WORTHINGTON's last years were clouded by debts, business reverses, and illness. In 1816, he had given John Jacob Astor his note at 7 per cent for $10,000 to invest in stock in the newly established Bank of the United States. He was never able to pay any of the principal on this purchase, and during the Panic of 1820 he could not even keep up payment on the interest. To make matters worse, he had given surety to numerous friends and relatives who were caught in the bank crashes which took place at that time. One of these was his son-in-law Edward King, for whom he paid a debt of $6,010 in 1826. Another was his old and trusted friend Samuel Finley, president of the Bank of Chillicothe, whose former wealth had dwindled to the point where it would pay only half his debts at the time of his death—"all gone to the dogs like so many others" as a result of the Panic. Finley had borrowed more than $20,000 from the Bank of the United States to pay the United States Treasury arrears of $40,000 on a debt incurred while he was receiver of public monies. Worthington, who was one of Finley's bondsmen, found himself liable for half of the amount in arrears, and devoted his energies to meeting this obligation as well as lesser ones of a similar nature which he considered himself honor bound to satisfy.

He never lost touch with Albert Gallatin, his confidant for more than twenty years. Over a long period of time he had urged him to come and live on his Scioto lands, where they could be neighbors. Gallatin and his family, however, refused to settle permanently in the western wilderness. They tried living in New Geneva, Pennsylvania, for a while in 1824, but were not happy there. Like Worthington, Gallatin had suffered business reverses; his glassworks had collapsed, and he had lost heavily in the failure of the Bank of Columbia. The move to New Geneva had been made of necessity, but the sale of much of his western land subsequently enabled Gallatin to settle in New

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1 James Swearingen to Henry Bedinger, April 29, 1821, RCHS.
2 Charles Hammond to Worthington, March 7, 1818, regarding Finley's debt to the United States, in the Hammond Collection. W. H. Crawford wrote Worthington, August 17, 1819, that the judgment was for $22,278.74. Worthington also owed $4,500 to his old friend Henry Bedinger of Shepherdstown, Virginia, and $2,000 to the Bank of Lancaster.
York City. In 1824, however, he was in such bad straits financially that he chided Worthington with some bitterness for charging him his agent's annual fee of thirty dollars. Nevertheless, they remained friends to the end.

The last four years of Worthington's life were complicated by almost continuous illness; his financial worries militated against his recovery, for complete peace of mind was impossible as long as he owed any man.

In 1823, after an exceedingly rainy winter, the Scioto Valley was swept by an epidemic of fever, and all the members of the household at Adena were very ill. The family took a trip to New Orleans in late March, but Worthington and his wife were both constantly unwell, and he never completely recovered his strength. Nevertheless, he made a trip to New York in May on behalf of the canal commission and continued to be as active as ever in business affairs. In April, 1824, he took a boatload of meat to New Orleans, there secured a $10,000 order for a December delivery of pork, and went by steamship to New York on canal business for the state. He had hoped that the salt air would benefit his health, but during the first part of the voyage he was very ill and oppressed by the heat and "muschetoes." In sight of Cuba he was well enough, however, to record in his diary, May 11, that he had seen a Columbian privateer overhaul and take a Spanish schooner.

In the spring of 1825, he took another trip to New Orleans with a consignment of produce, accompanied by his son James T. and his daughter Sarah King. From New Orleans James sailed to Europe for a tour of the manufacturing towns of France and England with a view to improving the methods and processes used at Chillicothe. He was much impressed by the industry of the British workers, but even more by the smallness of the manufacturing establishments, the squalor in which the European laborers lived and worked, and the persistence of the domestic system.

