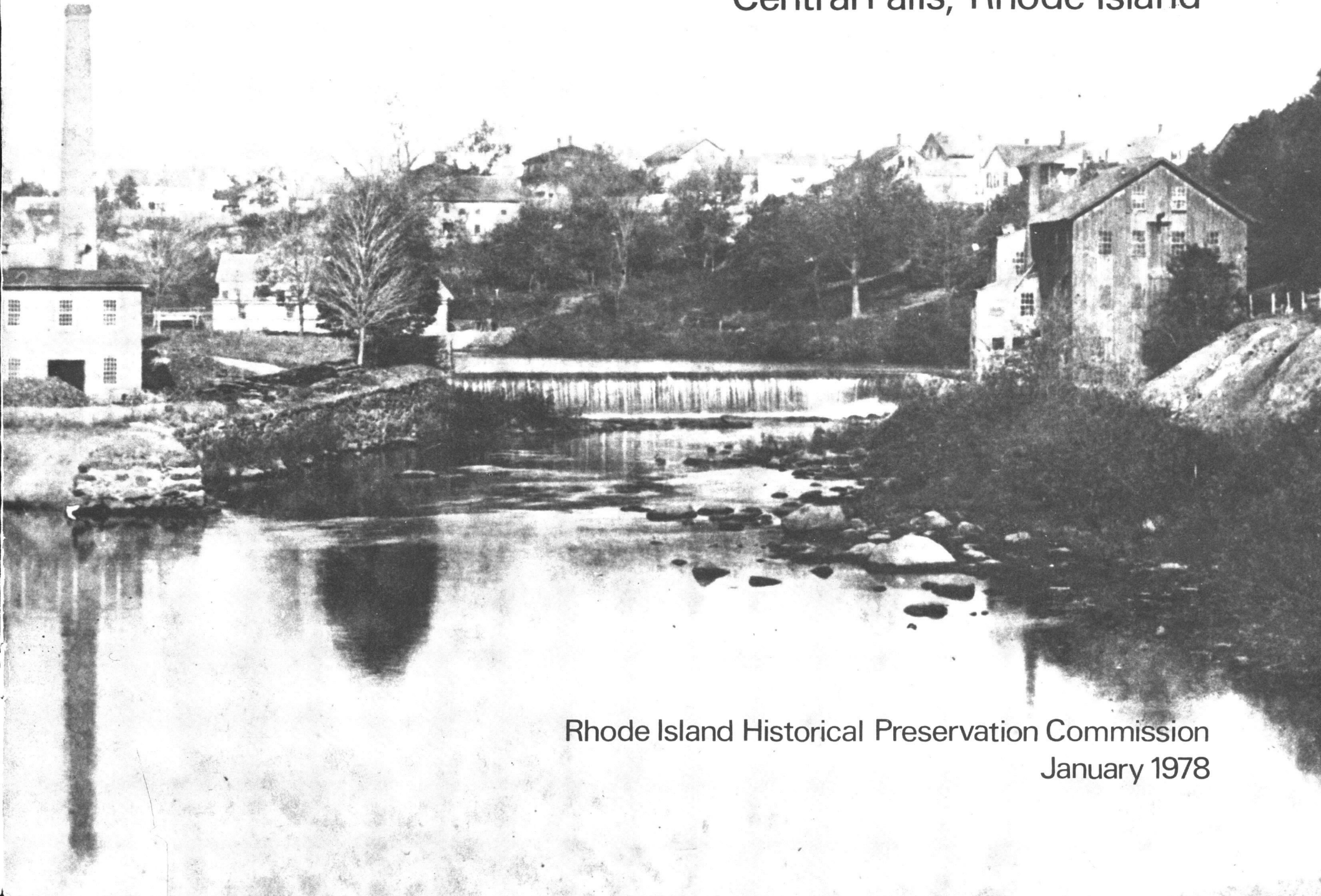


CENTRAL FALLS, RHODE ISLAND

# Central Falls, Rhode Island



Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission  
January 1978





STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
Old State House  
150 Benefit Street  
Providence, R. I. 02903  
(401) 277-2678

January 30, 1978

The Honorable J. Joseph Garrahy, Governor  
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
State House  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Governor Garrahy:

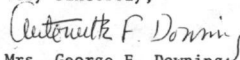
It is with pleasure that I transmit herewith Central Falls, Rhode Island--Statewide Preservation Report P-CF-1, the ninth publication in the Statewide Preservation Report series.

This report provides an analysis of the historical and architectural growth of Central Falls, with consideration given to current redevelopment problems. It recommends a preservation program which should be incorporated into the city's overall planning effort.

The Commission has only begun the task of recording and conserving the rich cultural resources of Rhode Island; its ultimate goal is to complete reports on each of the cities and towns in the state.

We believe that our work, represented in this publication, will forward the cause of historic preservation in the state.

Very sincerely,

  
Mrs. George E. Downing  
Chairman

This document is a copy of the original survey published in 1982. It has not been corrected or updated.

Since the original publication:

- >additional properties have been entered on the National Register;
- >some financial incentives referred to in these pages are no longer available;
- >some new financial incentives are available.

For up-to-date information, please contact:

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission  
150 Benefit St.  
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(401)222-2678      www.preservation.ri.gov      info@preservation.ri.gov

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission is your state agency for historical preservation. The Commission identifies and protects historic buildings, districts, landscapes, structures, and archaeological sites throughout the State of Rhode Island.

## PREFACE

In 1968, the Rhode Island General Assembly established the Historical Preservation Commission, charging it with, among other duties, the task of developing a state preservation program following the guidelines of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as administered by the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior. Citizen members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor; the chairmen of the House and Senate Finance Committees of the General Assembly, the Director of the Department of Economic Development, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources, the Chief of the Division of Statewide Planning and the State Building Code Commissioner serve as ex-officio members. The Director of the Department of Community Affairs has been appointed by the Governor as the State Historic Preservation Officer for Rhode Island.

The Historical Preservation Commission is responsible for conducting a statewide survey of historic sites and places and from the survey recommending places of local, state or national significance for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places; administering federal grants in aid to Register properties for acquisition and development; and developing a state historical preservation plan. Additional duties include compiling and maintaining a State Register of Historic Places; assisting state and municipal agencies in the area of historical preservation planning, by undertaking special project review studies; and regulating archeological exploration on state lands and under waters of state jurisdiction.

The Rhode Island Statewide Historical Survey, inaugurated in June, 1969, has been designed to locate, identify, map and report on buildings, sites, areas and objects of cultural significance. In line with the current movement among preservationists, planners and architectural and social historians, the total environment of a survey area is considered. In addition to outstanding structures and historical sites, buildings of all periods and styles, which constitute the fabric of a community, are recorded and evaluated. Presently, however, archeological resources are recorded in a separate survey effort, usually independent of historical and architectural surveys.

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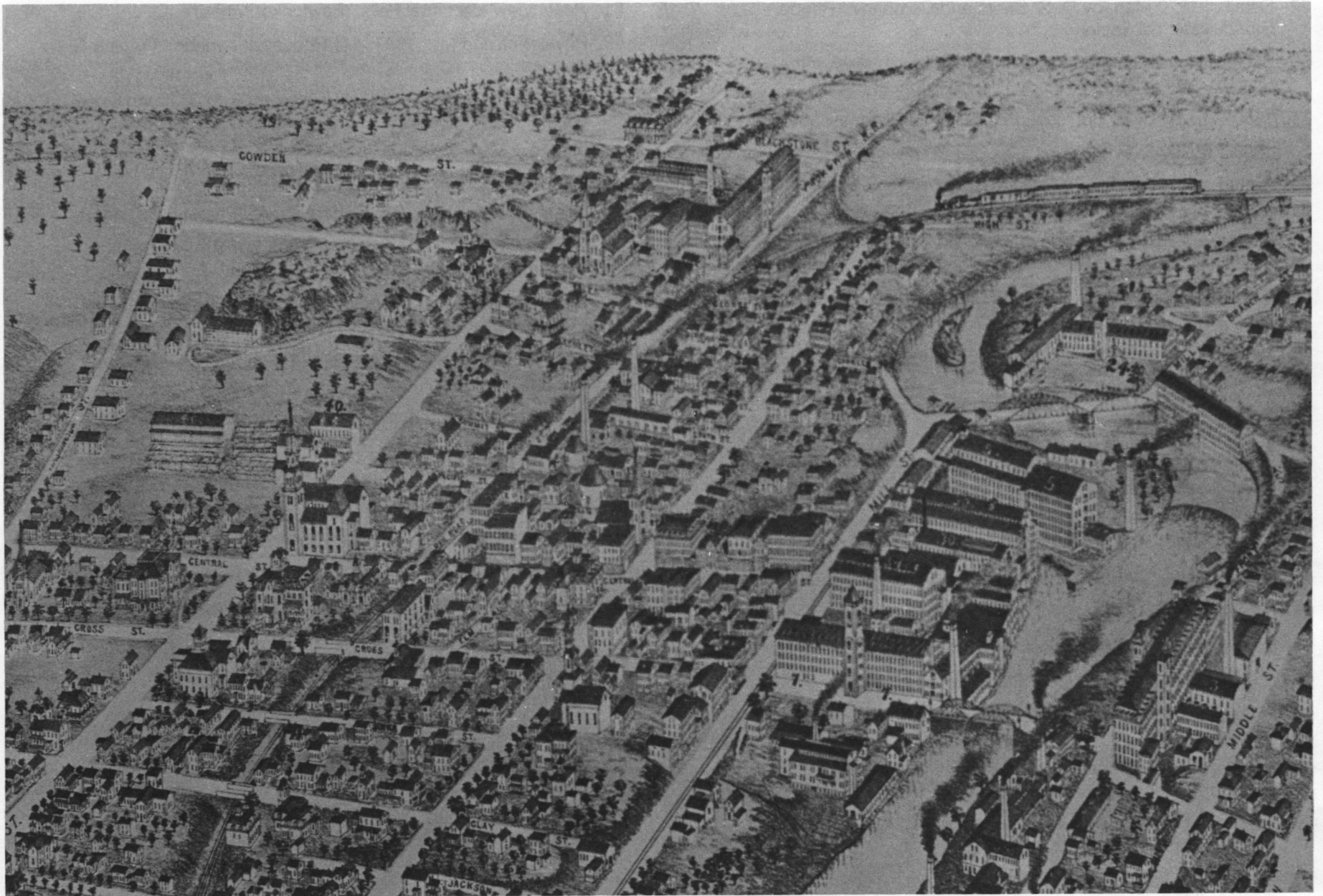


