

Whetton's Store



Whetton's Store, circa 1915.

J. J. Whetton was born in England, and came to Needham in 1870. As a younger man, he was a seaman in the British Navy. (His distinctive gravestone in Needham Cemetery, engraved with a ship under full sail, is a nod to his naval career.) Whetton, and later his son, owned the general store in the Heights for several decades. He was also the Postmaster, and a ticket agent for the Cunard Line. His store boasted the first telephone in Needham.

The second floor of Whetton's store was a meeting room known as Highland Hall. Highland Hall was the main assembly room in the Heights, and the location for dances and lectures, as well as a meeting place for civic, fraternal and religious organizations. The store, which was built in 1857, was abandoned in 1932 and torn down in 1938. It is now the site of Heights Shell.