

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Worthington Multiple Resource Area (Partial Inventory) History/Architecture

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number The incorporation limits of Worthington not for publication

city, town Worthington vicinity of congressional district 15th

state Ohio code 039 county Franklin code 049

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> multiple	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> resource		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership - see Ohio Historic Inventory Forms

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Franklin County Courthouse

street & number South High Street

city, town Columbus state Ohio

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Ohio Historic Inventory and has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no  
National Register of Historic Places

date 1975 ☒ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Ohio Historic Preservation Office

city, town Columbus state Ohio

## 7. Description

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☐ altered

### Check one

☐ original site  
☐ moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Worthington was originally a small New England community founded atop a low rise on the east bank of the Olentangy River, approximately 9 miles north of the Ohio state capital. The village grew rapidly in the first four decades of the 19th century, but expanded little after 1860 so that it never completely filled the original 160 lots. A comparison of the 1856 and 1872 maps of Worthington, in fact, shows virtually no change. The nominated properties are, therefore, predominantly from the pre-Civil War period. In the past two decades, Columbus has expanded northward so that the southern corporation line of Worthington and the northern line of Columbus are one and the same. Worthington itself has expanded with residential subdivisions to the east, west, and north, more than doubling its original size.

The architectural style of the buildings included in the nomination are predominantly of the federal period with low scale, one or two story, 5-bay houses with central hallways and gable roofs. The details and woodwork of these properties feature fanlights, sunburst medallions and beaded and fluted molding. There is one Greek Revival property (10) which has the gable ended entrance, full classical pediment, and pilastered doorway typical of this style. The two Gothic Revival structures (1 & 21) have the steep roofs, vertical siding and pointed windows of this style. There are a few modest examples of the Italianate and 2nd Empire styles with their emphasis on height, projecting cornice and roof-line (2, 8, 20 & 22). The turn-of-the-century styles are relatively scarce although the two examples both include massive and unusual features; the roof of Hotel Central (16) and the rear porch and ballroom of the Gardner House (26). The one true example of the Neo-Classical style, the Presbyterian Church, has the round arched and elliptical openings and rustication characteristic of this style. The interior has straight-backed pews, classically detailed plaster moldings, and a broken pediment over the altar. In general, Worthington is renowned in Ohio for the most blatant and unfortunate examples of the alteration of legitimate historic commercial fabric into "pseudo-colonial" storefronts. This was a major factor in selecting properties to include in the nomination. A significant amount of relatively unaltered 19th century fabric still remains in the community.

Worthington was originally platted with rectangular lots measuring approximately 150' x 75', surrounding a central 600' x 300' public green. Buildings were generally located on the street side of these lots, although there was, and still is, great variety in the setback distance from the street. Density varies with the highest in the commercial area south of the green and the lowest in the residential lots in the outer perimeter of the original plat. The character of both the northern and southern limits of High Street have suffered in recent years with substantial "strip" type and shopping center developments. Since Worthington has become an attractive suburb for Columbus workers, the village has been transformed into almost entirely a residential community, with small "boutique"-type enterprises in the old two-block commercial area south of the green.

The original survey of Worthington was completed in the summer of 1975 as part of a county-wide inventory funded jointly by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office and the Columbus Chapter of the A.I.A. The Worthington Historical Society supplied the personnel for the initial survey. This inventory was supplemented by the form preparer, a historian, in 1978 with activities again coordinated with the local historical society.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED	APR 17

Worthington Multiple Resource Area, Worthington, Franklin County, Ohio

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Four properties included in this nomination are already listed in the National Register: the Orange Johnson House (NR 4/3/73); the John Snow House (NR 7/26/73); the Boarding House of the Worthington Manufacturing Company (NR 1/9/73); and the New England Lodge (NR 3/20/73). Ohio Historic Inventory forms have been included for each of these properties and they are discussed in both section 7 and 8. Since none of these properties had specific boundaries indicated in the original nominations, an effort has been made to denote the appropriate areas for them on each inventory form.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Worthington is important to the history of central Ohio for a variety of reasons. Its early platting and settlement (1803–4) resulted in its introduction of several important social and religious institutions into the state; and its proximity to Columbus, the state capital since 1813, made Worthington a prominent early commercial center with a number of taverns and inns. The New England heritage of the community brought several distinctive elements to central Ohio, in particular, its central public green, early manufacturing elements and its agricultural tradition of living within the community and farming the adjacent land. Finally, although a fairly wide range of styles are present in the community, a significant portion of the historic architecture of Worthington dates from the early 19th century.

