

WORTHINGTON BICENTENNIAL

Architectural and Historical Tour of Worthington

As you drive along our highways and byways, you will pass many lovely houses and cottages which have not been included in this itinerary because actual facts were not available or the owners could not be reached to provide the information needed. We want to extend our apologies to you and the proud owners for not introducing them on this tour.

\$1.00 per copy

No. 1 Robert Bartlett (Allen)

Located on the most charming part of West Street, this modest house shows how the Cape Cod style developed during the Federal or young Republic period. No longer does the roof line reach the tops of first floor windows. The person who built this house, during Worthington's most prosperous era, had a good view of the Center and what happened there!

No. 2 The Parson Huntington House

Built circa 1771, first known inhabitant was Rev. Jonathan Huntington, also a physician. House features very early woodwork, moldings, plank window frames, and a bake oven in rear wall of fireplace. Unique chamber five feet in diameter built under chimney stack and opening into basement has passages up to and openings into four of the five fireplaces. In the attic one finds a smoke chamber for meat built into the old chimney, which was laid up with clay for mortar. Never a grand house, owners are in the process of restoring it to its former primitive condition.

No. 3 Cold Spring Farm

In 1764, John and James Kelly, accompanied by their mother and two sisters, settled the land known now as Cold Spring Farm. Their first house sat across the road to the east of the present one. In 1792, the present house was built which incorporates portions of still another house, the second built by the Kellys, the frame of which constitutes the shed behind this house. Brick was made in the spring lot below the house and was used in this house and neighboring houses in the area. Indians, who passed through the town, occasionally camped in the springlot.

No. 4 Metzger (Martin)

Built in the late 18th century by Jonathan Brewster, boasts raised paneling, sheathing, many fireplaces, and some of the original floors. It is presently being renovated by the owner. During the 19th century, and possibly before, the house was noted for the white quartz wall built along its road frontage. In the last decade of that century, Monroe Todd incorporated part of this wall stone into the chimney. The beautiful leaded fan window over the door is original to the house and added a bit of elegance to what must have been a rustic existence.

No. 5 Lagerstrom (Thompson)

Built approximately 1803, this small house and red barn create a peaceful interlude on the Old Main Road. In the process of restoration, the house has wide board floors and two of its original fireplaces with their original mantels. The present owners are working diligently to return the house to its early appearance.

No. 6 Conwell Academy

(See page 133 of Bicentennial Booklet)

Opened in 1893 as an experiment to provide educational opportunity for students of limited means, work was provided to students outside school hours.

The austere and plain lines of this building, whose only decoration is a deeply-molded cornice and many-paned windows, define the type of education dealt out in the late 1800's. The first floor of the Academy, where classes were held, was divided into two large rooms (one an auditorium) that are entirely paneled with the narrow, beaded boards Victorians used for wainscoting. These are stained and varnished. The walls arch into and become the ceiling.

One of the most delightful features of this wonderful building is the original painting which constitutes the stage curtain--large enough to screen a stage which spans the width of the room. The scene, done in light, whimsical colors, depicts a mountain scene complete with lake and chalets! Certainly, this curtain, in nearly new condition, saw many a serious drama! Stacked in one corner of the auditorium are the Windsor-like benches on which the audience sat.

The present owner of the Academy can produce an advertisement dated 1895 announcing the fall term of that year. The tuition is listed as 75¢ per month.

No. 7 Maplehurst Farm

This farm is the portion of Plantation No. 3, later the town of Worthington, which was settled by Nahum Eager in 1763 or 1764. The first two houses he built were of log (the second located 50 yards east of the present structure). Nahum represented Worthington at the Provincial Congress at Cambridge on February 1, 1775. Jonathan Eager, Nahum's grandson, built this house in 1856. It is the fourth house to be built on the property. Nahum, his many wives, and some of his family are buried in Center Cemetery--their graves marked by some of the loveliest old gravestones.

