

ers included President Johnson of the railroad who lived on a large estate, now occupied by Meadowbrook Village, on East Front Street in Plainfield. The railroad purchased one square mile of the old Coriell Farm where it relocated its tracks from the former Midway Avenue location. Although farming continued to be the major interest in the 1870s, Union County was on the verge of the Industrial Revolution.

The railroad opened the farmland to developers, residences and businesses. Lumber and coal companies opened on nearby sidings, and communities grew around the railroad stations. The railroad also provided material for the construction of future borough streets. In 1888 it was reported that George Kyte, the future mayor of Fanwood, obtained crushed stone and slag to build up the roads around the freight house. The good condition of Fanwood's roads and sidewalks was the result of Mr. Kyte's ability to secure the railroad's help in placing this material without cost to the tax payer.

Lumber and coal yards were established near the new depot. In the old days, the only business places were C. A. Smith and



*The Venezia farm on Terrill Road was one of many local farms in Fanwood during the late 1890's.*



*The railroad tracks were moved to their present location in 1874 and Station Park was the designation given to the lawn and gardens that surrounded the new north side depot.*

Company's Coal and Lumber Yard and Edward Johnston's Coal Yard.

C. A. Smith, in his active days, was regarded as an influential politician in Union County G.O.P. circles. He served several terms on the Board of Freeholders and was popular among his constituents. Edward Johnston, his rival in the coal business, was the father of Surrogate George H. Johnston of Union County and one of the borough's original "boomers" and developers.

The community in the 1870s and 1880s was largely unsettled. The Central Land Improvement Company owned about 350 acres, called "Fanwood Park with serpentine roads well kept in order, offering great inducements to those in search of a desirable location."

The rift between the two areas within Fanwood Township began when the railroad abandoned its plan for a station near the business center of Scotch Plains. It was reported in 1877 that "It is a matter of general regret that our lively hamlet has for so long been ignored by the railroad, and our station permitted to be known as Fanwood. But for us there would have been no need of a station at that point, and it is no more than right that we