Figure 2: Detail of view of Central Falls, 1877.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The historical and architectural survey of Central Falls, Rhode Island, was initiated by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in cooperation with the City of Central Falls in July, 1975. The survey was funded by the Commission through a survey and planning grant from the National Park Service and by the City with funds made available through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

To accomplish the goals of the statewide survey program three stages are necessary: field survey, compilation of maps and preparation of a final report for each area surveyed. A standard survey form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet," has been prepared by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission for use throughout the state. It incorporates both architectural and historical information and a photograph of each building or site recorded. Historical information is obtained through the use of local maps, state atlases, published and unpublished histories and guidebooks and manuscripts which are readily available. Extensive deed research is not usually undertaken by the Commission staff. The survey encompasses the city's topography, its settlement and street patterns and its commercial, industrial, institutional and residential buildings. Data from the survey forms is ultimately transferred onto maps so that information pertaining to historical preservation can be easily used for planning purposes.

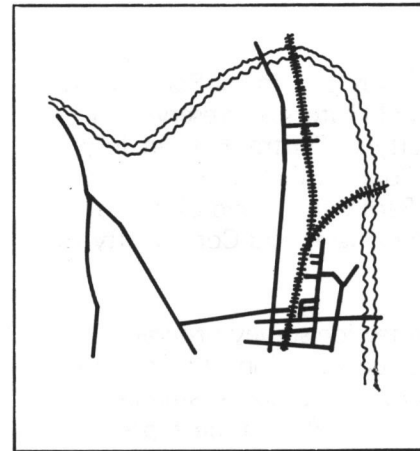
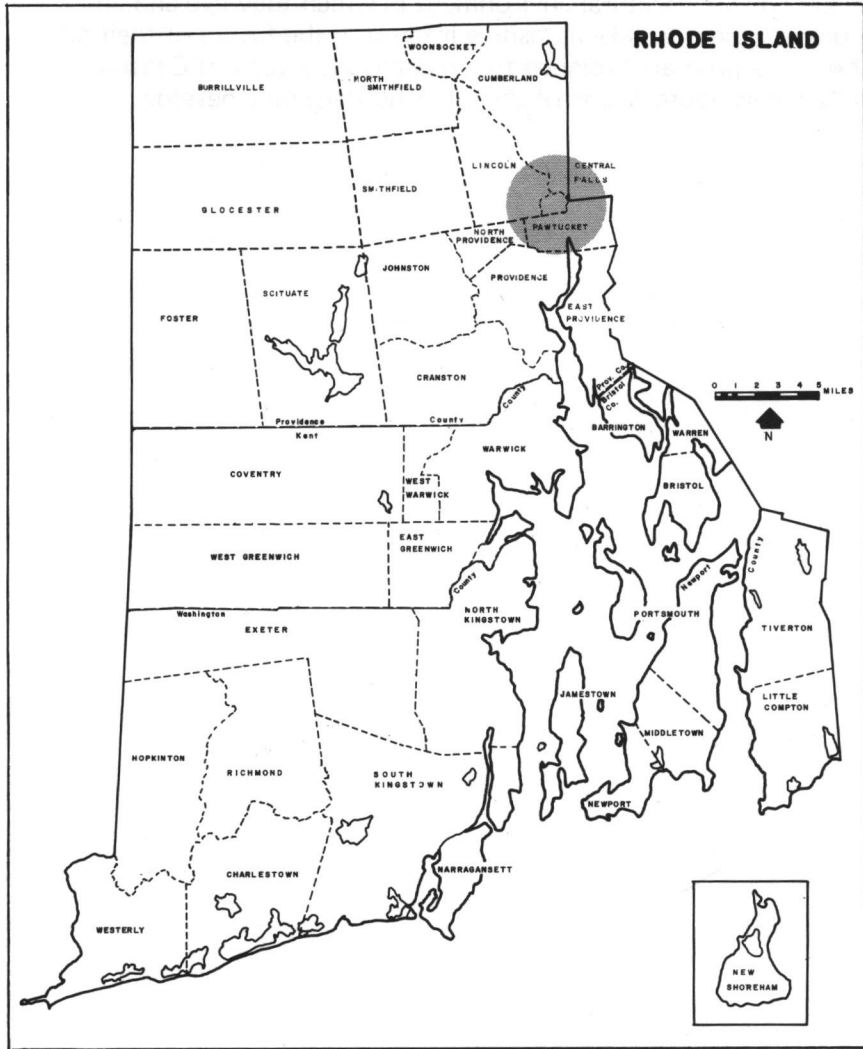
Upon completion of the survey and review by the Commission and by local officials and citizens, copies of the survey forms, maps and final reports are filed at the Commission office and in appropriate local repositories, such as the city or town hall, historical society or library.

This report deals with those manifestations of Central Falls' past which should be retained as a living, active part of the city's present and future life. It presents a concise history of Central Falls and its architectural development, together with recommendations for preservation planning. In the Appendices are explanations of the National Register of Historic Places, the Grants-in-Aid program and the survey form of the Historical Preservation Com-

mission. An inventory of noteworthy structures and sites in Central Falls, a list of recommendations to the National Register and a list of pertinent preservation agencies are also included. The objectives of the report are threefold: it is a planning tool, which can be used to guide future development; it is an educational resource, useful in the study of state and local history; and it can be a catalyst in awakening civic pride, helping residents to become aware of the historical and architectural environment in which they live and encouraging them to take a positive interest in the future of their city. Through a program designed to safeguard the legacy of Central Falls, a new appreciation of the city's heritage may develop.



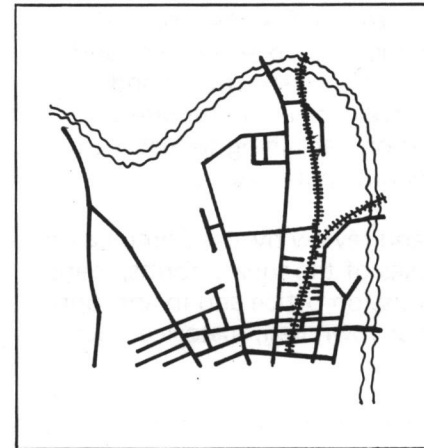
Figure 3: Map of Rhode Island, locating Central Falls.



1851



1862



1870



1895

Figure 4: Maps showing the development of Central Falls in 1851, 1862, 1870 and 1895.

## II. PHYSICAL SETTING

Central Falls is bounded by the Blackstone River and Valley Falls Pond on the north and the east, the town of Lincoln on the west and the city of Pawtucket on the south (Figure 3). Part of the Providence metropolitan area, Central Falls is approximately six miles directly north from the city of Providence and is roughly square in shape. Although only 1.3 square miles in area (the smallest municipality in Rhode Island) it is intensively developed and ranks fifteenth in population.

In its earliest years, the undeveloped land of Central Falls was part of the "North Woods" of Providence. Only sparsely settled throughout the eighteenth century, the area did not experience intensive development until technological innovations made the water power of the Blackstone River a valuable resource. From its origin as two hamlets on the banks of the river, Central Falls expanded into a major textile and metals manufacturing center in the nineteenth century. Like Pawtucket, its neighboring city to the south, Central Falls was shaped largely by the process of industrialization and its early growth was, for the most part, an extension of development in Pawtucket; this close relationship continued throughout the nineteenth century.

In the nineteenth century, the city became home to immigrants from a variety of countries and, even today, retains its ethnic heterogeneity. Economic reverses in the twentieth century have been a significant factor in the city's recent history. But after years of economic decline, Central Falls is now taking positive steps toward renewal.

In many ways, the city's growth has been conditioned by its geographic setting. The Blackstone River is the most important natural feature of Central Falls; it makes up over half of the city's boundaries and, although not a large river, has been intensively used for the past one hundred and fifty years as a source of power. The river has been a major force in the community's evolution. As the water flows down from Valley Falls Pond on the city's northern border toward Narragansett Bay it passes between steep banks and over a series of falls — Valley Falls at the north end of

Broad Street; the middle waterfalls (the source of the city's name) at the north end of Roosevelt Avenue; and, to the south, Pawtucket Falls. These waterfalls provided power for industry and it was this industrialization which sparked the development of Central Falls and fired its rapid growth as an urban center. The physical appearance of these falls has been modified by filling, to create a more even flow, and by the construction of dams at intervals along the course of the river. Because they used water power, the original industrial plants of Central Falls were located along the river, especially on Roosevelt Avenue and at the northern end of Broad Street. The Blackstone River is bridged at three points in the city — at Cross Street and Roosevelt Avenue (leading to Pawtucket) and at Broad Street (leading to Cumberland).