No. 8 Wilke

This contemporary house uses natural materials and finishes, an isoteric design, and a setting of ledge outcroppings, birches, wild juniper, and blueberries. The house, with wide expanses of glass and unfinished siding, seems to merge with its environment--the upward surge of the roof line catches and matches the thrust of the rock ledges from the mountainside. Truly pleasing, and a vivid contrast to the 18th and 19th century homes of the area.

No. 9 Parade Rest - Hines

Can you imagine a rag-tag group of hilltown militia rattling their muskets and practicing the intricacies of drill on this very spot? It is indeed the location of the first drill grounds for Worthington's Revolutionary War militiamen! What a fitting location for a retired military man and his wife--Col. and Mrs. Hines--who planned the unique house you now see!

Unique because the structure was once a carriage house for the adjacent Brewster estate. The present owners were imaginative enough to see its possibilities and produced this house from the original structure after it had been moved to the Old Parade Ground in the 19th century.

No. 10 Denworth Farm

Built during the latter part of the 18th century by one of the Leonard family--earliest settlers, represented on the first Board of Selectmen, and active in organizing the fledgling town. Originally a Cape Cod, the roof line was changed during the renovation to gambrel style, thus affording a more spacious second floor. The old paneling and fireplaces were restored and replaced, so that the interior now reflects the taste of an influential family of the 18th century.

Nos. 11 & 12 Joslyn and Pease

A pure example of American Gothic architecture built in 1840, known as John Adams Place. Mr. Adams was a hardware merchant, town official, and representative to General Court.

The yellow color enhances a style popular when ladies were ladies and gentlemen, gentlemen, and everything was done in picture-book manner.

Nearby stands the Pease House. This pure Victorian with its tower, gingerbread porch, and decorative shingle epitomizes again the splendor of the late 19th century. One can picture the parolled ladies playing croquet (in a dignified and gracious way, of course) on the lovely lawns.

No. 13 Hitchcock (Brewster)

Built circa 1830-1842 for use as a general store--pictures on display at Conwell School. Judge Brewster held his law offices in rear of the store. The second town church stood on part of the backyard. Once had a boot and shoe factory operating on the grounds. The left wing was a one-room school house. During World War II rationing so curtailed business that store closed, and Franklyn Hitchcock transformed it into the pleasant home you see today.

No. 14 Lucie Mollison

This modest little cottage, that still retains a paneled chimney breast over its one remaining fireplace, must have been witness to the activities of a busy colonial settlement of the late 18th century --the period of its construction. On one side was the Parade Ground where the militia drilled, and nearby was the church, newly moved to this more central location from West Street. Certainly, the location was at that time the "heart" of fast-growing Worthington.

No. 15 Brewster

Long the home of illustrious Worthingtonians, the first of this long line was Captain Elisha Brewster who came to town during the late 1700's and established a tavern-inn in this building.

(Earlier a general store had been located on the site.) Nearby was the militia parade grounds, and on the adjacent Brewster property militiamen obtained refreshment from an old stone well which still exists. The small building near the house is the office of Judge Elisha Brewster, grandson of Captain Brewster.

Nos. 16 & 17 Bartlett (Frissell) and Reardon (Porter)

Side-by-side two houses that follow styles established during the first years of our Republic sit on a street that more and more grew to be the center of the town's activities. In addition to the church and Parade Ground, a store had been established nearby and home industries were springing up. The Bartlett House was built in the manner of a Greek temple--the gable shaped like the pediment--an architectural form popular to Federalists who dreamed of a new democracy patterned after that of ancient Greece. The Reardon House reflects this same point in its columned doorway--again copied from architectural forms established by ancient democracies. And so inhabitants of this bustling hill settlement--still without a public road system--were expressing themselves and the new nation's hopes through the homes they were building.

