BICENTENNIAL BULLETIN No. 48
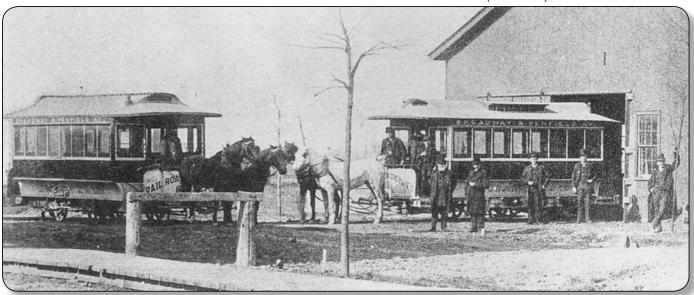## —Sheffield Celebrates 200th Birthday

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*

PENFIELD JUNCTION
Intersection of North Ridge Road and Broadway, Sheffield Township

The intersection of Broadway and North Ridge Road was originally known as Cotton's Corners for Newton Cotton, owner of the surrounding land. Newton named his homestead Penfield Farm. In the 1890s the road leading to downtown Lorain was known as Penfield Road and it stopped at North Ridge Road, not projecting south to Cooper Foster Park Road as now. Broadway, the name of the downtown main street in Lorain, later replaced the Penfield name for the road at Cotton's Corners, but the intersection then became known as Penfield Junction.

From 1885 to 1984, the Lorain Street Railroad operated a horse-drawn streetcar between Penfield Junction and Lorain Harbor along track laid in the center of Penfield Road and on to Broadway. The stable and barn were located at Penfield Junction. Nine horses and four streetcars—two open and two closed—serviced the line. In 1894, Tom Johnson purchased the Lorain Street Railroad in conjunction with the steel mill he was constructing on the Black River. He converted the horse-drawn cars to electric trolley cars, but terminated service to Penfield Junction, stopping the line at the steel mill.
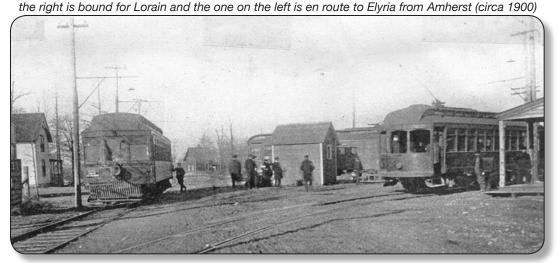
Horse-drawn streetcars at Penfield Junction stable and car barn (circa 1887)

The name Penfield Junction took on renewed importance once another interurban electric line was introduced to area. The Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway—known as the *Green Line*—provided interurban service from Cleveland to Elyria starting in December 1895. The journey only required two hours rather than a half-day stagecoach ride. Later a connection to Lorain was completed that followed Lake Avenue from Elyria, then crossed into southwestern Sheffield Township, and progressed northwest to Penfield Junction near where present-day Clearview High School stands. From Penfield Junction the main line ran north into downtown Lorain, via Reid Avenue, where

it shared a terminal with the Lake Shore Electric Railway on West Erie Avenue. Also from Penfield junction, a spur line ran southwest along North Ridge Road to downtown Amherst where a *wye*—a "Y-shaped" triangular portion of track—was used to turn the trolleys around to run in the reverse direction.

During World War I the interurban lines reached their peak because citizens had difficulty getting new automobiles during wartime. Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway service was in such demand that passengers could be seen hanging on the steps and the back ledge of cars, and even some climbing on the roofs.

Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway's station at Penfield Junction; electric railway car on the right is bound for Lorain and the one on the left is en route to Elyria from Amherst (circa 1900)

The Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway also operated a lavender colored funeral car known as *The Dolores*. The decease's relatives sat in the front of the car and friends in the back. There was room for two caskets in the back of the motorman's vestibule. The funeral car would depart from downtown churches where services were held and travel south along Reid Avenue to Penfield Junction then west to on North Ridge Road to a Cemetery Stop, where Elmwood Cemetery was located on the north side of the road and Calvary Cemetery to the south. Here, the cemeteries had installed special wenches to unload the caskets.

The Lorain Tornado of 1924 and the Great Depression of 1929 hit the interurban lines hard causing abandonment of the Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus Railway's lines in 1931. The Lorain Street Railroad ceased operations in 1938 and by the end of 1939 all of the tracks and electric lines were gone. The name Penfield Junction still lingers on, but fewer and fewer folks recall its origin.

Lorain's downtown electric railway terminal on West Erie Avenue (a short distance west of Broadway) was shared by competitors—Lakeshore Shore Electric, trolley on right, and Cleveland, Southwestern & Columbus, trolley on left (circa 1906)

Lorain Street Railway streetcar at the Loop *in downtown Lorain; the Lake Shore Electric Railway's main line east-west tracks crossed Broadway in the center of the* Loop *(circa 1906)*