

# Reviews

**Recapitulation**  
Wallace Stegner  
Doubleday, 1979  
278 pages, \$8.95



The title of Wallace Stegner's twelfth and newest novel, *Recapitulation*, works in several ways. For one, the book recapitulates the Salt Lake City adolescence and young manhood of Bruce

Mason, the autobiographical survivor of *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* (my own favorite Stegner, with *Angle of Repose* and *The Spectator Bird* tied for a close second). In that earlier novel, still one of the best novels of the American west and of the American family, Bruce Mason, for all his resemblance to the author, was kept carefully peripheral to Elsa and Bo Mason, the parents at the center of the book, which left Stegner lots of room to retell Bruce's Salt Lake story in the new book without repeating himself overmuch. Here again are Bo's bootlegging, Elsa's slow attrition by cancer, and Bo's murder-suicide in a sleazy hotel lobby, but seen at moments or from angles not used earlier, and recalled by a fully matured Bruce Mason who thought he had permanently buried his past. And here is a great deal we did not see earlier of Bruce: more of his solitary and painful adolescence; his gropings after sexual knowledge among the crowds at Saltair; his friendships with Mormons Jack Bailey and Joe Mulder; his collegiate dalliance with Salt Lake bohemianism; his poignant, abruptly and obscurely broken love affair with a mixed-up Mormon girl from Wayne County—in short, his discovery of himself, or at least of some version of a self that can leave Salt Lake and move on into adulthood, the future.

"Recapitulation" in a second sense: The book also dexterously incorporates and thus "retells" three earlier short stories Stegner wrote out of his Salt Lake City experience—"Maiden in a Tower," "The Volunteer" and "The Blue-Winged Teal." (The first and third have always seemed particularly fine stories to me). Now Chapter 1 of Part 1 in the

novel, "Maiden in a Tower" gives us Bruce Mason's re-entry into the city of his youth:

The highway entering Salt Lake City from the west curves around the southern end of Great Salt Lake past Black Rock and the ratty beaches, swings north away from the smoke of the smelter towns, veers toward the dry lake bed where a long time ago the domes of the Saltair Pavilion used to rise like an Arabic exhalation, and straightens out eastward again. Ahead, across the white flats the city is a mirage, or a mural: metropolitan towers, then houses and channeled streets, and then the mountain wall.

Driving into that, smelling the foul, exciting salt-flat odor, Bruce Mason began to feel like the newsreel diver whom the reversed projector sucks feet first out of the splash. (p. 3)

Here in a funeral home on East South Temple, the very house with a tower where the desperately loveless maiden Holly had reigned over crowds of "Jazz Age bohemians crawling in and out," and where now the aunt who was the only other survivor of Mason's family lies in the back parlor ready for burial, Mason first feels "the pressure of a crowd of ghosts" that will haunt him throughout the novel. The small story both enriches and is enlarged by its new context.

This is even more true of "Blue-Winged Teal," which as Chapter 2 of Part 4 in the novel, gives us Bruce Mason's last remembered encounter with his worn and despairing father—a "duck feed" in a dingy poolhall that becomes the only family love-feast this father and son can share, a repast of mingled rage, love, pity, repudiation. Bruce Mason sees his father in a moment of merciless and pained clarity, which permits him to imagine the old man's emptiness:

For a moment, in the sad light, with the wreckage of the duck feast at his elbow, he wondered if there was anything more to his life, or to his father's life. . . or to anyone's life, than playing the careful games that deadened you into sleep. (p. 262)

After that, when Bo Mason comes back from a helpless and maudlin crying jag in the toilet, Bruce can announce that he is leaving for good:

But he did not say it in anger, or with the cold command of himself that he had imagined in advance. He said it like a cry, and with the feeling he might have had on letting go the hand of a companion too weak and exhausted to cling any longer to their inadequate shared driftwood in a wide cold sea. (p. 263)

I had always felt that this story, despite its differently named characters and careful avoidance of place-names, belonged to the Mason family cycle and to Salt Lake City; it is good to see it in what seems its rightful place. And here, besides being a farewell to his father, it also becomes Bruce Mason's penultimate farewell to what has become "this hateful city."