Topographically, the city has a generally flat, outwash terrain, except for the steep banks of the river and the bedrock outcroppings visible in several locations, such as those at Cross Street and Roosevelt Avenue and in Jenks Park. The topsoil is relatively thin and not well suited for agriculture. Several minor hills which once existed were graded during nineteenth-century development.

This physical setting posed few problems and offered several inducements for settlement in the nineteenth century. Hence, the man-made environment of Central Falls is unusually extensive, with little open land remaining, and is characterized by dense development with structures set close together and a relatively consistent building scale. Most structures are two or three stories tall, even along the commercial area of Broad and Dexter Streets.

The city's land-use pattern is heterogeneous — industries are concentrated along the eastern edge of the city (between Broad Street and the river) and in the southwest corner (west of Dexter Street). Although both of these areas contain residential sections, most of the city's housing is located in the truncated triangle formed by Dexter and Broad Streets and varies in density, with the least compact development occupying the area around Shawmut Avenue.

The river-front industrial section and the neighboring residential areas are separated from the rest of the city by the tracks of

the Providence and Worcester Railroad line, traversing the area in a north-south direction and branching off across the Blackstone River south of Blackstone Street. Central Falls' location on the east-coast rail corridor was a key factor in sustaining its nineteenth-century industrial development. Although the tracks interrupt east-west traffic across the city, there are crossings at Clay, Jenks and Cross Streets, Sacred Heart Avenue and Blackstone, Hunt and High Streets.

Three major thoroughfares traverse Central Falls in a north-south direction: Broad Street (State Route 114), Dexter Street and Lonsdale Avenue (State Route 122). They connect Central Falls with Pawtucket and Providence to the south and with the mill villages along the Blackstone River and Woonsocket to the north. The fact that the city developed along pre-existing roads rather than around a village center is reflected in the linear concentration of commercial activity along Broad and Dexter Streets. Although the city's major public buildings and Jenks Park are on Broad Street between Central and Fales Streets, this area at present lacks the clarity and definition required to establish a focal point for the city.

The street pattern of Central Falls (Figure 4) reflects its stages of growth. The southeastern section, where the earliest development occurred, is characterized by an irregular street pattern, with dead-end streets and uneven lot and block sizes. The rest of the city, developed largely in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, has a more even pattern, with streets and lots typically meeting at right angles.

The major points of access to Central Falls are the three bridges crossing the Blackstone River, at Broad Street, Dexter Street and Lonsdale Avenue. From these bridges, the views of the river on both sides clearly mark the border of the city; the other boundaries, however, are less well defined.



### III. HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

#### First Settlement (to 1750)

Before the arrival of European settlers, the land which is now the city of Central Falls was probably common ground used by the Nipmuc, Wampanoag and Narragansett Indians. These native inhabitants lived in villages of conical houses which were made of mats shaped over a frame of branches. Indian economy was based on hunting, fishing and agriculture, including the cultivation of squash, corn, beans and tobacco. The Sneechetocket (Blackstone) River was a fruitful fishing area, and the Indians were attracted to the falls at the northern ends of present-day Roosevelt Avenue and Broad Street, where large numbers of fish could be caught.

The landscape of Central Falls as the Indians knew it would be a stark contrast to that of the city today. Much of the area was wooded with oak, walnut, chestnut and birch trees between the rock outcroppings. The land was crossed by footpaths leading to the fishing areas and fords at the three falls. The banks of the river were steeper than they are today, the falls more jagged and irregular. An Indian trail, later called Old Roebuck Road, whose exact location is now unknown, connected the general area of the three falls (at Pawtucket, Central Falls and Valley Falls) to present-day North Attleboro and to Providence, where it joined the Pequot Path running south toward Westerly.

When European settlement began in Rhode Island in the 1630s, this area offered few advantages to the early settlers who joined Roger Williams in Providence; development in the vicinity of Central Falls proceeded very slowly throughout the seventeenth century. The first white settler to venture into the area was William Blackstone (or Blaxton) (Figure 5) who actually arrived in 1635, a year before Roger Williams founded Providence. Blackstone had been the first settler in the Boston area, but he quarrelled with later arrivals. He moved to "Study Hill" (near Lonsdale) but was never joined by others; his enduring legacy to the area was the name of the river which flowed past Study Hill and was called "Mr. Blackstone's River."

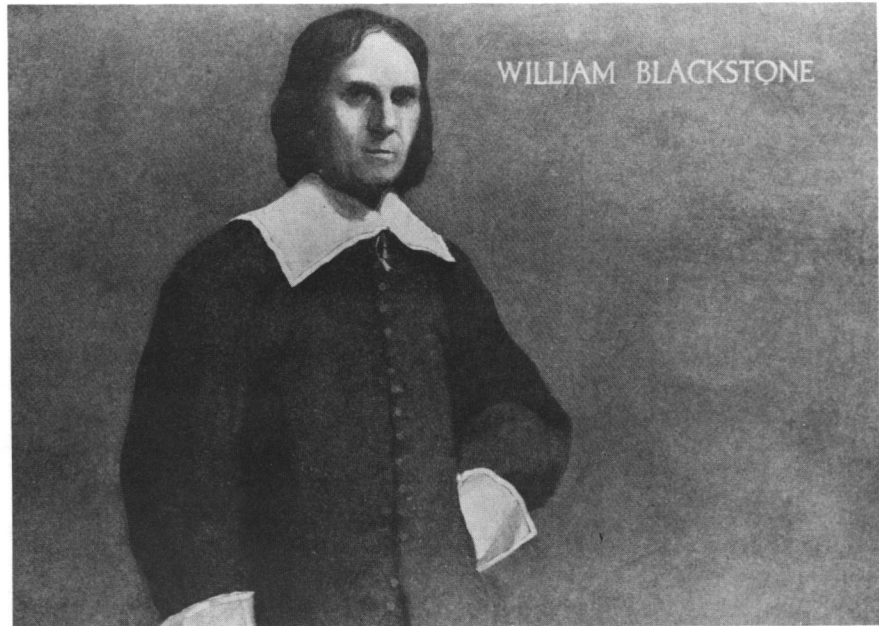


Figure 5: William Blackstone; calendar illustration, c. 1925.

In 1636, Roger Williams and his followers acquired the land which is now Central Falls as part of Providence when Williams made a verbal agreement with the Narragansett sachems Canonicus and Miantinomi. This purchase was confirmed by a written deed in 1637 granting the settlers the "meadows upon two rivers," the Pawtucket (Blackstone) and Pawtuxet. A confirmation of this deed stated that the Providence group had acquired the "river and fields of Pawtucket." Since the Indian name "Pawtucket" was used to identify a region of waterfalls, it is probable that the area of Central Falls was purchased through this transaction. In 1646, the land was paid for a second time following negotiations with the Wampanoag sachem Massasoit, who also claimed the territory.

Central Falls was not included in the original laying out of Providence and remained the common property of the town, the "lands of public domain," to be sold to newcomers to the colony. Among the earliest landowners here in the "North Woods" were Richard Scott, Daniel Comstock, Thomas Estance and Joseph

Jenks, Jr.; the latter had been the first to make use of the power of the Blackstone River at his forge near the Pawtucket Falls. It is unclear whether such early landowners actually lived in the area, but it is likely that they did not. Other settlers from Pawtucket and Providence took advantage of good fishing and hunting in the area; the Providence Town Records indicate that the regions near the falls were set aside as common fishing grounds, and landowners Joseph Jenks and Gregory Dexter were compensated for this intrusion. The banks of the river may have been used for pasturage, but the area remained the "outlands" of Providence.

Central Falls was, however, the scene of a major confrontation between settlers and Indians during King Philip's War. The war began when Massasoit's son, the Wampanoag sachem Alexander (Wamsutta), died of a fever on his return from the Plymouth Colony where he had been arrested on a charge of planning an attack. His death marked the start of hostilities between the English settlers and the Wampanoags who thought Alexander had been murdered. Alexander's brother, Philip (Metacomet), led the Wampanoags in the war. The war reached a climax at the Great Swamp Fight, in present-day South Kingstown, in 1675 and expanded when the Narragansetts agreed to aid the Wampanoags. Skirmishes recurred the next year and the Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies, fearing an attack on Rehoboth, garrisoned the town in the spring with a company led by Captain Michael J. Pierce of Plymouth. Pierce received word that the Narragansetts under their sachem, Canonchet, were marshaling their forces in the Central Falls area before attacking. Taking the offensive, Pierce moved his band of sixty-five colonists and twenty Indian allies toward the Blackstone River to engage the Indians on March 16, 1676. Their progress toward the waterfalls was observed by the Indians from Dexter's Ledge, now the site of Cogswell Tower in Jenks Park. Pierce and his men were met as they forded the Blackstone near the middle falls (at the head of Roosevelt Avenue). Most of the colonists were killed in the battle; nine fled to the Cumberland area where they were captured and executed at the spot now known as Nine Men's Misery. Pierce's Fight was an important episode in King Philip's War. Soon after, Canonchet was captured and later executed, and, before the year ended, Philip was killed; without these two leaders the war ended quickly. Today, a tablet (Figure 6) near Macomber Field commemorates the site of Pierce's battle.

