTHER

Although I was only six years old, yet I can see him now just as he looked then. On his little bed, white and feeble, he lay faintly breathing. One could scarcely see that he lived. But for his big, bright, blue eyes, and the brown, wavy hair that crowned his head, my little, sick, three-year-old brother seemed nothing more than skin and bones.

His weak, bony, helpless hands; his slender, skinny legs; his worn, gaunt body; his thin white face—all these suggested only death. Day after day and week after week as we watched over him we had seen the fever and pain waste away his flesh.

I want you to see this child: This sick, pain-racked laddie; this feeble, suffering babe, lying there—*dying*.

Every one said the case was hopeless. The neighbors urged mother to give the child up and let him die in peace. I understand *now* how hard it was for her, for she was in great sorrow and trouble, far worse than seeing those we love most pass from this life.

Long years after, mother told me, while we were talking of this incident, that she stood girt and ready to say, "Father in heaven, Thy will be done." But she must make sure that it was His will, and not her lack of faith that left her child to die. She must have the witness in her heart that she had done all that a mother's love can do. Fear or doubt were to have no place or part in this matter.

On a day set apart by mother, she, my eight-year-old sister Vilate, and I, fasted and prayed for Howard's recovery. Assisted by another woman mother washed his body from crown to sole with soap and warm water, after which they rubbed him with alcohol.

Prest. McAllister of the St. George Temple, with two other Elders, came to administer to him the ordinance of anointing and blessing the sick.

President McAllister was mouth in sealing the anointing, and blessing the child. It must have been a wonderful prayer. In my childish fancy I thought the Lord must be present in person. I more than half expected to see Him when I opened my eyes at the close of the prayer. I know that He was near. Brother McAllister promised Howard that he should live and be well from that hour. I think all who were present felt that the promise made the little dying fellow was from the Lord, and that he would recover. But not one of us was prepared for what happened.

Mother was holding the sick child on a pillow in her arms during the administration. He was too weak to raise his head from the pillow to take a drink of water. Mother had told the Elders that while blessing him and praying for his recovery to dedicate him to the Lord that he might be prepared for the Father's will.

The brethren had not reached the gate upon leaving the room when Howard astonished and shocked us by sitting upright and saying, "Mama, dress me and let me go outside to play."

"My dear child," mother replied, in her astonishment: "You are still too sick and weak to get up. I will put you in your little bed. In a few days, when you are quite well and strong, you may go out to play."

How glorious he must have looked when he spoke next. He challenged mother's faith with these words "Why, Ma Young, those good men prayed for me! I am not sick any more! Get my clothes! I am going out to play!"

Mother's courage and faith rose

and met the challenge of her child. She dressed him. He leaped from her lap and ran outside rejoicing and playing. He was well. Never again until he was a man grown was he bedfast with sickness. The Lord had spared my brother to live with us for twenty-nine years more. Before passing from this life in 1912 he had married and become the father of two beautiful children, a son and a daughter. Al-

though Howard was an upright, godly man, his little family are fully worthy of such a husband and father. The association of this good brother for so many years, and the memories and influence he has left me are one of the mighty hopes that help me to be a man. And since death had marked him for her own, as related above, it was in very deed a gift of a brother from God.



Only known image of Howard Spencer Young with his mother and two brothers. Howard is rear left, then Edward Webb in the middle and Newel K. Young on the right.