It is a farewell Mason never really sets aside; so the latent pun in "recapitulation," a re-surrender, never quite becomes an active sense of the title in the book, notwithstanding that Mason immerses himself in his past so deep and so often that both he and the reader risk losing sight of what little there is for him to do in the present. The Bruce Mason at the end of *Big Rock Candy Mountain* had seemed a version of the artist—the artist as memory, the surviving consciousness that held his family's experience and a piece of history and could say, in a human echo of the Artist of Genesis, "It was a good thing to have been along and seen." But the older Bruce Mason of this novel, "the ex-ambassador, the editor, the expert on Middle Eastern oil" called to do diplomatic troubleshooting at the OPEC meeting in Caracas, is (or is dead-set on becoming) thoroughly the rootless, future-oriented man of the mid-twentieth century erasing the last vestiges of his past. Mason carries a little black book in which he jots "appointments, reminders, obligations" and then, when they are taken care of, solidly inks them out "so blackly that they could not be read;" his friends see him as a man "indifferent to where he had been, interested only in where he was going" (p. 237). That is temporarily untrue for the duration of Mason's stay in Salt Lake City, but when he has buried his aunt, he inks out both the memoranda of his short sojourn and "Bruce Mason as he once was" (p. 278). Like each of us, Mason may be, in Bergeson's phrase, "a thing that

lasts;" but for him, lasting does not depend on any connection with the thing he was.

The Bruce Mason of *Recapitulation* may superficially resemble the *senex iratus* narrators Stegner has used in his last three novels—he's getting old, and there's plenty he's angry at (Salt Lake urban renewal, for one thing). But finally he does not appear to be as much a spokesman for Stegner's own values and accumulated wisdom as are Joe Allston (*All the Little Live Things* and *The Spectator Bird*) and Lyman Ward (*Angle of Repose*); for in his nostalgia and "disgust for the shoddy present" (which Stegner says are "not enough" in his essay, "History, Myth and the Western Writer") he seems determined not to have any "sense of a personal and possessed past." Stegner has witnessed our need to "rig up... a line between past and present" to help us "make it from shelter to responsibility and back again;" Mason has cut the lines, done with shelter, lives and responds only forward. As Benjamin DeMott pointed out in the *New York Times*, he represents us not only in that "we can't bear connection" (D. H. Lawrence's insight), but also in that "we find continuity still more endurable." Maybe it's in the genes: is Bruce Mason the logical limit of the belated pioneer instinct that turned his father into a permanent hobo, the "Bo" who never could get home?

*Sunstone's* Mormon readers may want to know what the novel has to say about a more limited "us." Mormonism is, in a sense, all around Mason, but it is decidedly peripheral. The novel gives us a shrewd and selective Gentile's-eye view of a segment of Mormon time most of us will never know. It can strike us with an image of "the temple... spiny as a horned toad" (p. 25) or beguile us with its extended cinematic treatment of a Mormon non-temple wedding against the red rock backdrop of Southern Utah, or puzzle us (as Mason is puzzled) with the enigmatic Nola Gordon, Mason's forsaken first love (another in Stegner's gallery of credible women characters). The best and worst characters in the book are jack-Mormons—Joe Mulder and Jack Bailey. Bailey is an all-too-familiar type even now: a roaring boy whose father and bishop hustle him into a mission he promptly ruins and comes home from in disgrace so he can go on roaring. Stegner, I'd guess, stays with the Mormonism he knows best, and handles it well, but he hasn't much to say about the life of orthodox Mormons.

Or has he? Orthodox Mormons caught up in the "lengthened stride" of accelerating "activity" in an "expanding church" (expanding like the universe blown out from its center in all directions infinitely) know something about blotting out the past and sense of deracination that can entail (last decade's razing of the Coalville Tabernacle was one symbolic instance; the recent "renovation" of the Logan Temple is another). Perhaps this is one reason for increasingly frequent exhortations to recapitulate our own personal and possessed past. Bruce Mason shows the way we may be going if we don't.

Bruce W. Jorgensen

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### Orson Hyde

Howard H. Barron  
Horizon Publishers  
336 pages, \$6.95



Who was Orson Hyde? This question has undoubtedly been asked many times by Latter-day Saints who have encountered his name while reading Church history. The passage of a century has

effectively obscured the accomplishments of the man whose life was so closely entwined with the development of the Restored Church in its infancy. Howard H. Barron attempts in this book to bring attention to the career of a man long neglected by Mormon writers.

