

Chapter 6

A MONUMENT TO THE FAITH AND SACRIFICES OF THE SAINTS

The Nauvoo Temple was one of the most unusual buildings constructed during the 1840s in the western settlements of the early republic. Many who visited that community aptly described its prominent location and its unusual features. “The site of Nauvoo is one of the most beautiful on the Mississippi,” David Nye White, senior editor of the *Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette*, wrote in 1843. He noted that the lower part of the city, located on a peninsula adjacent to a large bend in the river, extended to a bluff, which rose gradually but was not very high. The temple under construction was located on this bluff, about a mile from the river. The site was “beautifully chosen,” he observed as it was in a “central and elevated position” and could “be seen from the river, all around the bend, and from every part of the town.” David White further observed that the temple was being built with stone that was almost white and suggested that it would present a fine appearance when finished. He assumed that this modern structure which was dear to every Mormon heart would “revive the departed glories of the temple of Jerusalem.”¹

The Nauvoo temple was in many respects a special building that has continued to have a special place in the