Despite the end of Indian hostilities, the development of the Central Falls area continued to lag. With its rocky soil, the land was not suitable for agriculture and the small meadows along the banks of the Blackstone which could be used for pasturing livestock were difficult to reach. Even the richer farmlands north and west of Central Falls were only thinly populated during the early decades of the eighteenth century. Many Quakers settled in the Lonsdale area, however, and several small hamlets grew up in what are now Cumberland and Lincoln.

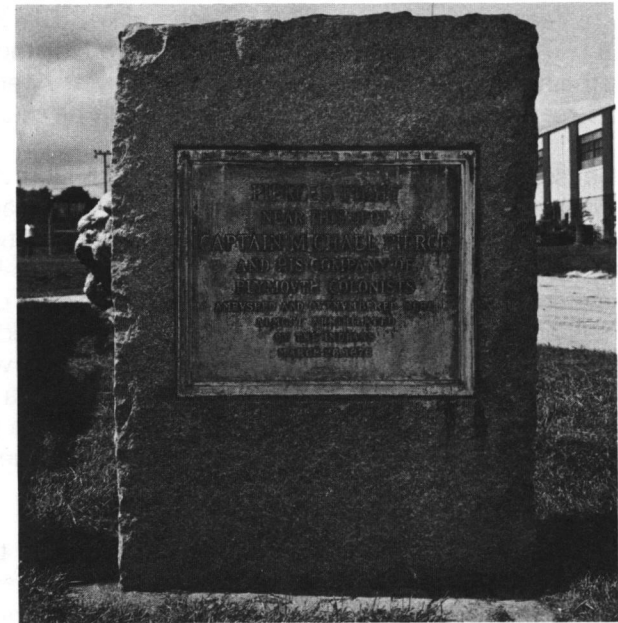


Figure 6: Marker, c. 1907; commemorating Pierce Fight, 1676; High Street.

In 1714, the Smithfield Road (now Lonsdale Avenue) was built to provide access to Providence for these outlying settlements in the Blackstone River Valley. In Central Falls this north-south road was connected to the waterfalls and fords on the Blackstone River by footpaths. Rather than pass over the fords at Central Falls, the traffic on these roads moved toward the lower falls at Pawtucket, where a bridge was erected in 1713 to serve that substantial village and facilitate intercolonial overland traffic.

Although the rate of growth in these "North Woods" of Providence was rapid in the twenty years preceding 1730, the actual number of settlers remained small. Despite this scattered population, the colony's legislature, prompted by difficulties in transportation and the wide distance separating these farmsteads from the compact part of Providence, was forced to consider the creation of new towns in this northern area. After receiving a petition in 1730, requesting a division of Providence into "three or four parts as they should think proper," the legislators partitioned the great northern section of the town into the three new towns of Smithfield, Scituate and Glocester because, as they said:

The Out Lands of the Town of Providence are large, and replenished with Inhabitants sufficient to make and erect three Townships . . . which will be of great Ease and Benefit to the Inhabitants of said land, in transacting and negotiating the prudential affairs of their Town, which for some time past has been very heavy and burthensome.

Thus, in 1731, the small area near the waterfalls on the Blackstone River now known as Central Falls became part of Smithfield. The new town, comprising seventy-three square miles, was one of the largest in the state and was bounded on the north by the Massachusetts line, on the west by Burrillville and Glocester, on the south by Providence and on the east by the newly acquired Attleboro Gore (now Cumberland).

Smithfield held its first town meeting in May of 1731. In spite of its political autonomy, the inhabitants were thinly scattered over a wide area, much of which was still wilderness. In fact, one of the first actions of the new Smithfield town government was the offer of a bounty for wildcats and wolves.

The Central Falls vicinity remained undeveloped for several more decades after Smithfield's incorporation. Its land was less immediately useful than the surrounding area for the early settlers, and not until the later decades of the eighteenth century was the river's power utilized here. The population of Smithfield grew steadily (from 450 in 1748, to 1,921 in 1755 and 3,073 in 1800)

as more land was opened for agriculture. Still, there were only a few scattered farms in present-day Central Falls.

One of the most important factors for the future development of Smithfield was the highway act of 1738. The first comprehensive highway legislation passed by a Rhode Island town, it required that every able-bodied man over twenty-one work for six days each year to maintain the town's roads; improvements in these routes facilitated the flow of people and goods between Providence and the north.

### **Early Use of Water Power (1750-1820)**

The origin of all later industrial development and the first use of Central Falls' most valuable natural resource — water power — occurred during the 1750s when Benjamin Jenks built a trench by the side of the river and erected a snuff mill powered by water flowing through this channel. Much of the land in the vicinity was owned by members of the Jenks family. In 1763, Captain Stephen Jenks purchased three quarters of an acre from Gideon Jenks and Ezekeal Carpenter on the Blackstone River near the present-day Roosevelt Avenue bridge where he built a triphammer-and-blacksmith shop to manufacture iron hardware, including ship bolts. In 1777, Benjamin Cozzens, who operated a fulling mill at Pawtucket, purchased ten acres nearby.

The first dam in Central Falls made extensive use of the falls possible. Probably located slightly above the present Roosevelt Avenue bridge, it was built in 1780 by Sylvanus Brown of Pawtucket for Charles Keene who purchased Benjamin Cozzens' property on the site of the present Stafford Mill, at 581 Roosevelt Avenue. Brown, one of a family of noted millwrights and machinists, later aided Samuel Slater in the construction and installation of the power system of his mill at the Pawtucket Falls. Keene began manufacturing scythes and other sharp-edged tools in a building he constructed near what is now the corner of Roosevelt Avenue and Charles Street. Part of the building was also used for the manufacture of chocolate, an industry which gave the name "Chocolateville" (or "Chocolate Mills") to the small settlement. In 1784, Keene sold part of his interest in the water power to Levi Hall of Providence who used his share for fulling (a cloth-finishing process).



Through a series of transactions between 1796 and 1806, the Hall and Keene land was bought by members of the Jenks family who thus re consolidated their holdings in the area. About 1807, the chocolate factory was used by the Smithfield Cotton Manufacturing Company for the spinning of cotton thread. The proprietors of the Smithfield Company were Stephen Jenks of Pawtucket, an ironworker, and his three partners, Benjamin Walcott and Rufus and Elisha Waterman who had previously operated a spinning mill on Abbott Run in Cumberland.

Before the War of 1812, this community consisted of only the chocolate mill, the blacksmith shop and two small dwelling houses, one of stone and one of wood. The war, which caused severe disruption in many other sections of Rhode Island, provided a boost to the economy of the infant settlement. Stephen Jenks contracted with the federal government for the production of 10,000 muskets (at \$11.50 each) (Figure 7) and added them to his manufacture of iron bolts. He built a machine shop near the present Stafford Mill for finishing the weapons. Members of the Jenks family went on to become premier manufacturers in the city throughout the nineteenth century.

The Wilkinson family, known for their mechanical and inventive enterprise, were the first to use the water power at Valley Falls. Oziel Wilkinson had operated a furnace in Smithfield where he produced nails, anchors, spades and other iron goods. In the

1780s, Wilkinson moved his family and his business to Pawtucket where, with his five sons, he became the principal ironworker of that village, selling his goods in a large market. David Wilkinson succeeded his father in the management of the firm. With his brothers, Abraham and Isaac, David Wilkinson acquired land on both sides of the Blackstone River at Valley Falls in 1812. Their mill, built in 1823, was later dismantled. More extensive development of the Valley Falls area did not occur for several decades.

Expansion of the industrial settlements at the middle falls and the Valley Falls was limited by transportation difficulties. The Blackstone was not navigable above Pawtucket and the street system consisted of Smithfield Road, a lane (now Roosevelt Avenue) from Central Falls to Pawtucket and cart paths through the woods connecting the two.

The difficulty of bringing materials to the small mills and taking finished goods to their markets was mitigated by the construction of Valley Falls Turnpike (now Broad Street). The General Assembly chartered the turnpike company in 1813 and granted it the right to build a road north from Pawtucket, "crossing the new bridge, now building at the valley falls" to Lonsdale. This road, built by Isaac Wilkinson, was the only toll road through what is now Central Falls, but it performed the critical function of tying the village to a network of other improved roads leading to Pawtucket and Providence and eased the flow of goods and materials to

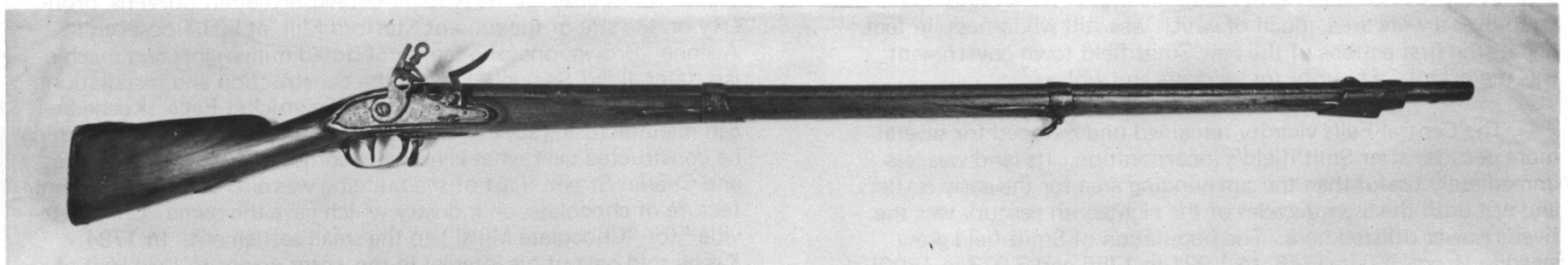


Figure 7: Jenks Musket, 1812; one of ten thousand made by Stephen Jenks for the federal government.

the new industries of the Central Falls area.