Orson Hyde was born in Connecticut in 1805, but after the death of his parents was raised for seven years by foster parents. At age 13 Orson left with this family to settle the virgin lands of Ohio's Western Reserve. At age 18 he decided to strike out on his own and settled in Kirtland, Ohio, where he worked for a time as a clerk in the Gilbert and Whitney store. While at Kirtland he came under the influence of Sidney Rigdon, a prominent Campbellite minister, which eventually led Orson to embrace the Campbellite teachings and become one of their preachers. It was in this capacity that he first encountered the elders of the L.D.S. Church in a public debate in which he attacked the new religion's claims. Ultimately Orson Hyde was won over to the Mormon cause after meeting with Joseph Smith, its prophet.

the church sent Hyde on several missions, during which he was a companion to both Samuel and Hyrum Smith. In 1833 he was sent by the Prophet to Missouri to petition the governor of that state for redress of the Saints' grievances there. Later he volunteered to go with Zion's Camp on its march to Missouri in 1834. Following the trials of Zion's Camp Orson was found worthy to be called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve, which was just being organized. In his role as an apostle he traveled with Heber C. Kimball to England to begin the missionary effort there in 1837. In 1841 Orson Hyde left on his famous trip to Palestine where he dedicated the Holy Land for the return of the Jews.

Despite his involvement with the momentous events that were part of the early growth of the Church, Orson Hyde was often at odds with the leadership of the Church. In 1835 he was briefly disfellowshipped, and again in 1838 he was excommunicated from the Church for siding with Thomas B. Marsh against the Prophet during the turbulent events that surrounded the Saints' expulsion from Missouri. In both cases Orson came to deeply regret his actions, and regained his membership in the Church and his position in the Quorum of the Twelve.



Following the death of Joseph Smith in 1844 Hyde continued to take an active part in the leadership of the Church. He returned once more to England with John Taylor to preside over the Saints in the British Isles, where he also served as editor of the *Millennial Star*. Upon returning to America he was sustained as President of the Quorum of the Twelve, a position he held for over twenty-five years. President Hyde remained in Iowa to direct the Saints in that state to prepare for immigration, and also to speak for the Church through the pages of the *Frontier Guardian*, of which he was editor. During this period he had the opportunity of baptizing Oliver Cowdery back into the Church shortly before Cowdery's death. Orson Hyde finally saw Utah in 1852, and was immediately sent out to help the Saints establish colonies in the outlying areas of the Territory, eventually to spend the last years of his life in Spring City in the Sanpete Valley.

Without question Orson Hyde's life was as intimately connected with the restoration of the Gospel as a man's could be, and certainly worthy of a

thorough biography. Unfortunately, Mr. Barron has produced more of a religious history than a biography. The reader learns quite a bit about Orson Hyde the public figure but woefully little about Orson Hyde the man. Orson Hyde the husband, father and friend is well hidden in this book, while a monument has been built to Orson Hyde the Apostle. Mr. Barron turned out a work that will build testimonies but avoid the very taint of controversy.

Orson Hyde, however, was a very controversial figure; a product of the times in which he lived. Although raised to high station in the Kingdom, he was not above condemning the leadership that placed him there, hence his excommunication in 1838. The author lightly passes over the rift between Orson Hyde and Brigham Young, which may have begun in Missouri when Orson turned against Joseph Smith. With just a little research into some obvious primary sources the author would have realized that Brigham Young considered Orson Hyde unfit for his calling, saying: "He is no more fit to stand at the Head of the Quorum of the Twelve than a dog. . . . He is a stink in my nostrils." Mr. Barron makes no mention of Orson's rebaptism in 1856, which Brigham Young required of him in hopes that he could regain the spirit of the calling. The author also claims that Orson Hyde was called to preside over the Sanpete Stake because of his great experience with colonization, whereas in reality he was more or less retired to the position because Brigham Young considered him no longer able to handle difficult assignments. The most amazing of Mr. Barron's oversights, however, was his uncritical acceptance of Brigham Young's reordering of the seniority of the Quorum of the Twelve, which conveniently kept Orson Hyde from ascending to the Presidency after Brigham Young's death in 1877.

The problems with Mr. Barron's biography of Orson Hyde primarily stem from his almost total reliance upon published sources for his research. Where are the quotes from Hyde's correspondence with Brigham Young and other prominent pioneers? Where are the quotes from the journals of Wilford Woodruff and other Church leaders? In their place we find lengthy extracts from Orson Hyde's conference addresses and public speeches. The end result is a book that provides insight into Orson's theology, but too little insight into his life.