Meantime, at New Orleans on April 10, Worthington, Governor Henry Johnson, and other distinguished gentlemen of Louisiana met Lafayette when he disembarked at Chaumette and accompanied him

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8 Gallatin to Worthington, October 21, 1824, in WMOSL.
4 James Worthington to Thomas Worthington, August 10, 1825, in WM; December 14, 1825, in RCHS.
over the historic ground of Pakenham's defeat. Worthington had an
opportunity to converse with the state's distinguished guest on the ride
back to the city, after which he attended the reception and banquet
in Lafayette's honor. Lafayette, whom Worthington had previously
met in New York, was extremely interested in news of the Ohio country
—its growth and progress since statehood—and expressed a determina-
tion to visit it. He regarded its rapid increase in population and pros-
perity as a complete vindication of an opinion he had formed at the
time of his first trip to America, namely, that a republic of free men
under a good government would succeed better than a state where
slavery was permitted to exist. Worthington wrote out an itinerary
for Lafayette's proposed trip up the Mississippi and Ohio rivers which
the General agreed to follow.

When Lafayette sailed up the Ohio River in the second week in
May, he had a most unfortunate experience. His steamboat, the
"Mechanic," struck a snag 120 miles below Louisville at midnight
and sank in ten minutes. No lives were lost, and the General and his
baggage were put ashore safely. Lafayette was provided with a cot on
which to spend the rest of the night, but a few hours later the "Para-
gon,“ en route to New Orleans, was signaled, and the captain readily
agreed to turn about and take Lafayette and his party back up the
river to Louisville. The General sent regrets to Worthington that he
could not go to Chillicothe to see him as he had hoped, since he had
to hurry east for the Bunker Hill celebration.

In August, 1825, accompanied by his daughters Margaret and
Eleanor, Worthington took a trip to Saratoga Springs to try the waters
for his health. He had now been suffering for some years from periodic
attacks of "pain beyond description" which the doctors had been
unable to relieve—probably gall bladder trouble or gastric ulcers, but
called "bilious colic" in those days. His father and grandfather had
succumbed to the same complaint. The Worthington party went by
boat from Sandusky to Buffalo. On the trip, Worthington, who re-
garded card-playing as the stupidest and most foolish way of spending
time, was mortified to have his daughters see the "disorderly gambling
passengers." He and the girls visited Niagara Falls and then went to
Troy, where Margaret and Eleanor were placed for the year in Mrs.
Emma Willard’s Academy. Worthington spent several days at Saratoga Springs, but the waters seemed to do him no good. His next stop was New York, where he stayed a few days visiting friends—among them John Jacob Astor and Rufus King—before going on to Washington. There he dined and had a good visit with President Adams, with whom he was well pleased. He told Adams frankly that he had not supported his election but that as President he might count on his undivided loyalty. President Adams urged him to communicate with him freely whenever he felt the Administration was in error. Worthington reached home on September 19, feeling somewhat rested, but his bilious attacks were increasingly severe and no less frequent. A second trip to Saratoga Springs, in 1826, definitely convinced him that the waters there would do him no good; if anything, they seemed to add to his misery.

The year 1827, which was to prove his last, opened like any other. Butchering in January, boat-building in February, and canal work in March were his major activities, but he was not the indefatigable stalwart of former years. Nancy Bedinger Swearingen, a niece of Mrs. Worthington living at Adena, reported that it was now customary to refer to Worthington as “the old man.” He had been sick practically all winter, and grew steadily weaker during the spring. On March 6, he confided to his diary, “I seem to be sinking gradually & hope my suffering will soon be over.” He drew his will on the fifteenth of the month, and a few days later despite the protests of his family, insisted on accompanying his boats to New Orleans. His stay there did him no good, nor did the thirty-five-day voyage to New York, which he reached on May 15 in a critical condition.

Judge McGeehee, a fellow traveler from New Orleans, saw him put up comfortably at the American Hotel. There the Reverend J. D. Disosway found him the next day reading his Bible and hymnbook, very weak but cheerful and in excellent spirits. Shortly thereafter, he was moved to quieter quarters, and his son Thomas, a cadet at West Point, was in constant attendance, spending several hours with him almost every day. The Reverend Julius Field of the Methodist Episcopal Church called regularly, as did two other clergymen—Burch and Ketchum. He had the best of medical care from Dr. David Hosack and his son, Dr. Alexander Eddy Hosack, who called in Dr. Wright Post and a Dr. King for frequent consultations. Their efforts were ineffectual. Worthington gradually weakened, and died peacefully.