The industrial pattern set in these early decades of the nineteenth century continued through Central Falls' history. The textile and metals industries were the cornerstones of the city's economy through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Industrial development quickly followed the revolution begun by Samuel Slater at Pawtucket Falls in mechanizing the process of spinning cotton thread. The earliest mills, such as the Smithfield Manufacturing Company, were spinning mills; not until the 1820s were weaving shops built in which cloth was actually made. The first mills were small — the Smithfield Company had only 400 spindles from 1810 to 1820. The mechanization of spinning did not disrupt the living or work patterns on the few farms in the Central Falls area. Even though cotton yarns were now produced at a quickened rate, the spinning operations encouraged the continuation of home or cottage industries, since manufactured thread was put out to local craftsmen for weaving and, therefore, weaving remained a home craft. The small work force required by the first spinning mills was drawn from the nearby farming areas and from other parts of New England. Often entire families, including children, worked at a mill.

Only minimally developed in the eighteenth century, Central Falls started as a manufacturing village and its early character was shaped by the nature of its industry. By 1820, it was still a settlement of but a few families. Development was limited to the small clusters of mills and houses near the falls, accessible from the south only by a few roads; the rest of the area was largely uninhabited. None of the houses of this early period of Central Falls' history still stand; nor do any factories remain since water power continued to be a valuable resource for a century following early development, and larger, newer, industrial structures replaced older ones on riverside sites.

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Central Falls was for the most part an adjunct of the more extensive development at Pawtucket, then a mill village in the town of North Providence. The major industrialists here — Jenks and Wilkinson — were both Pawtucket men. However, the presence of infant textile

and metals industries in the Central Falls area presaged the rapid expansion which followed in the succeeding decades.

### **Emergence of An Industrial Center (1820-1830)**

During the 1820s, the development of Central Falls expanded considerably. The most decisive influences on this expansion were technological innovations in textile manufacture and in transportation. A regularization of water-power rights led to an expansion of the small industries in the vicinity and, in turn, attracted a growing population.

The water power of the middle falls was divided in 1823 and the owners of the water rights incorporated as the Central Falls Mill Owners Association. The water power was divided into six separate "privileges" which were apportioned to individual owners. Each owner was entitled to an aperture in the side of a canal dug from the area of the Roosevelt Avenue bridge to the Central Street bridge, running roughly parallel to the Blackstone River. This division and regulation of the use of the river's power promoted the first great boom in Central Falls' development and encouraged the growth of manufacturing. In 1815, there had been three small thread mills in Central Falls; in 1825, there were eight textile operations, six making cotton cloth, two spinning cotton thread. Within a few years, four of these six power rights were occupied by spinning and weaving operations. The mills built by the new owners were more substantial than the early smith and tool shops, and brick and stone buildings were added to the wooden structures clustered along the river.

The first and most northerly privilege was purchased by John Kennedy who built a small, brick mill for cloth production in 1825. David and George Jenks built a mill on the second privilege in 1824. The lower story of their mill was used by Simons Hale and William Havens and later by Uriah Benedict and George F. Jenks for a spinning operation. The third privilege was originally occupied by the Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company. In 1826, Stephen Jenks purchased the Universalist Meetinghouse of Attleboro and moved it to his privilege (Number Six) now the site of the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill at 501 Roosevelt Avenue. Jenks converted

the meetinghouse into a weaving mill. The building was later moved several hundred feet south by Weatherhead and Thompson who used it as a tannery.

Most of these early mills were small, wood buildings, and, as they were often the victims of fire or of later development along the valuable waterfront, only two survive. The Kennedy Mill, one of the earliest mill buildings constructed of brick in New England, is a long gable-roofed structure with an end tower facing Roosevelt Avenue and a clerestory monitor. It was operated by the Stafford Manufacturing Company from the 1860s and has had several additions made to the original structure. The small mill built for the Pawtucket Thread Company (Figure 8) in 1825 on Privilege Three still stands at 527 Roosevelt Avenue. No longer visible from the street side, it is four stories tall and built of stone; its original monitor roof has been modified. The Kennedy Mill and the Pawtucket Thread Mill are the oldest extant industrial buildings in the city and, as such, are a vitally important resource for Central Falls since they are the earliest reminders of the city's origin as an industrial village on the banks of the Blackstone.

The Blackstone Canal, opened as far as Woonsocket in 1828, helped to satisfy these early manufacturers' need for better transportation facilities. Part of the great canal-building effort throughout the United States, the Blackstone Canal passed just to the west of the present city boundary. Designed to connect Providence to Worcester, it bypassed the obstacle of the falls and had the potential for increasing the manufacturing and commercial activity of inland communities by connecting them to their sources of material and the markets for their goods. However, the canal was short lived and was never successful.

The boom of the 1820s also witnessed the beginnings of diversification among Central Falls' manufacturers. Despite the regional depression which occurred at this time, the first shop for production of textile machinery was opened in 1825 by Fields and Jacobs in the Pawtucket Thread Company's stone mill. Equally important was the specialization within textile manufacturing made possible by the introduction of power looms; six of the nine textile operations in 1825 were weaving shops.

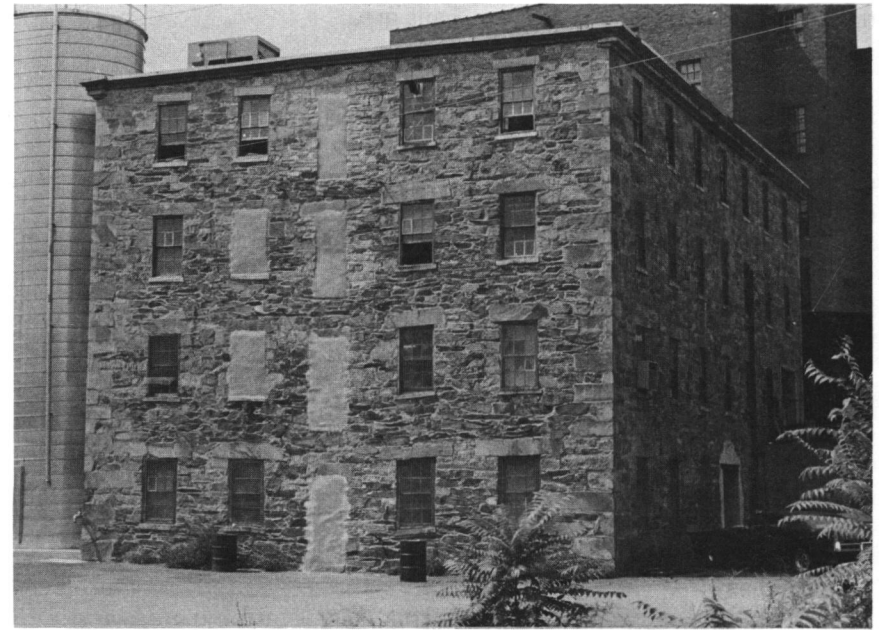


Figure 8: Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill, 1825;  
527 Roosevelt Avenue.

The mechanization of weaving altered the character of the small village far more than had the spinning mills of a decade before. Spinning operations were limited in size by the amount of yarn which hand looms could use; the introduction of powered looms expanded the scale of manufacturing here as it did in other textile centers. The comparatively large numbers of workers required by weaving operations in a factory system now encouraged a concentration of population. These employees lived near the site of their work and required the services of commerce and housing. Thus, further growth and the beginnings of a genuine community were encouraged.

Though Central Falls was not yet large enough to require many institutions, a school was built in 1820 at Cross Street and Roosevelt Avenue. Religious meetings were held and were sometimes led by David Benedict, a student at Brown University and later a renowned divine in Pawtucket and its earliest historian.

By the close of the decade of the 1820s, only a small area in Central Falls was densely developed (Figure 9). The cluster of buildings on the water privileges included only a few small mills and mill houses. The importance of this hamlet lay in its industrial plant since the village was still outside the major commercial and industrial areas of the state and was, for the most part, an extension of development further to the south in Pawtucket.