Worthington developed into a fair sized community early in the 19th century by virtue of its location on a major north-south overland route to the nearby state capital of Columbus to the south. As other communities were established in central Ohio, Worthington lost its earlier prominence and its growth slowly drastically through the 2nd half of the 19th century. The 20th century development of the community is primarily a reflection of Columbus' growth and subsequent northward urban sprawl leading to the vision of Worthington as a pleasant suburban residential environment. This line of development can be clearly seen today in the physical environment of Worthington. The ante-bellum growth never completely filled the original 1803 plat and there were relatively few late 19th century subdivisions, so that there is a narrow body of early 20th century properties ringing the perimeter of the original plat. This contrasts starkly with the tract housing subdivisions that dramatically increased the size of the community in the 1960s and 70s and now surround the original plat. Thus, the majority of properties included in the nomination are the physical reflections of the early 19th century development.

Worthington was founded by the Scioto Company, organized in Granby, Connecticut, and lead by James Kilbourn (15), as a haven for Episcopalians desiring an escape from the political and religious ostracism in Congregationalist Connecticut. A number of the properties in this nomination reflect Worthington's position as an early headquarters for Episcopalian activities on the Ohio frontier (see 1 & 10). This strong religious heritage was also reflected in the prominence of Worthington as an abolitionist center (11). Other religions soon followed the Episcopalians with the establishment of a Methodist congregation in 1811 and a Presbyterian in 1816 (see 18). The Methodist were active in early educational pursuits organizing the first authorized Methodist Church female seminary in the state, the Worthington Female Seminary (see 13, 14 & 21).

Many of the original settlers who came with James Kilbourn (15) were Masons, so the establishment of a fraternal lodge and temple were early orders of business. In fact, the New England Lodge (NR 3/20/73 - 17) is the oldest masonic temple west of the Alleghenies. The Snow House (NR 7/26/73 - 4), the Sign of the Sun (15), and Sharon Township Hall (2) are all historically associated with important Masons or masonic orders.

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Worthington Multiple Resource Area

Worthington, Ohio

Franklin County

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Although Worthington was an important commercial center early in the 19th century, relatively few properties remain that were utilized or associated with the heavy north-south traffic generated by the state capital. The Sidney Brown House (12) was the home of an important grocer on this route, the Adams House (13) was reportedly used as an inn, and the Sign of the Sun (15) and Hotel Central (16) are both well documented as havens for travelers and entertainment.

Because Worthington never developed far beyond the early 19th century stage, a number of elements of its New England heritage remain. The most obvious of these properties is the original plat with its village green (14). Individuals experienced with the varied manufacturing heritage of New England transferred their know-how to the community and Worthington is notable in central Ohio for the presence of a number of early manufacturing enterprises. The Boarding House of the Worthington Manufacturing Company (NR 1/19/73 - 5) was a part of a firm which produced an intriguing variety of cloth, wooden, leather, and iron goods as early as 1811. The Orange Johnson House (NR 4/3/73 - 3) was the home of a major and early comb manufacturer, and the Potter Wright House (24) and Horace Wright House (22) are important for their association with a prominent textile machinery manufacturer. The New England tradition of agricultural pursuits immediately surrounding the community where the farmers generally lived is reflected in the Wilcox Farmhouse (23) and Bishop-Noble House (25).

The historical development of Worthington is well represented in its historic architecture, with the vast majority dating from before the Civil War, a few from mid-century, and very few in the late 19th and early 20th century. The symmetry, simplicity, and attenuation of details and proportions common to the ante-bellum period of building in Ohio are exemplified in properties of both brick and braced frame construction. (See 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 23 & 25). Several of these early properties are of exceptional significance: The Johnson House (3) with its refined fanlighted entrance, the New England Lodge (17) with its recessed arched panel and full pediment, and the St. John's Episcopal Church<sup>(1)</sup> an early and impressive local adaption of the Gothic Revival style. By mid-century, however, most of the economic stimuli in the community had dissipated, and the properties constructed at this time show a reserved adaptation of the Italianate style (see 2, 20 & 22). The Topping House (8) is an unusually small version of the 2nd Empire style, another possible indication of Worthington's economic well-being at this time. Two properties stand out as examples of the architectural exuberance at the turn-of-the-century: the Hotel Central (16); and the Gardner House,<sup>(26)</sup> whose massive rear porch and distinctive third floor ballroom give support to the local claims of this home being a social center. The construction of the Presbyterian Church (18) in 1926 in a handsome neo-colonial style started a building trend which resulted in the construction of several other large public buildings less successful in their recreations.

