

and his first wife, Phebe, at best felt ambivalent about plural marriage.

Despite its overall strengths, Alexander's biography is disappointing in places. Only nine out of the narrative's 332 pages are devoted to Woodruff's family background and personal activities before he was twenty—an extremely critical period of his life. Perhaps anticipating a predominantly Mormon audience, Alexander also fails to provide adequate explanation of various Mormon doctrines and beliefs, particularly within the context of Joseph Smith's life and personality. Alexander also could have examined more fully Woodruff's attraction to, interactions with, and impressions of the charismatic Mormon Prophet, as well as of his two immediate predecessors, Brigham Young and John Taylor—strong dynamic personalities in their own right.

More serious, however, are problems with the biography's overall presentation. While presenting his subject within a general chronological framework, Alexander's narrative often skips back and forth in time, making it at times confusing and difficult to follow. Granted, no biography can present its subject absolutely chronologically, especially such a complex, multifaceted individual as Woodruff. However, movement back and forth in time during certain important episodes seriously disturbs the narrative flow. For

example, Alexander describes the drama surrounding Woodruff's involvement in the "traditional topping-out ceremony" of the Salt Lake Temple in March 1893, then notes the formal dedication the following month (p. 290). Over the next six pages, he then skips back and forth in time, discussing difficulties with the temple architect, Joseph Don Carlos Young, during the earlier construction, and problems with dissident apostle Moses Thatcher that occurred before the temple was formally dedicated. One wishes, instead, for a smoother narrative presentation which would convey to the reader a sense of "episodic tension" important in presenting the larger epic drama of a life being lived.

Despite such problems, Thomas G. Alexander's *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* is an important, noteworthy biography of a significant Latter-day Saint—a study equal in stature to such recent biographies as Stanley Kimball's on Heber C. Kimball (1981), D. Michael Quinn's on J. Reuben Clark (1983), Linda Newell and Valeen Avery's on Emma Hale Smith (1984), Leonard Arrington's on Brigham Young (1985), James B. Allen's on William Clayton (1987), and most recently, Levi Peterson's on Juanita Brooks (1988) and Roger D. Launius' on Joseph Smith III (1988).

The Administrative Role of the Presidency

The Founding Prophet: An Administrative Biography of Joseph Smith, Jr. by Maurice L. Draper (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1991), 255 pp. \$14.00.

Reviewed by Ronald E. Romig, RLDS Church Archivist at the Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

THIS USEFUL WORK PROVIDES a worthy synopsis of the early history of the Restoration Movement. In particular, it offers important insights about the administrative role of the presidency from Maurice Draper, a member of the RLDS First

Presidency for twenty years.

I began this book expecting to come know Joseph Smith, Jr., more intimately. I was chiefly looking for insights into the motivation, personality, and organizational struggle that forged and shaped the familiar history and experiences of the early Restoration. However, *The Founding Prophet* does not delve deeply into such transformational tensions. While it treats the early movement's organizational history, it uses administrative structures primarily as background for a restatement of historical events. Consequently, it offers