



BICENTENNIAL BULLETIN No. 23 ***—Sheffield Celebrates 200th Birthday***

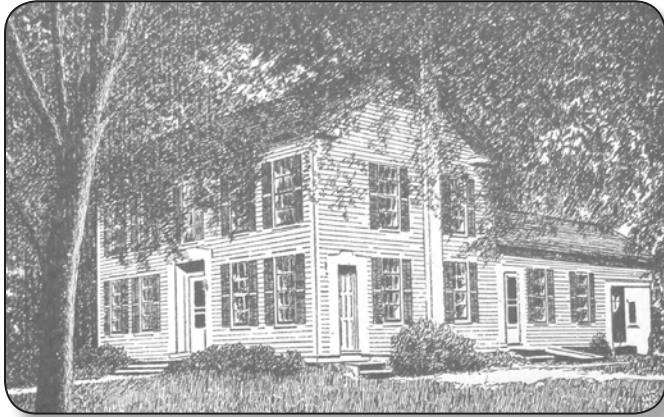
The Sheffield Bicentennial Commission will issue a *Bicentennial Bulletin* each Monday throughout 2015 that illustrates the rich heritage of our communities. **View them at — www.sheffieldbicentennial.org or sheffieldvillage.com**

WILLIAM ROOT HOUSE (built circa 1850—home of an early Sheffield historian) 3535 East Erie Avenue, Lorain, Ohio

In 1816, as young boys, William Henry Root and his brother Aaron Root walked 600 miles through the wilderness with their parents to start a new home in Sheffield. In the 1850s William built this elegant Greek Revival-style home on a Lake Erie bluff at the foot of Root Road. The house once had a Victorian-style porch, but now the original façade has been restored. When built the house was located in the hamlet of Lake Breeze in Sheffield Township. In 1894, the western portion of the Root Homestead (containing the house) was annexed by Lorain, but the eastern section (containing the barn) is now in the City of Sheffield Lake.



Sketch of William Henry Root House as it appeared in 1850



William Henry Root House in the 1880s with Victorian porch



William, son of Henry Root (1767-1829) and Mary [Day] Root (1772-1859), was born in Sheffield, Massachusetts. He was a banker and served as Lorain County Auditor from 1855 to 1861. William was married to Sarah E. [Case] Root (1803-1833) and Francis “Fanny” [Day] Root (1805-1879). His eldest son Orville (1837-1919) followed in his father’s footsteps, serving as Lorain County Auditor in the 1870s. In 1912, Orville had purchased a ticket for the return maiden voyage of the *Titanic* from New York to England—needless to say it was never used.

William Henry Root House front façade in 2009



William Henry Root grave marker in Garfield Cemetery



William’s grandfather was Colonel Aaron of the 1st Berkshire County Regiment during the Revolutionary War. William’s parents were among the original settlers of Sheffield, being the first family to arrive with children (April 3, 1816). Henry married Mary Day on September 10, 1800 in Sheffield, MA. They journey through the wilderness to Ohio by ox cart with their six children: Aaron (14), William (12), Julia Ann (10), Jane (9), Frances (6), and Mary (4). The Root family settled on Lot 17 at French Creek, near where St. Teresa Church now stands. Henry Root built a wood frame house by French Creek about 1926. In his later years Henry lived on the lakeshore near Root Road with his son William, while his eldest son, Captain Aaron Root lived in the old house when not sailing on the Great Lakes.

William Henry Root wrote a number of articles of historic reminiscences for the *Elyria Republican* in 1875, which provides insight to early life in Sheffield. He died on June 27, 1889; William and his wives are buried in Garfield Cemetery (Block, Lot 26, Graves 9-11).