



## Worthington Early Settlements

### Historical Context and Overview

After the passage of the Northwest Ordinance in 1787, the U.S. government began organizing the territory north and west of the Ohio River. In addition to establishing a process for admitting states from the Northwest Territory (including Ohio) into the Union, the Northwest Ordinance specified democratic ideals to be incorporated into the states.

In 1802, a year before Ohio became a state under the terms of the Northwest Ordinance, a group of men met in Granby, Connecticut to plan the founding of a town 700 miles away in Ohio. The meeting was organized by James Kilbourn, a self-made, enthusiastic merchant, who also served as a deacon in the Episcopal Church. These men became proprietors in the Scioto Company and purchased 16,000 acres of land along the Olentangy River. The Scioto Company consisted only of proprietors, not speculators, and selection into the group was made by a democratic majority. Like many migrating settlers, these New Englanders were lured westward by the promise of inexpensive, fertile land and a better life for their families.

Founded in 1803, Worthington was named for Thomas Worthington, a U.S. Senator and later Governor of Ohio, who was instrumental in securing statehood for Ohio. The town of Worthington was laid out according to a New England model with a grid pattern around a village green.

Traditional New England institutions were quickly established in Worthington. St. John's Church became the first Episcopal Church in the Northwest Territory in 1804. Rev. Philander Chase, the Church's first rector, later founded Kenyon College. Chase's nephew, Salmon Chase, lived with his uncle in Worthington and later served as a Senator, Ohio Governor, Secretary of the Treasury, and Chief Justice of the United States.

### Standards Alignment

#### Ohio's New Learning Standards: Social Studies

##### Grade 3

Content Statement 1. Events in local history can be shown on timelines organized by years, decades, and centuries.

Content Statement 2. Primary sources such as artifacts, maps, and photographs can be used to show change over time.

Content Statement 10. Individuals make the community a better place by solving problems in a way that promotes the common good.

##### Grade 4

Content Statement 5. The Northwest Ordinance established a process for the creation of new states and specified democratic ideals to be incorporated in the states of the Northwest Territory.

Content Statement 17. Effective participants in a democratic society engage in compromise.

##### Grade 8

Content Statement 15. The movement of people, products and ideas resulted in new patterns of settlement and land use that influenced the political and economic development of the United States.

## Learning Objectives

- Explain the impact of the Northwest Ordinance on new settlement in the Northwest Territory, using Worthington as an example.
- Explain how the early settlements in Worthington reflected the cultural heritage of New England.
- Discuss how early residents of Worthington worked together for the common good.
- Describe the role of religion in early Worthington.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why would the first settlers of Worthington have left Granby, Connecticut to travel almost 700 miles west into the wilderness of the Northwest Territory? What conclusions can you draw about the character and personality of those who founded Worthington?
2. Why would settling the Worthington area in the wilderness of the Northwest Territory as a group be more advantageous than setting out individually?
3. How did the early settlements in Worthington reflect the cultural of heritage and values of New England?
4. In what ways were the democratic ideals of the Northwest Ordinance reflected in the settlement of Worthington?
5. How was the method of allocating lots in the new settlement reflective of democratic ideals?
6. What role did religion, particularly the Episcopal Church, play in Worthington? How did this reflect the New England heritage of Worthington's early settlers?

## Extension Activities

- Using the events identified in the online text of the History of Worthington (see below), create a timeline representing the history of Worthington through the year 1835, when it was incorporated as a village. For students in grade 4 or higher, have them create a multi-tiered timeline, representing events in Worthington, events in Ohio, and events in the United States.
- Select one artifact or primary source from the online collection at Worthington Memory from 1800 – 1830. Have students discuss the artifact/primary source, what it is, and how it represents how life was different in the early 19th century. Have small groups of students work on analyzing different artifacts/primary sources. Use the Analysis Worksheets at the National Archives (see below) to guide the discussion based on the type of artifact/source.

## Additional Resources

- National Archives – Document Analysis Worksheets: <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/>
- Worthington's Official Website – the History of Worthington: <https://www.worthington.org/index.aspx?NID=82>
- Worthington Memory: <http://www.worthingtonmemory.org/Browse.cfm>