No. 18 Hyde

This contemporary house, designed by the owner, was built in 1955. The theories of Frank Lloyd Wright concerning desirability of relating house to its site is evident here since naturalized stone of the house wedds it to the stonework and naturalized gardens and shrubs of the hillside. The stonework in the gardens was executed by a local artisan, Lewis Zarr.

No. 19 Buffington House

A relative of the two Georgian houses at the Corners and built in the same year (1806) this house witnessed Lafayette's arrival in a yellow coach drawn by white horses in 1825. Before its construction, Hessian soldiers captured at the Battle of Bennington were marched to Boston via the old stage road that passed by. The first tavern was located a short distance east of the present kennels, and here the first town meeting was held and selectmen elected.

No. 20 Wolff (Durgin)

This beautifully proportioned gambrel was built on the old stage route in the last decades of the 18th century. Originally a center-chimneyed house, with the traditional floor plan (one room on either side of the front door, with a long room across the back in which the big cooking fireplace was located, and a small room, sometimes referred to as a "borning room" at one end of this big kitchen), it has been renovated and now a center hall replaces the chimney.

No. 21 Heacock-Markham

The original portion of this magnificently pillared and porticoed mansion was built in 1842, and comprised only two floors. Amazingly enough, those two earlier floors are now the second and third

floors--the first house was lifted so an addition could be made below it! Styles had changed and called for high ceilings and airy rooms, and this was the way it could be achieved. The ambitious project was carried out sometime prior to 1884, and before the 1900's the grand portico was added! Still sturdy and solid, it maintains its longtime dignity and has been a treasure house of priceless antiques from generation to generation.

No. 22 Woodbridge House

Built in 1806 by Jonathan Woodbridge, a lawyer. It is such a pure example of Georgian architecture that plans of the house have been recorded and preserved at the Library of Congress. The doorway is particularly important to students of architectural history. This house in its untouched condition still retains original glass, woodwork, paneling, mantels, staircase, fireplaces, and floors. William Cullen Bryant studied law here under the supervision of Judge Howe who took possession of the property after Woodbridge.

No. 23 Snook (Rice)

Known in history as the Rice House, this Georgian was built in 1806 as was its sister across the street. It, too, has a lovely center hall, beautifully proportioned stairway and many fireplaces. It witnessed the glorious visit of the Marquis de Lafayette in 1825 and undoubtedly Judge Howe and his student, Mr. Bryant, occasionally wandered in for tea and legal discussions. What a marvelous history!

No. 24 Shepherd

The salt-box home of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Shepherd is a copy of the old Day house in West Springfield. Built in 1957-1958, the inside is finished in pine, with wide board wainscoting and floors, adding to its look of age. A center chimney takes care of the large brick fireplace which burns four-foot logs.

No. 25 Hebert (Lane)

Known as the Drury Lane House, built in 1778. Located on stage route to Boston, it retains much of its original Indian shutters, clapboards fastened with hand wrought nails, graceful doorway, traditional 9-window fenestration on front of house, eight fireplaces, marble hearth stones from Vermont, wide pine flooring, and latches, hinges, etc. At one time the Drury Casket Shop was located on the premises. An Indian ladder is located in the attic and goes to a look-out on the roof. Much paneling and the original stairways with turned balustrades.

No. 26 The Corners Grocery

Located at Worthington Four Corners where store has been kept since Revolutionary years. William Gove is believed to have been the first proprietor. The first post office between Northampton and Pittsfield was established here in 1796. Original store burned in

1859 and was promptly rebuilt by Horace Cole I whose family owned and operated it for three generations. Double porches across the front of the two-and-a-half story structure give it a distinctive country store appearance. The second floor literally hangs from the roof supported by great iron rods. The ell part has been extensively altered through the years and originally housed a grain and feed business. Town library kept in room on second floor for few years in late 1800's; first gasoline pump here; and telephone exchange installed in back room in 1905. Operated since 1925 by the Packard family, the Corners Grocery is a modern superette with much of the old country store flavor retained. In 1968 the store ranks with the town hall as "The place where the action is".

