

# Needham Heights Common



Postcard View of Heights Common, 1910

Land for a Common in the Heights was purchased in 1884 from landowner Isaac Burr, to form a focal point for the growing village. The land around the Highlandville (Heights) train station had been open fields and farms, but was beginning to see new residential and business growth in the 1860s and 70s. The main roads, Highland Avenue and Webster Street, were finally extended to reach as far as Needham Center in the 1880s.

Development and industry arrived in the Heights in the 1850s, as knitters from the English Midlands, displaced by industrialization, brought over their looms and settled in this area. The most famous of these was William Carter (Site #2). The knitting industry grew, and needed new workers. Population grew along with the knitting mills, and in the next few decades shops, factories, and residences began to fill in the space around the train. Laying out the Common gave the new village a central community space.