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8 Worthington’s diary, September 11, 1826.
9 Nancy B. Swearingen to Sarah Bedinger, February 19, 1827, copy, RCHS.
on June 20 at the age of fifty-three, conscious and cheerful to the end, full of thoughts of his family and, characteristically, consoled by the precepts of his religion. Mrs. Worthington and her son-in-law Edward King arrived in New York the next day and accompanied the body to Ohio.

The National Intelligencer for June 26, 1827, noting Worthington's death, called him

a conspicuous politician of the Jeffersonian school . . . . He was particularly useful from his familiarity with the interests of the West and is believed to have been the legitimate father of the beneficent measures which have reduced and almost annihilated the Public Land Debt of the Western country and by establishing a reduced cash price for the lands of the United States have prevented the possibility of its reaccumulation. Governor W[worthington] has been, in a word, a very useful citizen.

News of the death of Worthington was the occasion for a mass meeting in Chillicothe at which preparations for his funeral were entrusted to a committee made up of William Creighton, Thomas Scott, Anthony Walke, and Samuel Williams. The pallbearers were William McDowell, William McFarland, Duncan McArthur, Thomas James, George and Felix Renick, James English, and John Woodbridge.

A troop of dragoons met Worthington's body at Hopetown, four miles north of Chillicothe, and a company of the Chillicothe Blues, together with a large concourse of people, joined them at the Scioto bridge near the edge of town for the march to Adena. The order of the procession was as follows: the dragoons, the hearse, the pallbearers, the committee of honor, the Masons, the judges and other Ross County officials, the members of the county bar association, the city officials, the teachers and pupils of the public and private schools, the citizens, and the Chillicothe Blues. At 2:00 P.M. the cortege reached the Worthington home, which had been crowded since 8:00 A.M. The services consisted of a prayer and a short but eloquent sermon delivered by old Bishop William McKendree.

The trip home and the fatigue of the day were almost too much for Mrs. Worthington, but she was able to be present at the interment in a lot dedicated to that purpose northwest of the house. At a later time, Worthington's remains were removed to beautiful Upland (now Grandview) Cemetery, just south of Chillicothe, where an appropriate memorial marks his resting place.
The resolutions of respect drafted by William Key Bond on behalf of the committee of honor admirably sum up Worthington's career. They describe him in part as

the builder of his own fame and fortune . . . conspicuous in that small but enterprising band of pioneers, who, in less than a quarter of a century, caused the wilderness "to blossom as a rose" . . . without disparagement to any, it may be truly said, that he was greatly instrumental in promoting us from the Territorial to the dignity of State Government . . . In all his various stations he met and performed his duties with that ability, promptitude and indefatigable industry, which commanded the respect of his associates, and inspired his constituents with renewed confidence.¹⁰

On July 5, 1827, the editor of the Scioto Gazette wrote on the death of “our distinguished fellow-citizen”:

Endowed by nature with a vigorous and discriminating mind, and great firmness of purpose . . . he always maintained the reputation of a faithful, zealous and vigilant public officer, and a true friend to the interests of his country. As a man of business he was remarkable for untiring industry, uncommon penetration, and astonishing perseverance. . . . The ordinary difficulties which usually arrest the operations of other men, seemed only to increase his ardor; and neither the rigors of the season, the infirmities of nature, nor even bodily suffering, appeared for a moment to impair his mental and physical activity.