The multiple resource approach is appropriate in Worthington, primarily because

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Worthington Multiple Resource Area

Worthington, Ohio

Franklin County

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8&9 PAGE 3

8. the legitimate expression of the neo-classical style has been transformed into some of the most unfortunate and infamous "pseudo-colonial" storefronts in the country. These alterations have destroyed the real sense of history that was once present in the downtown. Furthermore, the commercial and residential expansion of Columbus northward has resulted in the destruction of a large amount of significant historic fabric in Worthington further reducing the feeling common to a historic district.

Preservation activities have heretofore been focused largely on the Orange Johnson House, although the Worthington Historical Society recently rescued the Episcopal Rectory from demolition. The historical society hopes to use this list of properties in the future as a guide for the community in further growth and development plans.

9. Corbin, Frank. A Walking Tour of Old Worthington. Worthington, O.: Author, 1969  
An Historical Sketch of Worthington, 1803-1953. Worthington Sesquicentennial, October 5-11, 1953.  
Parsons, Mira Clarke, "Historic Worthington", Ohio Archaeological and Historic Publications, Vol. XIII (1904), pp. 71-82.  
Samuelson, Robert, and Judith Kitchen. Architecture: Columbus. Columbus, O.: Foundation of the Columbus Chapter of the A.I.A., 1976.  
Shedding Light on Worthington. Worthington, O.: Woodrow Guild of 1st Presbyterian Church, 1931.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Arter, Bill. Worthington Vignettes. Columbus, O.: Author, 1975.  
Bowers, Paul, G. Jr., and Goodwin Berquist, Jr., "Worthington, Ohio: James Kilbourn's Episcopal Haven on the Western Frontier", Ohio History, Vol. 85, No. 3, (Summer 1976), pp. 247-262.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property See individual inventory forms.

Quadrangle name Northwest Columbus

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References See individual inventory forms.

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The lot number for each property is indicated on the attached inventory forms and the nominated area includes all or part of each specific lot as indicated.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David A. Simmons, Historian  
organization Ohio Historic Preservation Office date 10/79  
street & number I-71 & 17th Avenue telephone 466-1500  
city or town Columbus state Ohio

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

David L. Brook  
SHPO

title

date 2/15/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for W. Ray Luce  
Keeper of the National Register

date 4/17/80

Attest: William H. Abraham

date 4/16/80

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

9/30/91

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Worthington MRA OHIO

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR THE FOLLOWING NOMINATIONS:

- |   |                           |          |
|---|---------------------------|----------|
| 1. Bishop-Noble House - name change / construction date<br>NOBLE, LEWIS, HOUSE                                | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003006 |
| 2. Brown, Sidney, House - name change / construction date<br>BUTTLES, AURORA, HOUSE                           | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003007 |
| 3. Fay, Cyrus, House - name change / construction date<br>HART, LUCY, HOUSE                                   | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003008 |
| 4. Johnson, Orange, House - name change / construction date<br>BUTTLES JOHNSON, HOUSE                         | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 73001443 |
| 5. Kilbourne House - name change / construction date<br>KILBOURNE COMMERCIAL BUILDING                         | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003010 |
| 6. Ladd-Mattoon House - name change / construction date<br>MATTOON WOODROW, HOUSE                             | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003011 |
| 7. Old Worthington Inn - name change / construction date<br>Hotel Central                                     | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003012 |
| 8. Park, Jonathan, House - change construction date   | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003013 |
| 9. President's House, Worthington<br>Female Seminary - name change / construction date<br>Principal's Cottage | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003014 |
| 10. Snow, John, House - change construction date  | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 73001445 |
| 11. Scott, Travis, House - name change<br>GILBERT HOUSE   | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003016 |
| 12. Skeeel, Capt. J.S., House - construction date change  | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003018 |
| 13. Topping, J.R., House - name change / construction date<br>Richard W. Evans House                          | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003020 |
| 14. Wilcox, Hiram, House - name change / construction date<br>Milbert Wilcox House                            | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003021 |
| 15. Worthington Manufacturing Company<br>Boardinghouse - change / construction date                           | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 73001446 |
| 16. Worthington Village Green - name change<br>WORTHINGTON PUBLIC SQUARE                                      | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003024 |
| 17. Wright, Potter, House   | Delores Byers<br>10/28/91 | 80003026 |