

A Sketch of Cranford

[The following article is reprinted from The Cranford Chronicle, June 4, 1897.]

We have received from Mr. H.P. Baldwin, General Passenger Agent of the New Jersey Central Railroad, a copy of the Travelers and Tourists Guide. The handsome little book has this to say of Cranford.

Distance from New York, 17 miles. Single ticket, 40 cents. Excursion ticket, 60 cents.

It may be said with perfect consistency that this is one of the most thriving towns in Union County, as well as attractive. Its social position in the category of suburban places of residence is very high, and it has many advantages that justify its steady and healthful growth.

The enterprise that naturally results from people of advanced ideas residing in a community has come to promote the welfare of the village. New residents are constantly being added to the roll of permanents, and new houses are going up to accommodate them. Building is constantly going on, and the echo of hammers and rasp of saws are among the most familiar sounds to be heard.

Between the years 1880 and 1890, Cranford made the largest gain in population of any town in Union County—45 per cent. The town is delightfully situated and has the advantage of being particularly well shaded, and contains within its limit a considerable amount of woodland. The streets are broad and sewered. The Rahway River flows through the town and affords the best of drainage. Both the streets and houses, where owners desire it, are lighted by electricity, furnished by the Elizabeth Gaslight Company. In addition to the sparkling Netherwood water, artesian wells are much used, as a very fine quality of water is secured in that way, and comes a trifle cheaper than the piped water. There are Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian and Catholic churches, one high grade school free, and a public library.

The Country Club is the prominent social organization and has on its membership list the names of the best people of the community. Its home was completed somewhat over four years ago, but a disastrous fire leveled it to the ground. Another club house, superior to the original structure will be erected this year. Within the past seven years the Building & Loan Association has erected upwards of one hundred homes and its monthly receipts are steadily growing. During 1892 and 1893, twelve other houses built independent of the Building & Loan Association, cost from \$6,000 to \$15,000 each.

Facing the broad thoroughfare back of the station, a long row of brick stone-trimmed buildings has been erected, under which are nine stores. A fine opera house has been included, with a seating capacity of 500. At other parts of the village are a variety of stores, from which all necessary articles can be procured, so that nothing lacks to make Cranford a most desirable places of residence.

The township has a sewerage system that proves a boon to the residents. The outlet is at tidewater.