No. 27 Tower

Built in 1777 by Nehemiah Prouhty. Although the old center chimney was removed sometime in the first half of the 19th century, old chair rails and some paneling remain. The house has heavy plank walls--an early form of construction. The slight indentation in the front lawn marks the spot where the Prouhty's first structure, a log cabin stood. An interesting feature of the present house is that the front of the house was once the back! Originally the house faced an earlier road which passed to the north of it!

Nos. 28 & 29 Cole and Frew

In this lovely valley beside a turbulent and fast-falling stream. are the remnants of a little settlement named for Aaron Stevens. Mr. Stevens built the big house you see here when he ran a hoop mill with waterpower from the stream. (The mill still stands.) Built as a one-story house which soon became inadequate, in 1846 the entire structure was raised by his son, Lafayette Stevens, so that a second story could be added underneath! Before this, however, Aaron built the smaller house as a duplex for his two sons.

No. 30 Fowler (Pomeroy)

Snuggled into the side of a mountain facing distant views down the valley past its weathered gray barn sits what may be one of Worthington's earliest houses. Painted "Indian Red" which researchers find was the first exterior color available in hilltown houses, this house has five fireplaces positioned in a massive stone stack whose foundation may be seen in basement and has hand-hewn beams and a chamber, possibly a meat-smoking oven. The stonework of the chimney was later narrowed and rebuilt at the roof line with brick but, otherwise, is still intact. The big cooking fireplace has its original bake oven at the side. Some of the original paneling, woodwork, and hardware are still in place.

No. 31 Doherty (Day)

Built in 1853 by William Bates, a farmer, the house and 100 acres passed to Ezra Brachett and, finally, to the Capen family in 1863. Although the proximity to a swift flowing stream suggests

home industry, all of the owners were farmers and no industry seems to have been established at the location.

Since architecture was adjusting to a modern invention, i.e., the stove, during the early 19th century, no fireplaces were originally incorporated into the structure, and chimneys were built from second floors up to the roof line. In the 20th century, a native fieldstone fireplace and chimney were added.

The house has four rooms upstairs which are reached by an open stairway from the center hall just inside the front door. Downstairs are four more rooms and a pantry.

No. 32 McCann (Chapman)

Eighteenth century house of traditional center chimney style built ca. 1780 by Samuel Buck. Its brown weathered siding was the common finish for houses in the early hill settlements where paint was rare and expendable. Restored by the present owners in the 1940's, no effort was spared to help the house regain its former 18th century atmosphere. It has become a landmark for Worthington and creates an image of the town's heritage.

No. 33 Downey (Vaughan)