David L. Washburn

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# Sunday School Supplement

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In general the "Supplement" this month will deal with the Kirtland period. Included is a bibliography and some supplementary material relating to the physical and spiritual milieu of Kirtland.

### The Church in Kirtland

Max H. Parkin, "The Nature and Causes of Internal and External Conflict of the Mormons in Ohio between 1830 and 1838" (M.A. thesis, BYU, 1966).

Robert Kent Fielding, "The growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio" (Ph.D. diss. Indiana University, 1957).

Max H. Parkin, "Kirtland, A Stronghold for the Kingdom," in McKiernan et. al, *The Restoration Movement*, pp. 63-98.

Max H. Parkin, "Mormon Political Involvement in Ohio," *BYU Studies* 9 (Summer 1969): 484-502.

T. Edgar Lyon, "Independence, Missouri, and the Mormons," *BYU Studies* 13 (Autumn 1972): 10-19

April 1979 *Ensign*.

R. Kent Fielding, "The Mormon Economy in Kirtland, Ohio," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 27 (October 1959): 331-56.

R. Mark McKiernan, "The Conversion of Sydney Rigdon to Mormonism," *Dialogue* 5 (Summer 1970): 71-78.

Danel W. Bachman, "New Light on an Old Hypothesis: The Ohio Origins of the Revelation on Eternal marriage," *Journal of Mormon History* 5 (1978): 19-32.

BYU Studies, Summer 1971, is devoted to the Kirtland period and includes the following: "The Chronology of the Ohio Revelations," Earl E. Olson, "The Meaning of the Kirtland Egyptian Papers," Hugh Nibley, "Kirtland: A Perspective on Time and Place," Robert L. Layton, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," Dean C. Jessee, "The Impact of the First Preaching in Ohio," Richard L. Anderson, "Kirtland as a Center of Missionary Activity, 1830-1838," Davis Bitton, "An Impressive Letter from the Pen of Joseph Smith," LaMar C. Berrett, "Sources on the History of the Mormons in Ohio: 1830-

38," Stanley B. Kimball.

BYU Studies, Summer 1972, contains articles on the later Kirtland period including: "The Quest for a Restoration: The Birth of Mormonism in Ohio," Milton V. Backman, Jr., "The Kirtland Diary of Wilford Woodruff," Dean C. Jessee, "The Kirtland Temple," Lauritz G. Petersen, "Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland, Ohio, 'Sketch Book,'" Leonard J. Arrington, "The Kirtland Safety Society: The Stock Ledger Book and the Bank Failure," D. Paul Sampson and Larry T. Wimmer, "The Failure of the Kirtland Safety Society," Scott H. Partridge, "The Waning of Mormon Kirtland," Davis Bitton, "A Bibliography of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York, Ohio, and Missouri," Peter Crawley.

### Environment

Robert L. Layton in his article "Kirtland: A Perspective on Time and Place," *BYU Studies* 11 (Summer 1971): 423-38, details the sights and circumstances which greeted the earliest Mormons in Ohio. He makes the following important statement:



The general lay of the land and climate were familiar to those members of the church who had come from New York. As it had been farther east, the forest was the major physical reality which faced new settlers—a familiar obstacle which would not be the challenge in later settlement in the Great Basin and even in the prairies of Missouri.

Layton describes the forests and the process of clearing for planting:

It seems doubtful that any of us today can really appreciate the overwhelming impact of the forest in the settlement of America. Forests were both a blessing and a curse. The forest provided lumber, medicines, nuts, dyes, fuel, fencing, wagons, ships, tools, sugar, tannin, and even roads. When the first settlement of Americans reached the grasslands of the west, they were lost without wood. On the other hand the forest was a barrier to road building, a problem to clear for farm land, and often thought to harbor disease, or to change the climate for good or bad if cut away.

Ohio was an area of superb forest. Except for areas of swamp and very limited prairies, or open grass areas, the entire state was covered with oak, maple, black walnut, black locust, walnut, wild cherry, and many other trees and shrubs. The sycamore is noted as the king of the forest, and one contemporary account relates a measurement of fifteen and one-half feet in diameter for one of these trees. Most trees were smaller, but many reached two or three feet in diameter and were difficult to remove. When Governor St. Clair was ordered to cut a thirty-foot road through part of Ohio in 1791, he found it far easier to cut three ten-foot roads and thus avoid the larger trees.

