

Kingsbury-Whitaker House (1710/1840)



Built originally in 1710, the Kingsbury-Whitaker House is only second in age to the Robert Fuller House (1707) on Forest Street. As first built, the house was a small saltbox (two rooms on the first floor, loft above) and faced west, toward Nehoiden Street. It was the home of Deacon Timothy Kingsbury, one of the signers of the Dedham Farmers' Petition that separated Needham from Dedham in 1711. Kingsbury's daughter Sarah, born in February 1712, was Needham's first baby.

The house was purchased by Edgar Whitaker in 1839 and substantially renovated and expanded to take its present farmhouse form. Whitaker was part of the company that brought the railroad to Needham. The rebuilt house was nearly twice as large, and faced Great Plain Avenue. There was a lawn and a walk bordered by pines that led from Great Plain Avenue to the house. Whitaker landscaped the property into gardens and terraced lawns, a gazebo and tennis courts. He would sit out in his gardens with his guests and watch the trains pull into the Center Station.

The property was purchased by David Murdoch in the 1920s. Murdoch subdivided the property for building, and laid out the Washburn Ave. and Glendoon Road house lots. A transplanted Scot, Murdoch named Glendoon Road after his old home, the Glen Doone, in Scotland.