No houses dating from the 1820s or before survive in Central Falls, but it is likely that most were small, spare, wooden structures which afforded no luxuries for their inhabitants, probably resembling the wood, two-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed mill house (Figure 10) built by the Stafford Company at a later date which stands at 34-36 Cross Street. Though the buildings are gone, insurance records offer some descriptions of the housing available to

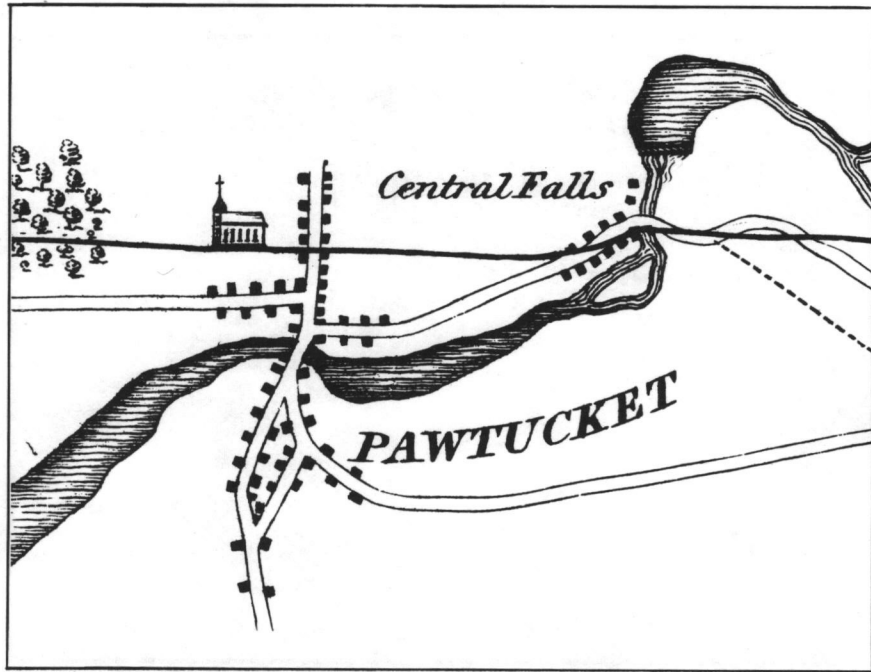


Figure 9: Detail of 1828 Map of the Blackstone Canal, by Edward E. Phelps.

mill workers during this decade. In 1825, for example, John Kennedy insured a dwelling house near his mill; the house, built of wood, was forty-nine feet long, forty feet wide and two stories tall and was occupied by eight families.

In 1827, the old narrow footbridge over the middle falls was replaced by a wider bridge paid for by a subscription conducted by John Kennedy who owned the privilege nearest the dam. The new bridge eased the problem of transportation for the budding industrial settlement and made passage from Pawtucket through Central Falls to the north easier. The bridge was opened at the same time as the dedication of the Jenks mill on Privilege Two. The coincidence of the two events, equally auspicious for the small village, was the occasion of a public celebration. James C. Starkweather



Figure 10: Mill House, c. 1860; 34-36 Cross Street.



delivered the oration at the new mill and, most memorable, Stephen Jenks renamed this area which, until then, was known as Chocolateville. The change in name was greeted, as one historian says, by "clapping hands, stamping of feet and swinging of hats and bonnets." Though still a part of Smithfield, the village was called for the first time by the name it retains today, a name identifying water power as its original source of wealth — Central Falls.

### The Beginnings of Urbanization (1830-1860)

In the thirty years between 1830 and 1860, the potential for growth revealed in the 1820s was realized. Central Falls and Valley Falls were but two of several discrete industrial villages lining the banks of the Blackstone River. Smithfield became the site of many small industrial centers, located along the town's major power-producing streams. Set in the town's agricultural landscape were a number of small villages clustered around factories, including Albion, Saylesville, Lonsdale and Manville. The Blackstone Valley in 1790 had contained only one quarter of Rhode Island's population. By 1860, it contained two thirds of the state's people and this growth resulted from industrial expansion in the valley.

In Central Falls, industrial development continued along the riverside and followed the earlier pattern of textile and metal enterprises. On the northern half of Privilege Four, Stephen Benedict and Joseph Wood built a wooden mill producing cotton cloth in 1840. Just south of the Benedict and Wood mill, Alvin Jenks and David Fales manufactured textile machinery in a shop built in 1835. Between this mill and the Jenks' meetinghouse mill, the firm of Moies and Jenks began manufacturing cloth in a wooden structure in 1839. Of these new industrial buildings near the middle falls, most were still small, wooden structures. None of them survive, but they probably resembled in form and structure the Slater Mill in Pawtucket.

A few of the new mills presaged later developments by their size and solidity. Built of brick, they were larger and less likely to be destroyed by fire than the early wood structures. The small Kennedy mill (Figure 11) on Privilege One, for example, was expanded in the 1860s by the Stafford Company until it reached its

present large dimensions. These new mills were several stories high with brick piers separating wide banks of windows designed to light the work spaces. Their tall, projecting towers, built to house the stairways, the water supply and the mill bell, were also the most elaborately decorated part of the building, a symbol for each mill.

The Chace family (who later incorporated their holdings as the Valley Falls Company) which owned mills on both sides of the Blackstone throughout the nineteenth century were instrumental in the development of the village of Valley Falls, which in the first half of the nineteenth century grew up around the turnpike on both sides of the river just north of Central Falls. The large, four-story brick mill (Figure 12) with a helm-roofed central tower on the southeast side of the Broad Street Bridge in Central Falls was built in 1849 by Samuel B. and Harvey Chace. The top floor of the handsome mill was designed as a clear space without posts to accommodate the Sharp and Roberts, self-actor spinning

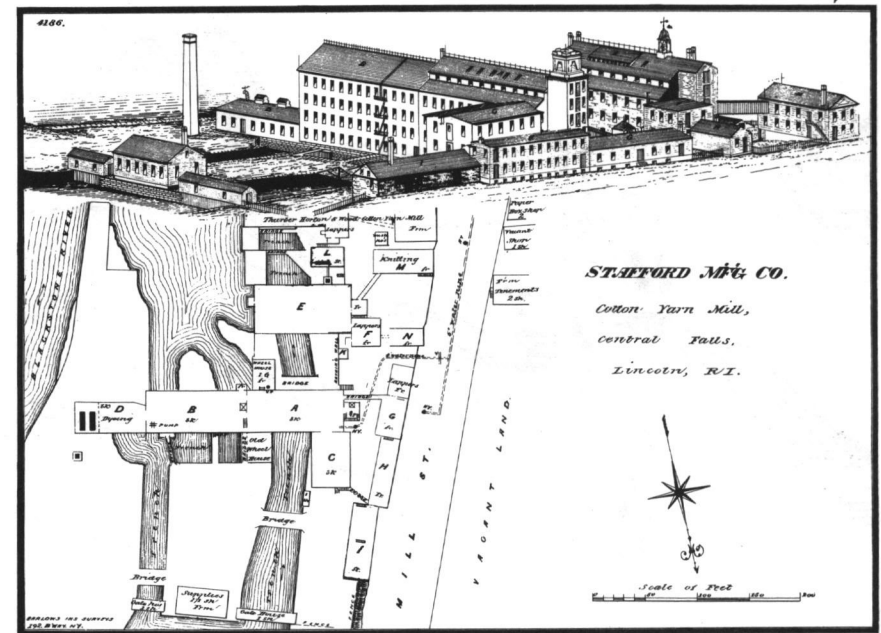


Figure 11: Stafford Mill, 1825, 1860s; drawing, c. 1885; 581 Roosevelt Avenue.

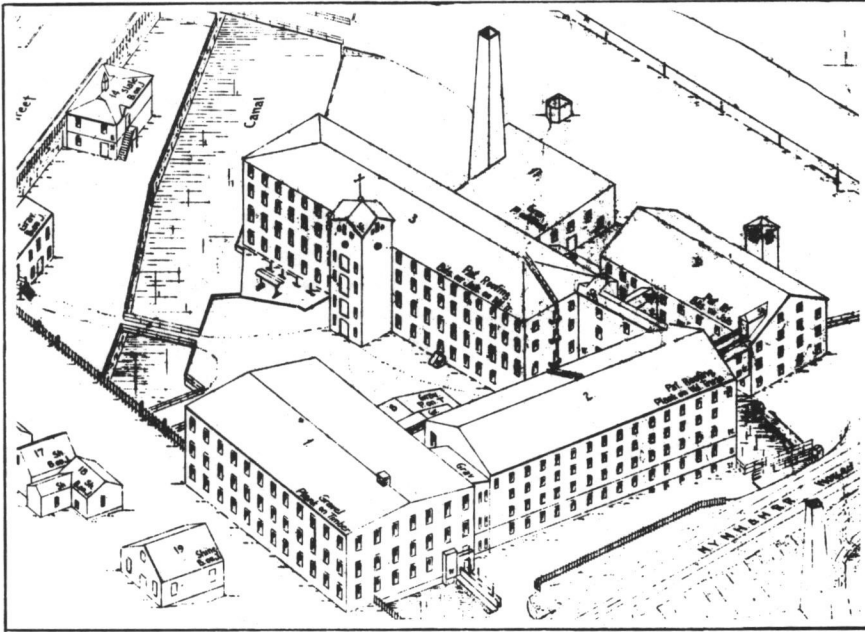


Figure 12: Valley Falls Mill, 1849; drawing, c. 1915; 1363 Broad Street.

frames the Chaces installed. In 1854, the Chaces built the stone dam at Valley Falls. This new dam replaced two earlier wooden dams upstream and was the third dam to be built at the Valley Falls. The gate house, covering the gate which controlled the flow of the Blackstone into the flume, still stands just south of the dam and is visible from Broad Street.

Although the number of mills did not increase substantially (from fourteen in 1835 to seventeen in 1845), the productive capacity of each expanded considerably, as did the average size, the number of employees and the output of individual workers. This change in the scale of operations brought about an ever increasing population. Many farmers and their families in the area, unable to make a success of agriculture, removed to small communities like Central Falls where work could be found in the mills.

It is estimated that in 1832 about 500 people were employed

in Central Falls in manufacturing; by 1850, there were 800 and over 1000 by 1860. Many of the workers were women and children, who were paid lower wages than men. In 1850, for example, the Chace family employed 210 workers — 90 men and 120 women; Benedict and Wood employed 13 men (whose wages averaged \$13 each month) and 27 women (who earned an average of \$11). Most employees in the textile industry worked a six-day week, twelve to fourteen hours a day.

