

James Taylor Worthington (1802-1881)

James was born May 31, 1802, shortly after the family moved into the log house Belle View. As the first son, he was groomed to take over Adena and the businesses of his father. He was given greater responsibilities than his siblings. James was an earnest young man and tried hard to please his father. In a letter to Thomas he signed, "I am, dear sir, your most obedient son."

His initial education came at a school built on the Adena property. At 13 he left for Ohio University at Athens. From there he went on to West Point where he was a good student. For an unknown reason his father called him home after a few years and James wrote that it "wounded me to the soul."

In 1827 James took a European tour. On that trip through Paris the French people frequently followed his carriage mistaking him for Napoleon who was similar in appearance. In his later years at Adena, James was known to wear a cape, broad brimmed hat, and use a walking stick.

When Thomas Worthington died in 1827, it was fortunate that James was an attorney. There had been a financial collapse in the 1820s and the Worthington estate was deeply in debt. As executors, James and Eleanor had to sell off a large portion of the vast land holdings and it took twelve years to settle the estate.

James married Julia Galloway of Xenia, a school friend of his sister Margaret. They lived in a large red brick home on East Fourth Street in Chillicothe until Eleanor Worthington died in 1848. At that point they moved into Adena. Julia gave birth to nine children, three of whom died. She was often troubled with ill health and was only mistress of Adena for eight years before her death in 1856.

James then married a widow, Martha Piatt Reed. They lived at Adena another 25 years before James died in 1881. Martha was the last Worthington to live at Adena. By the time of her death in 1896, the house and grounds were in disrepair. It was James' daughter Mrs. Julia McDonald who inherited the estate and sold it to George Hunter Smith of Chillicothe in 1903.