

## Stalwarts Of Mormonism

# Edward Hunter Served 33 Yrs. As Presiding Bishop of Church

By PRESTON NIBLEY

**EDWARD HUNTER** was a native of Pennsylvania, a convert to the Church, resident of Nauvoo, friend and confidant of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pioneer of Utah, first bishop of the 13th Ward in Salt Lake City, and for 33 years Presiding Bishop of the Church.

Edward Hunter was born in Newtown Township, Delaware County, Penn., on June 22, 1793. He was the son of Edward and Hannah Merris Hunter.

When Edward was 22 years of age his father died. The young man inherited an excellent farm and through his diligence and ability he prospered. He held the confidence of the people and was elected to the office of County Commissioner of Delaware County.

When Edward was 25 years of age he sold his holdings in Delaware County and purchased a 500 acre farm in Chester County. In 1833 when he was 40 years of age he was married to Ann Standley.

**EDWARD HUNTER FIRST HEARD** of the LDS Church in 1839 when missionaries visited his neighborhood. He attended their meetings

and became greatly interested in their teachings. The following year the Prophet Joseph Smith, who was then on his return trip from Washington D. C., was a guest in Edward Hunter's home for several days.

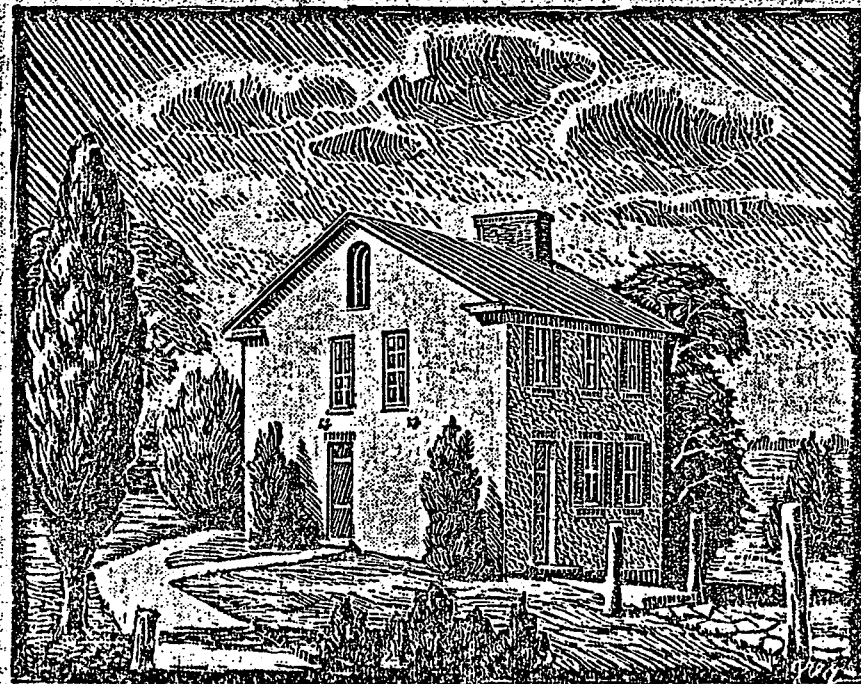
On October 8, 1840, Edward was baptized by Elder Orson Hyde. In September 1841 he visited Nauvoo and purchased a farm near that city. He returned to Pennsylvania, sold his holdings, and moved to Nauvoo in June 1842. It is said that he took \$7,000 in money with him, which he presented to the Prophet Joseph Smith for the benefit of the Church.

In Nauvoo Edward Hunter became a prominent merchant. He also served as a member of the Nauvoo City Council. In November 1844 he was set apart as bishop of Nauvoo Fifth Ward.

### IN THE EXODUS OF THE SAINTS

to the west Edward Hunter followed the leadership of President Brigham Young. He crossed Iowa with his family, in the summer of 1846, and after spending the winter on the Missouri River he proceeded on his journey to Salt Lake Valley where he arrived on September 29, 1847.

In February 1849, he was appointed Bishop of the 13th Ward. In September 1850, he succeeded



The old home of Edward Hunter in Nauvoo

Newel K. Whitney as Presiding Bishop of the Church. On April 6, 1853, he assisted in laying the corner stones of the Salt Lake Temple, and on that occasion said: "I have acted in the priesthood and in the part allotted to me, with the love and fear of God before my eyes, to the best of my ability, and I hope acceptably in the sight of God and those who preside over me in this latter-day work!"

Bishop Hunter died at his home in Salt Lake City on October 16, 1883. He was 90 years of age. At his funeral held in the Assembly Hall on October 19th, Erastus Snow said that few men of his acquaintance had so uniformly maintained their integrity, discharging their duties with fidelity and faithfulness, with credit to themselves and with honor to God, as had Bishop Edward Hunter.