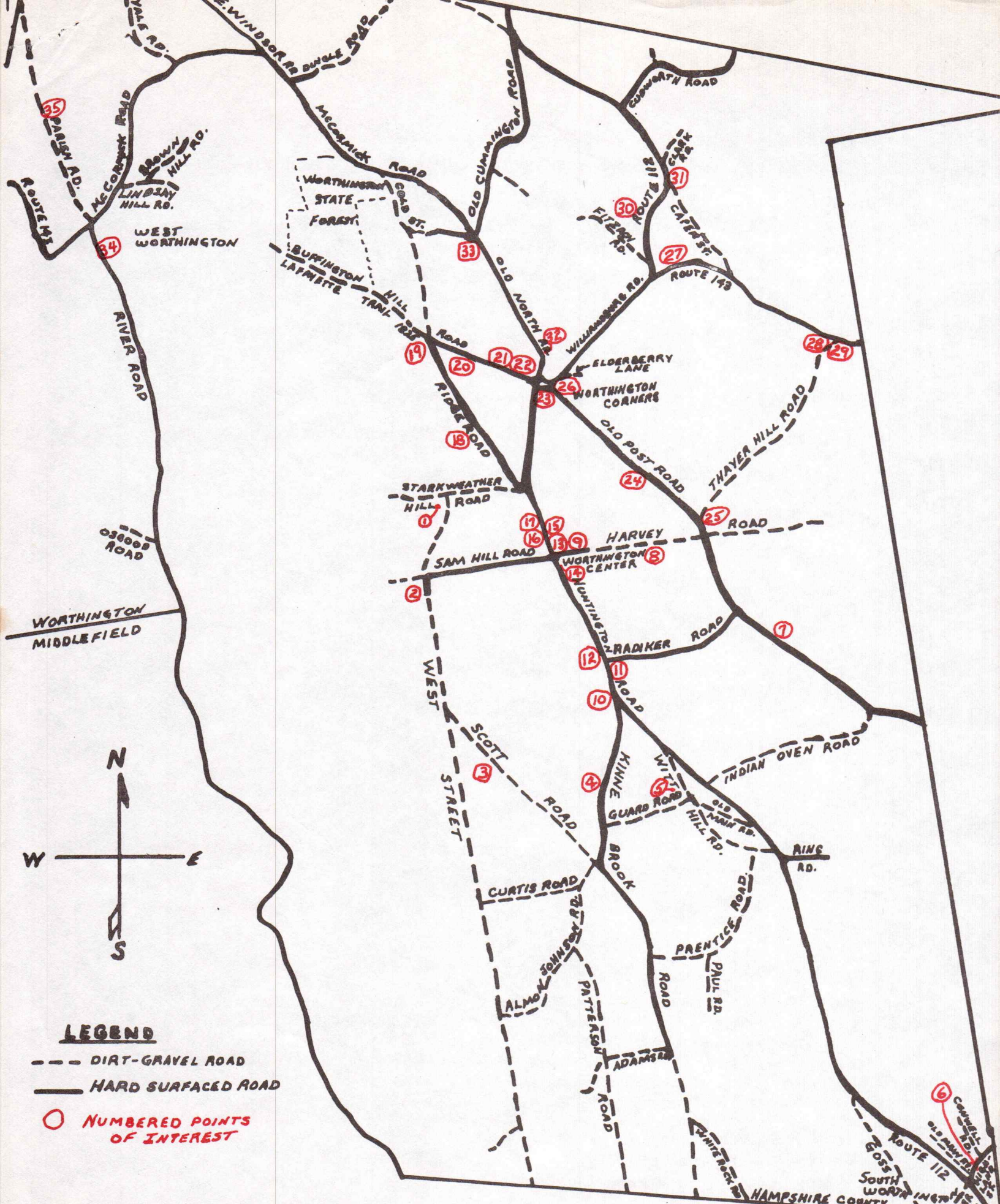
This interesting, early house appears to be four Cape Cods joined together, and it may be just that. Nothing is architecturally more pleasing than the steeply proportioned roof line of an early Cape, the eaves coming down to just above the window frame. This house boasts four such roof lines! With some of the original woodwork and sheathing, one wonders how the house evolved and what interesting story lies behind its development!

No. 34 Brookstone

The oldest section of this house was built in 1790 by a farmer named Ward. It is believed to have been a center chimney Cape Cod style building. In 1820 a tanner, named Watson, who had acquired the property added the impressive Greek Revival portion across the front of the original house. The style of this later addition is reminiscent of the famous architect of that period, Benjamin. To the south of the house and near the river you can still see the foundation stones of the old tannery.

No. 35 Weidenkeller (Parish)

On old Parish Road by a rushing stream sits a marvelous old Cape Cod. The unknown builder chose the site well--an unending source of water and fertile valley acres. The house, date also unknown, has very early proportions: a steeply-pitched roof that reaches down to the tops of the windows, a plain framed doorway with five small panes above to light the cramped, dark hallway inside, and a fat, handmade-brick (beautiful rosy, terra cotta color) chimney rising from the ridge. Awaiting restoration, it presents a pleasantly mellow and weathered face to the passer-by.



TOWN OF WORTHINGTON