Although stagecoaches served Central Falls by 1835, the increase in population and productivity intensified the need for a more sophisticated transportation system. As late as the 1840s, many of the mill owners still carted their raw materials in and shipped their products out by wagon. Some bulky products, such as grain, hay and bricks, were carried up the Blackstone on barges as far as the Pawtucket Falls where they were transferred to wagons and sold on a circuit which merchants made through the northern villages. The steep falls of the river which made it a valuable resource also limited its use above Pawtucket as an avenue of transportation. The Blackstone Canal had never lived up to its promise; it operated for a few years but was ultimately a failure. Frequent controversy and long litigation between the canal company and mill owners resulted from disputes over water rights. The mill owners had to contend with seasonal dry spells when their factories had to shut down; they fought diversion of any of their water supply to the canal. When the operations of the canal ceased in the 1840s, some mill owners believed that the supply of water on the river increased, although low water was still occasionally a problem, and water rights were often hotly contested.

The difficulties of transportation were mitigated by the construction of the Providence and Worcester Railroad line. Chartered in 1844 and completed in 1847, it paralleled the Blackstone River. In 1848, the Boston connector, branching off the line, was completed. This new transportation artery connected Central Falls to a far-ranging, rail-distribution system which allowed movement of its products in and out with relative ease; the railroad quickly replaced other means of transit. The original passenger station, no longer standing, was on Central Street.

As industrial and commercial opportunities expanded so did population, and, with an increased need for services, Central Falls' residents began to develop local institutions. Before the 1840s, church members traveled to Pawtucket for their meetings, but during that decade the religious life of the village centered on two newly founded local congregations. The Central Falls Baptist Church, the first organized religious group in the village, erected its brick building (since demolished) on High Street in 1844. The following year, the Central Falls Congregational Church moved its meetings to a new building on High Street on the site now occupied by St. Joseph's Church.

These Protestant congregations reflected the demography of Central Falls in the first decades of its intensive development. Most residents were white, Protestant and American born. Only a few foreigners immigrated to the area in the early nineteenth century and these were mostly Englishmen and Scots, many of whom were experienced in some aspect of textile manufacturing and came to the area because it offered especially good opportunities for advancement.

Later in the 1840s and during the 1850s, however, a large number of Irish immigrated to the Central Falls area. Many of the men who did the rough and unskilled labor needed in the construction of the railroad and the mills were Irishmen who later settled in the area and found jobs in the mills or the stores of the growing community. Famines and political unrest in Ireland during the 1840s prompted others to immigrate to this country and, by 1860, the Irish were a significant part of the village's population. This, of course, was true in many other industrial centers in Rhode Island and Massachusetts as well. Most of these Irishmen worked in manufacturing, and their presence in large numbers provided a ready source of labor for Central Falls' industrialists.

As the industrial village took on an increasingly urban character, a division of interests arose between it and the rest of Smithfield and the relationship between Smithfield and Central Falls became increasingly strained. While there were several small manufacturing villages within the borders of largely agricultural Smithfield, Central Falls was by far the largest and the one most quickly

approaching urban status. Central Falls residents believed that Smithfield should furnish the public services they required; the farm people of the rest of Smithfield were unwilling to tax themselves to provide such services, which were needed only in a small section of their town.

This disparity of interests between agricultural and industrial sectors remained a continuing problem in Central Falls' political history for fifty years as town and country became increasingly polarized. The annexation of Central Falls to North Providence was widely debated when seventeen citizens of the village, many of them prominent manufacturers, had petitioned the General Assembly in 1833.

The conflict continued, however, but was temporarily resolved in 1847 when the Central Falls Fire District was created by the state legislature. Creation of such districts was a common response by state government to the needs of quickly developing manufacturing centers in Rhode Island and was an early example of urban services being shaped by state policy. The fire district was slightly smaller in size than the present boundaries of the city since it did not include the Valley Falls area. The district was actually a quasi-municipal organization, administered by officers elected annually, with the power to tax its residents for the purchase of fire equipment but was also subject to the general taxation of the larger town. Prior to 1847, volunteer firemen had operated their horse-drawn hand pump and organized bucket brigades in the event of fire, supplementing the fire protection measures taken by mill owners for their industrial buildings. After the creation of the fire district, taxation provided for equipment, but it was still manned by volunteers. The engine was stored in a small building, no longer standing, on Broad Street between Central and Cross Streets. Thus, local fire protection, an urgent need in an urbanizing area, was the first symbol of a cohesive community and was the initial step toward the eventual independence of Central Falls. The legislature later allowed the district to perform other functions so that it could provide additional services. In 1860, for example, the fire district was given the power to set up a street-light system.

During the decade preceding the Civil War, no new textile

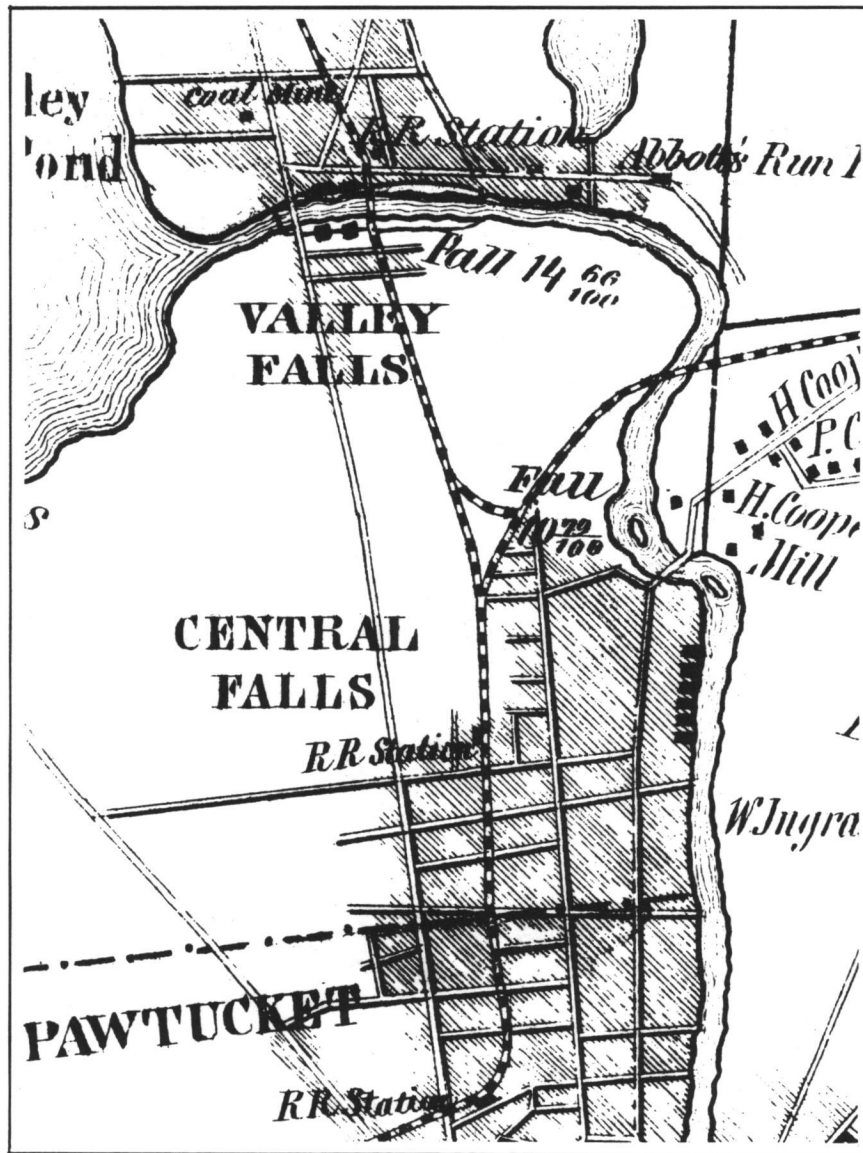


Figure 13: Detail of 1851 Map, by H. F. Walling.

mills were built in Central Falls. In addition to the economic depressions of 1850 and 1857, Rhode Island's manufacturers were faced with new competition in the market for cotton cloth from the mills of Lowell and Lawrence, Massachusetts, which produced cloth on a far larger scale than did Rhode Island mills. The machinery and metals manufacturers who depended on the textile industry for their primary market were also negatively influenced by depressions and by new competition. Many concerns continued to operate, nonetheless. Fales and Jenks produced machinery with great success; two other smaller shops made bobbins; and William Newell operated a small brass foundry on High Street in 1850. The only noteworthy new metals operation begun in the 1850s was that founded by Robert Plews, an English immigrant, who began the manufacture of sheet iron and tin cylinders in a small shop on Central Street. The Greene and Daniels Company made cotton thread in a mill on the present site of the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill at Cross Street and Roosevelt Avenue before moving across the river and building a mill in Pawtucket in 1860. William Hood made jewelry and toys in a shop on Broad Street. The major new construction effort was the building of a gas works on Elm and High Streets where coal gas for illumination was manufactured.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Central Falls was still largely an extension of development in Pawtucket (Figure 13). The major roads of the area, the Smithfield Road, the Valley Falls Turnpike, Main (Roosevelt) and High Streets, and the railroad were oriented toward the south and the traffic of materials, goods and people was directed toward Pawtucket.