To clear land for agriculture took a man three to four weeks of dawn-'till-dark labor for one acre. Once fifteen to twenty acres had been cleared and agriculture begun, many settlers hired a professional slasher to clear additional land. The slasher would study carefully the prevailing winds and the slope of the land, then carefully notch the larger trees over a long strip about thirty feet in width, cutting so the trees would incline toward the center of the strip, and deepening the notches as he moved windward. Upon finishing the strip he waited for a favorable wind, then felled the "starter" tree against the next in line and so felled a number of acres at one time. The trees were then allowed to dry for two or three years, following which they were fired to burn the branches and brush. The large trunks were cut into logs, either with an ax, or by building a fire on and around the fallen trunk and burning through the log. The latter was known as "niggering" and an

experienced man by attending a number of fires and by "sawing" the burning poles against the log to remove the charcoal, could obtain logging lengths more rapidly than was possible with an ax. At this point the neighbors would often hold a logging bee, and men and oxen would assemble to remove the logs for later use as lumber or fence rails. Finally there remained the problem of removing the stumps, which were burned as much as possible, and then left to rot. Clearing was a long process requiring years of labor before the land could be plowed without difficulty, but clearing increased the value of the land sufficiently enough that some settlers supported themselves by taking up new land, clearing it, selling to later arrivals, then moving on to repeat the process in newer lands to the west (pp. 426-427).

#### Journals and Diaries

One of the most effective ways of introducing a student to the events of history is through an absorbing journal or diary. Hearing of events from a first hand observer makes otherwise distant happenings seem more immediate and real. There are many such journals available for an enterprising teacher. The most valuable resource in helping to locate such journals is *Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies* compiled by Davis Bitton.

The Kirtland diary of Wilford Woodruff covering his six-month stay in Kirtland prior to his departure for a New England Mission on 31 May 1837 is aptly described as a "significant mirror of the men and institutions of Kirtland" by Dean Jessee in "The Kirtland Diary of Wilford Woodruff," *BYU studies* 12 (Summer 1972): 265-399. Share, for example, Woodruff's excited report of his first glimpses of Kirtland after an absence of over two years:

There is an enjoyment in meeting our brethren & companions in tribulation that the world knows not of because it flows from a Celestial Source.

After spending a short time in conversing with my friends a more important scene was now to open to my view than Kings ever saw or Princes ever knew in this generation which was to visit the Temple of the Lord & its contents Elder Smoot and myself visited each apartment of the House accompanied by Elder Parrish & I must confess the scenery is indisscribable. When I entered the threshold of the house & Passed into the lower room their was great solemnity if not awe immediately

overwhelmed me I felt indeed as if my footsteps were in the Temple of the Lord After walking into the Pulpets erected for the Priesthoods & viewing the curtains all bespeaking that grandure, solemnity & order that nothing short of wisdom from God could invent. We then visited the upper rooms & there viewed four Egyptian Mumies & also the Book of Abram written by his own hand & not onwly the hieroglyphicks but also many figures that this precious treasure contains are calculated to make a lasting impression upon the mind which is not to be erased many other important views I was Privileged with in the upper story the school rooms. belfry &c. All indicating great architecture & wisdom we then spent some time in visiting the Bank & Printing office But wonder on wonder strikes my sense to look into the casket of the great work of Israels God in these last Days as the prophet exclaims he does things we looked not for. Two & a half years since I left Kirtland with my Brethren in their Poverty to go fourth to visit our brethren in tribulation in Zion then our Brethren in Kirtland were poor. Despised. & even looked upon By the pomp of babylon with disdain & disgrace who stood waiting with eager eyes to behold them sink into forgetfulness. But how changed the scene now I behold a cheerfulness beaming upon every countenance that indicates Prosperity & the noise of the ax & the hammer & the sight of their walls & dwellings newly erected & their Bank & market & especially house of God speaks in language loud as thunder that the saints will have a City in prosperity in spite of all the fals Prophets of Baal or even earth or hell because God is with them & his Temple stands in honor of his Kingdom while babylon begins to wonder & will soon perish (p. 371)

