



BICENTENNIAL BULLETIN No. 3 ***—Sheffield Celebrates 200th Birthday***

The Sheffield Bicentennial Commission presents a weekly series of *Bicentennial Bulletins* on topics that illustrate the rich heritage and fascinating diversity of our communities. ***Collect them all and join in the 2015 Celebrations!***

MILTON GARFIELD HOUSE (built in 1839—National Register of Historic Places)
4921 Detroit Road, Sheffield Village, Ohio



Two Hundred years ago, 22-year-old Milton Garfield purchased a 200-acre track of land from Captains Burrell and Day in the relatively new State of Ohio. The track was located in Township No. 7 in the seventeenth range of north-south townships in the Connecticut Western Reserve. Each township was five miles wide and the ranges started at the Pennsylvania line. Although Milton bought the land sight unseen, he based his selection on 1806 survey records that showed a sandy elevation at the southern limit of the township. As the highest elevation in the township, it came to be known as North Ridge because it was the northern most of several abandoned beach ridges left behind by the deeper glacial lakes that once occupied the Lake Erie basin.

Milton, convincing his brother James to accompany him, trudged the 600-mile-long trek from their father's farm in Tyringham, Massachusetts—in the Berkshire Mountains a short distance north of Sheffield—through the wilderness to North Ridge. During the summer and fall of 1815 they cleared

some of the land, built a small log cabin, hunted game, and had several amenable encounters with the Indians of the region. In the late fall they returned to Tyringham for the winter. The next spring, James decided not to repeat the journey west, but Milton's cousin John Garfield did, purchasing land on the Black River immediately to the west of Milton's tract.

In addition to being a farmer, Milton had taught school in Tyringham, earning a teaching certificate from the State of Massachusetts. He eagerly joined the Ohio Militia, rising to the rank of colonel. After four years his farm had prospered from the sale of flax and wool to the point that he proposed to Temperance "Tempe" Williams of nearby Avon. She was a daughter of John and Clarissa [Hamlin] Williams, also natives of Massachusetts. Her brother was Henry Harrison Williams, a prominent Avon merchant who lived to be 93 years old.

Milton and Tempe were married on May 4, 1820. He enlarged the log house several times as their family grew to three sons and two daughters. Together the family cleared the land, planted the fertile ground, and endured the hardships of pioneer life. By 1839 they had accumulated materials and wealth to build an impressive Greek Revival-style home, which still stands on North Ridge. Their third daughter, Julia Clarissa, was born in the new house. The current occupants are the fifth generation of the Garfield family to live in the old North Ridge homestead.

Originally a member of the Whig party, which was formed about 1834 in opposition to Jacksonian Democrats, Milton became a Republican in 1854 when that party was organized to succeed the Whig party, supporting Abraham Lincoln for the Presidency. He served as county commissioner when Lorain County was first organized in 1824, and was elected trustee and first treasurer of the newly formed Sheffield Township on July 10, 1824. In the mid-1830s he served as trustee of the Sheffield Manual Labor Institute, a branch of Oberlin College located on the Burrell Homestead.

Milton and Tempe had six children: Henry Williams (1821-1892; California Gold Rush "49er"); Halsey (1823-1906; married Harriet Root in 1855; Avon merchant, Sheffield farmer, and township official); Eliza Paulina (1826-1897; married George F. Smith—Civil War hero of both the U.S. Army & Navy); Fannie (1827-1871; married Graham Harris); Daniel W. (1833-1911; married Mary Taft; Sheffield farmer); and Julia Clarissa (1841-1922; married Edward Root in 1866—Civil War veteran). The two Root marriages were of cousins to each other: Harriet Root was a daughter of William Henry Root and Edward Root was a son of Aaron Root. Both William and Aaron were sons of Henry Root and Mary [Day] Root, Sheffield pioneers of 1816.

Tempe and Milton Garfield (~1860)



Milton Garfield House in 1884

