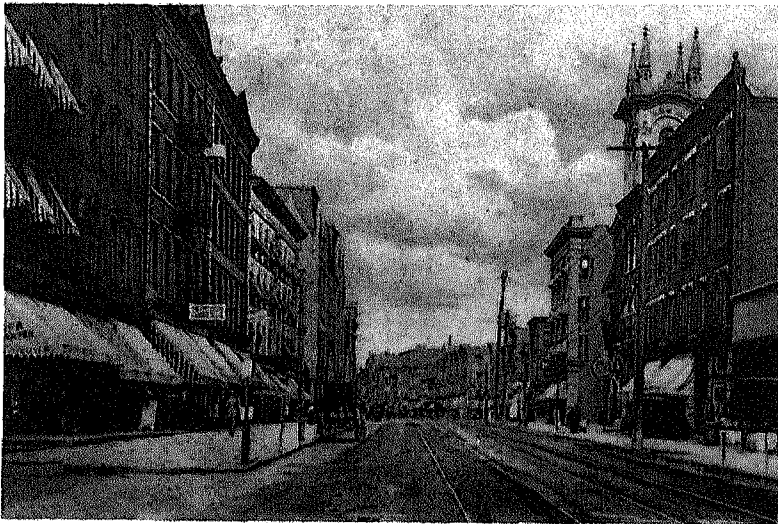


∞ Plainfield ∞

Fanwood's western border is shared with the "Queen City", the city of Plainfield. The first settlers migrated here from Perth Amboy establishing their early farmsteads along the Ceder Brook.

During the Revolutionary period this small community served as a fort and militia post for colonial soldiers. Its link to colonial and revolutionary times have been preserved in a number of fine eighteenth century landmarks which includes the Drake House Museum. The Drake House was built by Issac Drake in 1747 on the then named Old York Road (now Front Street). Old York Road traversed Union County connecting Elizabethtown and Philadelphia. The Drake House was use by General George Washington and his officers during the Battle of Short Hills on June 26, 1777. The City of Plainfield has taken over the current



West Front Street, Plainfield was the shopping mecca for millionaires in the early 1900's.

ownership of this historic site. By the end of the eighteenth century, Plainfield had attracted a nucleus of settlers and was considered a "small country village with approximately 250 inhabitants". During the early decades of the 1800's a number of "hatteries" were established throughout this town, which was one industrial activity which gained considerable importance for the Plainfield area. In fact, by 1837 there were more than a dozen such factories in this area mostly located along the Green Brook. This early industrial activity was followed by the extension of the Elizabethtown and Somerville Railroad through Plainfield in 1837. With the connection of this rail line into New York in the late 1860's, Plainfield began to attract a larger number of residents and suburban commuters. In 1886, the Evening News, predecessor of the Courier News, printed a slogan dubbing Plainfield as the "Colorado of the East". Since at that time Denver, Colorado was regarded as the "Queen City of the Western Plains", the latter part of this phrase was dropped, giving Plainfield its name of the "Queen City". It should be interesting to note that Plainfield, as a political subdivision, was formed ten years before the official formation of Union County when on April 5, 1847, the Township of Plainfield was established from Westfield Township. Nearly twenty years elapsed from the time of its formation as a township to its formation as a city on April 21, 1869. Thus with its accessibility, Plainfield experienced a considerable growth period with its population tripling between 1870 and 1900.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the City of Plainfield became increasingly attractive as a place to live for a large number of wealthy commuters and businessmen. It was reported Plainfield was home to over fifty millionaires in the late 1800's. A large number of substantial residences were constructed during this era and provides Plainfield with a textbook of interesting architectural styles. Many of the mansions constructed in this period also had accompanying or auxiliary structures which provided shelter for horses and