Listening to Woodruff's accounts of the powerful experiences of worship in the Kirtland Temple, it is easier to understand the zeal and commitment which fired these early converts. On 23 March, 1837, he recorded:

I repaired to the house of the Lord at an early hour in the morning to spend the day in prayer and fasting with the saints in Kirtland, as this was a day set apart for that purpose. Immediately after entering the house in company with several other Elders, I went within the veil and we bowed down before the Lord in the Aronic stand & offerd a morning sacrifice, & the Spirit of God rested upon us with

joy to our Souls. I was Called upon, by the Patriarch JOSEPH to read a chapter in the book of Mormon; I then read the third chapter of the Book of Jacob, which contains the parable of the tame olive tree likened unto the house of Israel as was spake by the Prophet Zenos. The same God that touched Isaiahs lips with hallowed fire, gave Zenos great wisdom in setting forth this parable. After I had made some brief remarks upon the subject the congregation took their seats, for the services of the day, in the following order The house being divided into four parts by veils, the females occupied two parts & the males the others. Some of the presidency presided in each apartment The time was taken up during the day in each apartment in singing, exhortation, & prayer, some had a tongue, others an interpretation, & all was in order. The power of GOD rested upon the people the gifts were poured out upon us some had the administering of angels & the image of GOD sat upon the countenances of the Sants. at 4 oclock PM. the Veils were all rolled up together which brough the whole congregation in full view of each other and while the presence of the LORD filled the house the congregation of the Saints fell upon their knees & all as one man, vocally poured forth rejoicing, supplication & Prayer, before the God of Israel which closed the services of the day, after contributing for the support of the poor (3 lines in shorthand). (pp. 385-386)

On the seventh anniversary of the founding of the Church, 6 April 1837, he recorded the events in the Solemn Assembly in the Temple and bore his testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

After the washing of feet, the veils were rolled, which brought the congregation into one assembly, the stand of the Priesthood were still covered with the veils the Presidency stood in the lower stand & President Joseph Smith jr arose and addressed the congregation for the term of three hours clothed with the power, spirit, & image of GOD he unbosomed his mind & feelings in the house of his friends He presented many things of vast importance to the minds of the Elders of Israel. O that they might be written upon our hearts as with an iron pen to remain forever that we might practice them in our lives That fountain of light, principle & virtue that came forth out of the heart & mouth of the Prophet JOSEPH whose soul like Enochs

swelld wide as eternity I say such evidences presented in such a forcible manner ought to drive into oblivion every particle of unbelief & dubiety from the mind of the hearers, for such language sentiment principle & spirit cannot flow from darkness. Joseph Smith jr is a prophet of God rised up for the deliverance of Israel as true as my heart now burns within me while I am penning thes lines which is as true as truth itself (pp. 390-391)

Many spent the entire day in the temple. In the evening the Prophet advised those who "felt disposed" to return to their homes and the rest, wrote Woodruff, "might spend the night in the house of the Lord in prayer, & exhortation, praise & thanksgiving" (p. 391). Woodruff also described the evening meeting:

At about candle light the meeting commenced with great interest Joseph requested the congregation to speak their feelings freely & pray according to the spirit the saints began to open their mouths & they were filled with language unto edification one a prayer another an exhortation some a doctrin & a psalm others a toungue. some an interpretation Prophecy was also poured out upon us & all things was done decently & in order & the night was spent gloriously by the Saints much of the gifts of the gospel rested upon us. One Brother clothed with the gift of tongues laid his hands upon my head and prophesied great blessing upon me another Brother possessing the interpretation uttered it unto me to my joy & consolation with the many blessing pronounced upon m head he rehersed the blessing that Jacob pronounced upon the heads of Joseph & said that I should possess the blessings of heaven & of earth & be much blessed in my ministry &c. much Prophecy was uttered upon the heads of many of the Saints in other languages & was interpreted which was glorious, thus was this day & night spent gloriously & those scenes will long be remembered Rejoice O, earth & shout O heavens for the natural fruit of the tame olive tree is again manifest in the earth. the fig tree is putting forth leaves. The Church of Christ is travling out of the wilderness with her gifts & graces which edify the body of Christ. The house of God is reared in beauty & splendor according to the pattern given by the vishions of heaven & the revelations of Jesus Christ O, ye gentiles come & recieve the gospel repent & be baptized for the

remission of your sins & recieve the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands & partake of the blessing of God with Israel that you may be hid under the shadow of the ALMIGHTY in the day of GODs wrath & indignation upon babylon which is at hand. The meeting continued until break of day when we all dispersed to our homes with great Joy & consolation May the Lord bless the Saints & have mercy upon the poor the sick & the afflicted & deliver Israel from the gentile yoke for Jesus sake amen (pp. 391-392)