In his will Worthington listed his debts at $38,000. He estimated his estate conservatively at $146,000. At the time of his death he owned at least 15,000 acres of choice land and a great number of town lots, but much of this property had to be sold to satisfy his creditors. Adena and its 1,500 acres, however, were left unencumbered to Mrs. Worthington and the unmarried children. It took Worthington’s executors twelve years to settle his very complicated business and personal affairs.¹¹

The achievements of Thomas Worthington illustrate what could be accomplished in early Ohio by a man of vision, courage, and perseverance. Left an orphan early in life, he lifted himself from obscurity by the exercise of these qualities and by unrelenting devotion to the work at hand. Arriving at the age of maturity, he manu-

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¹⁰ Scioto Gazette, July 5, 1827.
mitted his slaves and moved to a virgin country which beckoned to his perspicacious mind. Others recognized the qualities of leadership which he divined within himself; whether on the bench or in the land office, working at home or surveying in the wilderness, conciliating Indians or commanding militia, directing a state or following a plow, he was never at a loss as to how to proceed. His record is one of outstanding accomplishment. Equally at home in the Ross County courthouse or the Senate chamber of the United States, in the company of his servants or among the élite of the nation's capital, his courteous and dignified conduct won the respect of his associates and the affection of most of his intimates.

No man did more than Worthington to make Ohio a state in the Union and a force in the councils of the nation. His services in the Senate were of extraordinary value. During wartime no one carried a heavier load of self-imposed responsibility for the safety of the people of Ohio. As governor, his recommendations to the legislature were simple, straightforward, and reasonable; conciliatory in tone and noble in sentiment, they stimulated the growth of a new philosophy among many of Ohio's lawmakers. Free education, state control of banking, pauper welfare, reformation of criminals, regulation of the liquor business, stimulation of home manufactures, construction of internal improvements—these were measures too advanced, it is true, for immediate realization in their entirety, but they were soon to be achieved.

Indefatigable in his numerous private concerns, Worthington attacked public problems with the same energy. Bold and decisive when convinced of the merit of a proposition, nevertheless he could be most cautious and discreet if necessary. Impatient of delay when a course of action was discernible, he rarely committed himself until he was sure of his ground. Slow to make up his mind, he was inflexible in his opinions; just in his judgments, he always believed that he was in the right. The force of his personality sometimes stimulated his political adherents to excesses for which he was blamed; he suffered from political vituperation of which he was aware but for which he did not feel personally responsible. Disdainful of counsel when his judgment was once formed, he often gave an impression of smug, supercilious conceit. When he had not yet reached a decision, his hesitation seemed to be equivocation, and his caution often appeared to be indifference. His prosperity caused jealousy, and in his advocacy of any project he was suspected of being motivated by self-interest; certainly no one was benefited more than he was by the constructive measures of his day. A radical Republican in theory, he was restrained
from rashness by his economic interests, which gave balance to his opinions. Although he was too able and influential to be disregarded, his assumption of leadership often smacked of condescension; he failed to appreciate fully the honor bestowed upon him in his election and appointment to the many offices in which he served. His greatest personal handicap, observable when he was under restraint, was an unconscious egotism which was disconcerting and irritating. A suspicious eye and a disdainful air of shrewdness often gave an impression of cunning, subtlety, and lack of candor.

Worthington was fundamentally a rugged individualist. He followed no man but failed to understand when, upon occasion, few followed him. His closest friends were constant in their loyalty, but most of his political support came from those who respected him for his superior abilities. He appeared to be an authority on any subject—law, land, Indians, wheat, cattle, politics, war, or mechanics—not because he had superior knowledge or formal training but because by the very intensity of his interest he gave an impression of omniscience. When he had complete control of a project, he was an excellent administrator; but he was annoyed when limited by the necessity of securing authorization for each step taken. He could not brook delay in carrying out a course of action which, to him, was obviously right. His diary portrays the impatience with legislative delay or the inability of his associates to make decisions which is characteristic of a man of action. Consequently, his four years as governor of Ohio were somewhat unhappy, for he was too often merely a figurehead. The man of deeds had to find an outlet for his energy and leadership in creating a library, in clearing and fencing the statehouse grounds, in establishing a bank, in planning a penitentiary, and in directing activities at his farms and mills.

