

George Hassam House (c. 1895)



The Hassam House was built around 1895, during the residential expansion of the Great Plain in the late 19th century. Like the Holmes House (#24), the Hassam house was built by the Holmes Brothers as part of their “Oakland Heights” development. They attracted buyers to Needham by highlighting the town’s “Constant Improvements, Electric Railways, Electric Lights, Pure Air and Town Water.” Purchasers were assured that each house would retain its value because no house within Oakland Heights “shall cost less than \$3500 or be located within 50 feet of Great Plain Avenue,” and because “Proper Restriction Insures Good Neighbors.”

George and Sarah Hassam purchased the house as its first owners. George Hassam owned a repair garage on Highland Avenue across from the Town Hall (currently the site of a restaurant). In 1921 he testified in the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti about car number plates that were stolen from his garage and used on the getaway car during the Braintree robbery.