#### Politics

Joseph Smith's revelation regarding the secession of South Carolina from the Union which he received in 1832 has often been cited as a prophecy of the Civil War. An account published in the *Philadelphia Sunday Mercury* May 5, 1861 (Vol. 11, No. 18) agreed with this interpretation. Quoting the text of what is now D & C 87 the newspaper made the following comment:

We have in our possession a pamphlet, published in Liverpool, in 1851, containing a selection from the "revelations, translations and narratives" of Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism. The following prophecy is here said to have been made by Smith, on the 25th of December 1832. In view of our present troubles, the prediction seems to be in progress of fulfillment whether Joe Smith was a humbug or not: . . . The war began in South Carolina. Insurrections of slaves are already dreaded. Famine will certainly afflict some Southern communities. The interference of Great Britain, on account of the sale of cotton, is not improbable, if the war is protracted. In the meantime, a general war. . . appears to be imminent. Have we not found a prophet among us?

Max H. Parkin (see bibliography for "Mormon Political Involvement in Ohio") has provided the following background for the revelation:

The Mormons in Ohio first showed interest in national politics when the Democratic president, Andrew Jackson, whom they supported, was forced to act on two vital issues of his administration—those of nullification and the Bank of the United States. In 1832, a year and one-half after Joseph Smith and the New York Mormons had arrived in Kirtland, President Jackson faced the problem of nullification which had been festering since his election; in 1828. Congress passed a protective tariff which proved detrimental to

cotton-growing states in the South. The South Carolina Legislature, which took the lead in resisting the effects of the tariff, on November 24, 1832, declared that the federal tariff was invalid within its sovereign boundaries after February 1, 1833. The act of this legislature, if honored, would have given the states the power to nullify federal laws to which they would not ascribe and thereby threaten the union of the states. Moreover, South Carolina threatened instant secession if the national government attempted to blockade Charleston harbor or to use force to collect the tax. President Jackson, an avid states righter, but one who opposed disunion, warned South Carolina against nullification and secession.

"A high duty obliges me solemnly to announce that you cannot secede," he wrote. "Disunion by armed force is treason. Are you really ready to incur its guilt?" questioned the president. Notwithstanding this sobering appeal, South Carolina refused to pay the federal tariff, so the president ordered Fort Sumter and Fort Moultrie reinforced and revenue cutters dispatched to collect duties if the federal custom officials were resisted. South Carolina's threatened secession had relevance in Mormon escatology when it prompted a classical latter-day prophecy—ostensibly, the first reference Joseph Smith made to a national political issue. While the country was under the strain of the nullification problem, the Prophet Joseph Smith received the following revelation on Christmas Day, 1832:

Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls; And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place. For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States. . . .

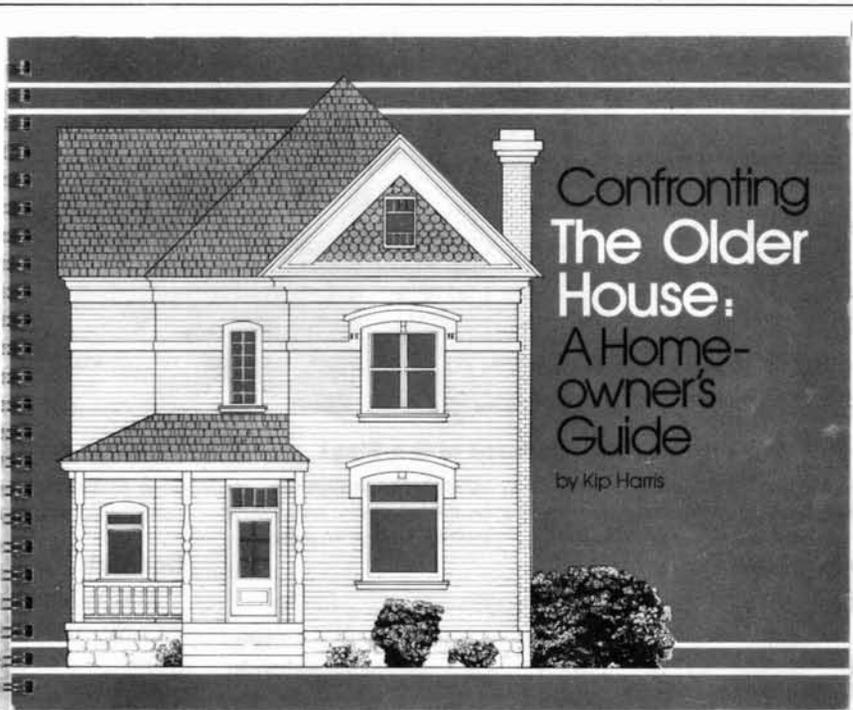
The following months (with the problem still unsettled) a Church editor, W. W. Phelps reported that "the dissolution of South Carolina from the Union," along with manifestations of other plagues and disasters, was evidence that the end was near. In time, Congress' graduated reduction of the tariff schedules placated South Carolina, and she did not secede. But twelve years