Although he attacked Plumer and persecuted St. Clair, Worthington was opposed to principles rather than to men. He forgave his enemies, conciliated his critics, and trusted his friends. His correspondence and diary are free from abuse and personal recrimination. As a true humanitarian, he opposed the useless sacrifice of lives, whether Indian, British, or American. As a senator, he disapproved of the death penalty for sabotage because he believed that capital punishment violated “the principles of humanity.” As governor, he favored solitary confinement rather than corporal punishment for prisoners, believing that contemplation would do them more good than

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12 Plumer, 105; Adams, Memoirs, I, 286. This was in reference to conspiracies to collect insurance by burning ships at sea (1804).
physical suffering. No man could abuse dumb beasts or servants in his presence. A well-digger's life was worth the risk of his own. He despised card-playing and condemned drunkenness as inexcusable because of the suffering it brought to the innocent.

Worthington built the finest mansion of its time in Ohio and surrounded it with splendid lawns, beautiful gardens, and noble trees. A lover of the humanities, his unusual private library was a mark of his devotion to learning. He was the sponsor of the Chillicothe Academy and a trustee of Ohio University. A true philosopher, he read Seneca on horseback rides to farm and mill, pondered the significance of man's earthly existence, and sought by faith to apprehend the next.

His family life was a measure of his character. A devoted husband, he kept the love and respect of his spirited wife through the vicissitudes of a frontier life. An indulgent father, he sought to train his children by precept and example rather than by dictatorial command. An appreciation of the dignity of labor was an essential aspect of their discipline. Religious by nature, he instituted family prayers as a part of daily living. He was often misunderstood because of his concern with spiritual matters, and the elevated level of his thought was regarded as superciliousness by many, but the dedication of his youngest son to the ministry of the gospel bore witness to the seriousness of his convictions.

Worthington was comprehensive in his theology and had no sectarian prejudices. Buffeted by the selfish cares of business and politics, away from home he found his greatest relaxation in the calm atmosphere of a Quaker meeting. At home, he accompanied his family to the local Protestant churches, to all of which his means were distributed according to their need. His spiritual horizons broadened with the years, and his diary came to be given over more and more to expressions of gratitude and homage to his Maker. He bore physical pain with fortitude, but his suffering helped confirm his desire to escape the trials of this life. A sense of having realized the purpose of his creation gave him peace of mind. He died at a comparatively early age after an amazingly full and fruitful career.

Every man has a right to the last word concerning his own life and works, his success and failure, his hopes and desires for the future.

18 Worthington's diary, August 17, 1811.
As Worthington approached the end of his second term as governor of Ohio, he evaluated the aims and aspirations of his career perhaps better than has the author of this volume. On March 24, 1817, in one of the longest entries in his diary, he penned the following statement:

> At home & this day commence the setting my affairs in order. My mind has an overcharge of business including public and private. . . . As I have heretofore made great exertions in the fulfilment of all my duties and by honest industry acquired a competency I now only desire either by the sale of part of my estate or my income from the whole to pay my debts & support my family—additional wealth has no charms for me. Experience has proved to my satisfaction that to increase it will only add to my troubles, Excite eney and increase my responsibility. I am now 43 years old and in the vigor of life and to my God I return the most sincere thanks for these impressions, for they have been on my mind from my youth up. The rem'r of my life I desire to make useful if I can but not in acquiring property—What I have is more than enough for myself & children if rightly used & too much if abused. I have endeavored with all my soul from my youth to do justice. I have loved mercy and desired to walk humbly with my God & to give him a satisfactory acc't of my stewardship—I have passed through many trials and tribulations and now my worldly affairs are settled and my soul longs for the presence of its God—I have a large family of children. To bring these up "in the nurture & admonition of the Lord" will be the greatest happiness I can enjoy whilst I live. In a word to fulfil the object of my creation is the first desire of my soul and to my God & saviour I humbly look up for aid having no reliance but on him. With Pope I can most sincerely say

> If I am right, thy grace impart
    Still in the right to stay:
> If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
    To find that better way.