

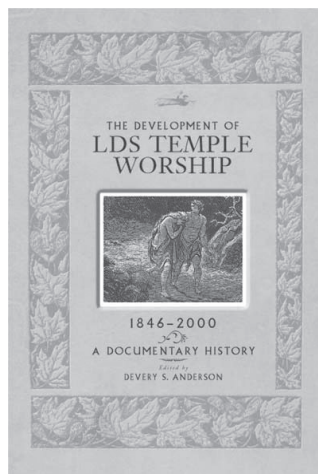
DEVERY S. ANDERSON, ed. *The Development of LDS Temple Worship 1846–2000: A Documentary History*. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2011, lii + 495 pp., index, \$49.95 hardcover.)

Reviewed by Dustin M. Naegle

Together with *Joseph Smith's Quorum of the Anointed 1842–45*¹ and *The Nauvoo Endowment Companies 1845–1846*,² Anderson's edited volume *The Development of LDS Temple Worship 1846–2000* continues an intriguing series of documentary histories that represent an abundance of primary sources related to LDS temple practices. Following the format of the previous two volumes, Anderson briefly narrates the history of Utah-era temple worship from its early beginnings at Ensign Peak to the more recent explosion of temple construction in the 1990s. He also provides a brief commentary on several of the lesser-known modifications in LDS temple practices (e.g., the second anointing, policy regarding women and the temple).

Anderson also includes a section of short biographical notes of the “principal characters,” as well as a useful index, organized mostly by individuals, though a few subject headings are included. The documentary material itself features excerpts from a variety of diaries, letters, official LDS publications, notes, minutes, and sermons. Footnotes supplement the primary material by providing readers with biographical information on a number of individuals mentioned in the excerpts (particularly in the earlier sources). To a lesser extent, the footnotes also help clarify or provide further information on historical events mentioned.

Readers will find a diverse range of source materials, from official declarations by LDS church leadership to accounts of personal religious experiences. The sheer breadth that this volume attempts to negotiate (over 150 years!) will certainly open the possibility of questioning particular omissions (e.g., the “Hosanna Shout”); however, Anderson does well to provide a good range of material. Among the materials, readers will find an ambience of familiarity in experiences, such as Samuel W. Richards', when a “[q]uorum . . . consisting of 15 members . . . called upon the Lord, his spirit attended us, and the visions of heaven were opened to our view” (5). However, readers may be surprised to find President John Taylor, in an



1886 letter, counseling a temple president that “there are many cases where people may violate the strict letter of the Word of Wisdom, and yet be following its spirit in doing so” (61); or that in 1968, a committee within the LDS leadership proposed that “we buy a ship and outfit the ship and make it a temple ship and that we take this ship to the ports of the earth where our people are” (372) as a way to provide temple ordinances economically to a growing global LDS population; or that in the 1950s, soon-to-be assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles Gordon B. Hinckley “proposed presenting the endowment ordinances in movie form” (291). Perhaps most apparent in my reading through the document excerpts was the degree to which the LDS Church has grown and thus adapted its practices to new contexts and new challenges.

Anderson’s work is certainly in line with the useful documentary histories that Signature Books traditionally has sought to produce. Reliance (at times) on transcriptions, rather than actual documents, will surely perpetuate ongoing discussions about accessibility to Church records, as well as raise questions about how such a work will be received in academic circles. With regard to source materials, the choice to include widely available published material such as the *History of the Church* or the *Journal of Discourses* seemed, at times, unnecessary. While some readers will no doubt feel that temple-related material ought not be the subject of a publicly available volume, I feel that Anderson’s work is respectful on all accounts in treating a subject that most Latter-day Saints consider sacred (to the extent of frequently using dashes to conceal sensitive names and information).

Overall, Anderson’s work will be a welcome addition to many general readers who are interested in better understanding the practices and policies behind what is perhaps the most central pillar of the Mormon faith. It will also serve as a convenient and beneficial reference guide to integral primary source materials for specialists interested in researching the subject of LDS temple worship.

Notes

1. Devery Scott Anderson and Gary James Bergera, eds., *Joseph Smith’s Quorum of the Anointed 1842–1845: A Documentary History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2005).

2. Devery Scott Anderson and Gary James Bergera, eds., *The Nauvoo Endowment Companies 1845–1846: A Documentary History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2005).

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