later, the Prophet added a reinforcement to his prophecy of 1832 when he wrote:

I prophesy, in the name of the Lord God, that the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of

the Son of Man will be in South Carolina.

It may probably arise through the slave question. This a voice declared to me, while I was praying earnestly on the subject, December 25, 1832 (D & C 130: 12, 13) (pp. 485-486, Parkin).



## Own Your Own Piece of History

A new book, **Confronting the Older House, A Home Owner's Guide**, is now available to assist you in analyzing your house and its place in the streetscape to make the most of its architectural and historical character. The book includes a brief description of Utah architectural styles.

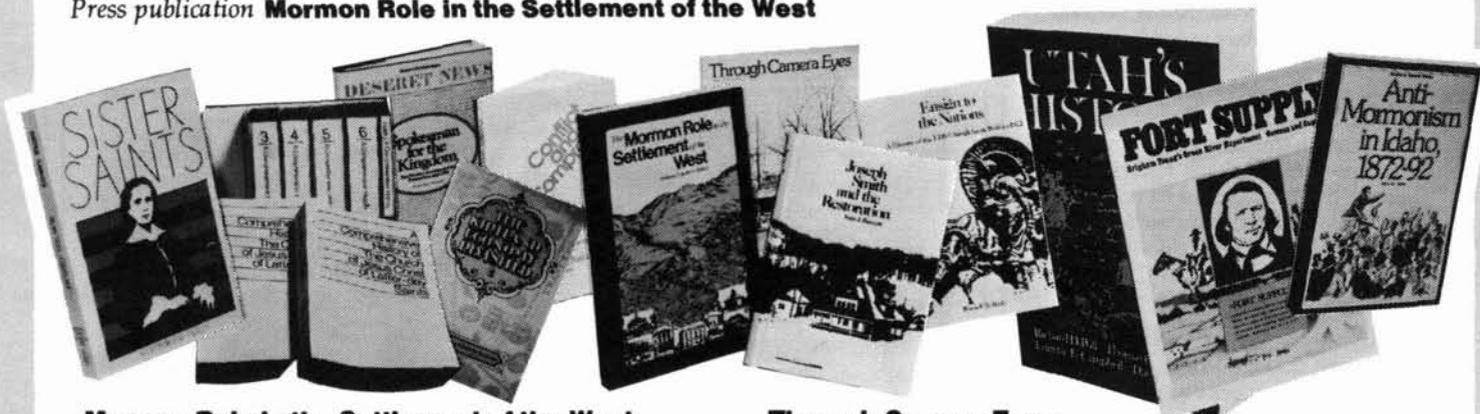
Written by Kip K. Harris, a Salt Lake City intern architect and resident of the Avenues historic district, the book has just been published by the Utah Heritage Foundation as a guide to owners of older homes throughout the state.

It is available from the Foundation for \$3.00. If ordering by mail, write 355 Quince Street, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84103 and please add 75 cents for postage and handling.

# BYU Press: A leader in Mormon history publications

The Mormon History Association, at its annual meeting held in Iowa recently, awarded Brigham Young University Press special recognition for their contributions to the field of Mormon history.

Of particular note was the award for "Best Book in Mormon History for 1978" bestowed on Richard H. Jackson for his BYU Press publication **Mormon Role in the Settlement of the West**



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