A map drawn in 1855 shows that Central Falls' population (probably under 1500) was still clustered in two small industrial centers on the river — Central Falls and Valley Falls. The more substantial village at the middle falls developed in a linear fashion along High Street and Roosevelt Avenue where its economic heart was located. The side streets crossing from Roosevelt to the turnpike were the site of the shops and homes of the residents.

Few of these early houses remain today. Those still standing are mostly executed in a very plain version of the Greek Revival style. Popular from 1830 to the Civil War, this style was inspired



by Greek temples, but, in its simplest expressions, the Greek detailing was reduced to a wide cornice band, simple cornerboards and a broad entablature over the center doorway, as seen on the Bullock House (Figure 14) at 1279 High Street. One of the better preserved examples in Central Falls which shows several of the Greek Revival elements in their vernacular form, the house was built for Bradford Bullock, a machinist. Even simpler examples are at 74 Clay Street and the altered house at 14 Elm Street.

### Industrial Expansion (1860-1890)

The economic stagnation of the 1850s changed with the beginning of the Civil War. Although many men were drawn into the army, the demands a war-time economy put upon the nation's factories, including those at Central Falls, caused a great economic expansion. A number of new industries grew quickly and the sec-



Figure 14: Bullock House, c. 1850; 1279 High Street.

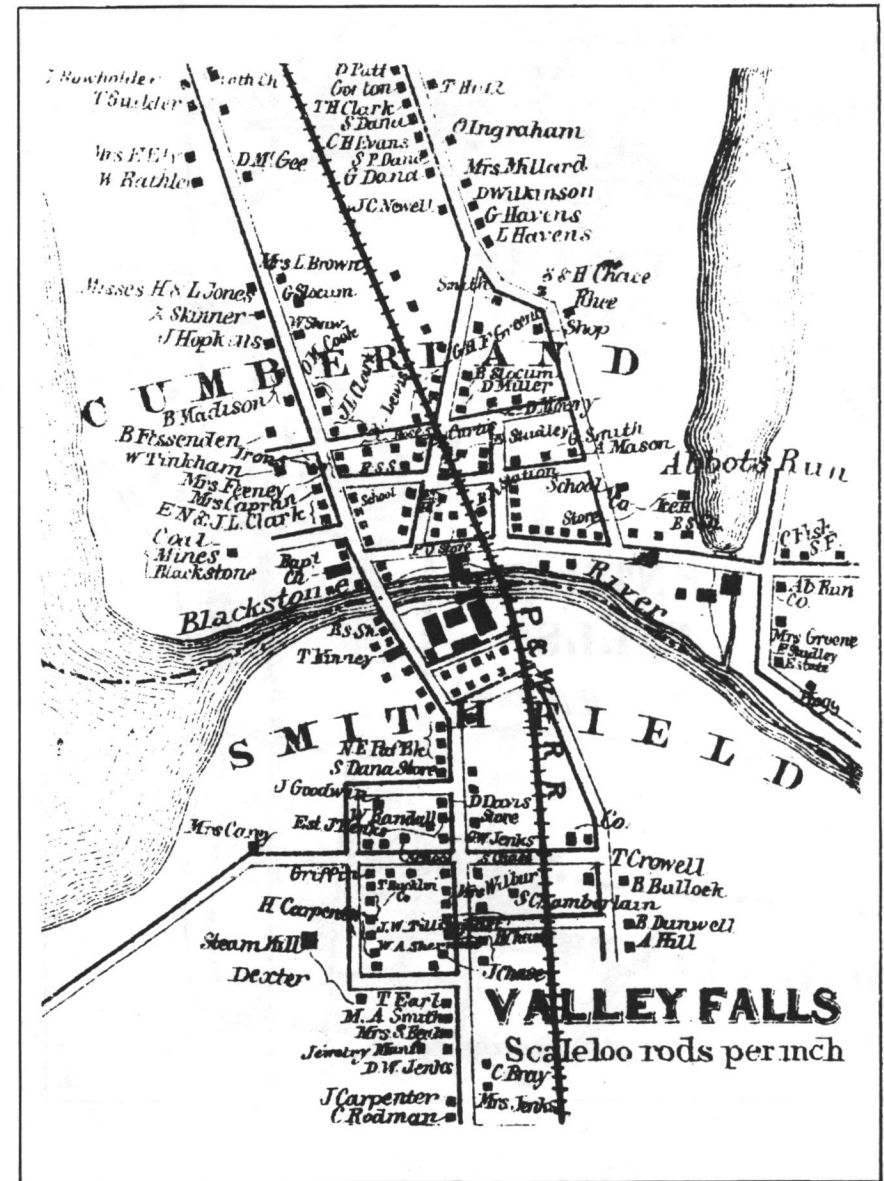


Figure 15: Detail of 1862 Map, by H. F. Walling.

ond of Central Falls' great boom periods began. The textile and machinery enterprises which sparked the early development of the community continued to be the generators of growth in the decades following the war. Interrupted only by the depression of the 1870s, this growth in economic activity, population and construction continued until the late nineteenth century.

Although a significant defection from Central Falls had occurred in 1860 when Greene and Daniels moved their operation from the wooden mill on Privilege Six across the river to Pawtucket, other construction more than compensated for the loss.

An 1862 map (Figures 15 and 16) shows that dense development had expanded considerably since 1855. The villages of Central Falls and Valley Falls, though still distinct, were both expand-

ing, leaving less open space between them. In Central Falls, all of the water privileges along Roosevelt Avenue north of Cross Street were occupied. While Stephen Perry's carriage factory was the only operation on the east side of Roosevelt Avenue (south of Cross Street), the western side of the street was closely lined with small houses and shops, and so too were Central, Clay, Jenks and Cross Streets; Central Street, the commercial hub, now extended west beyond the turnpike. Although the western sector of Central Falls

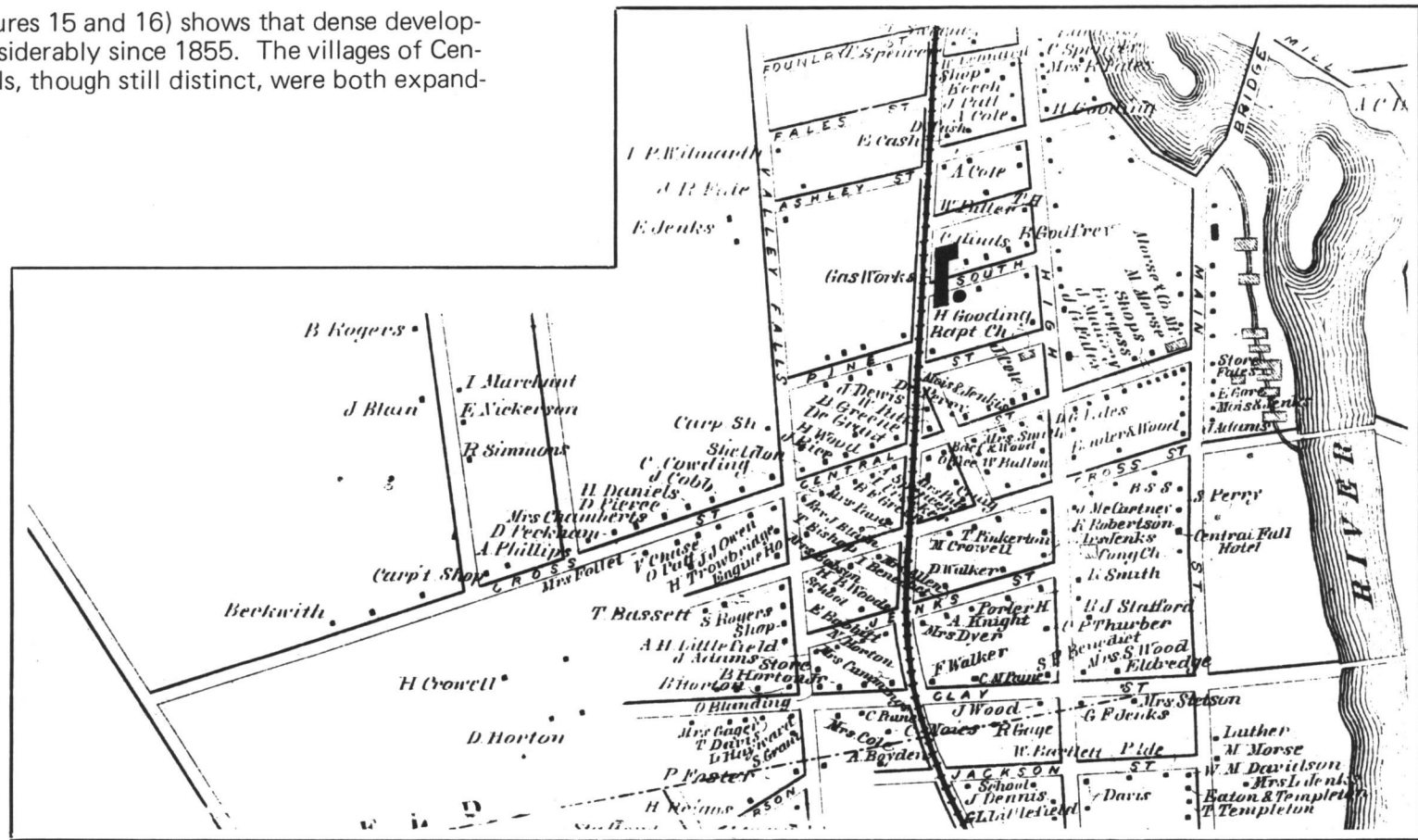


Figure 16: Detail of 1862 Map, by H. F. Walling.

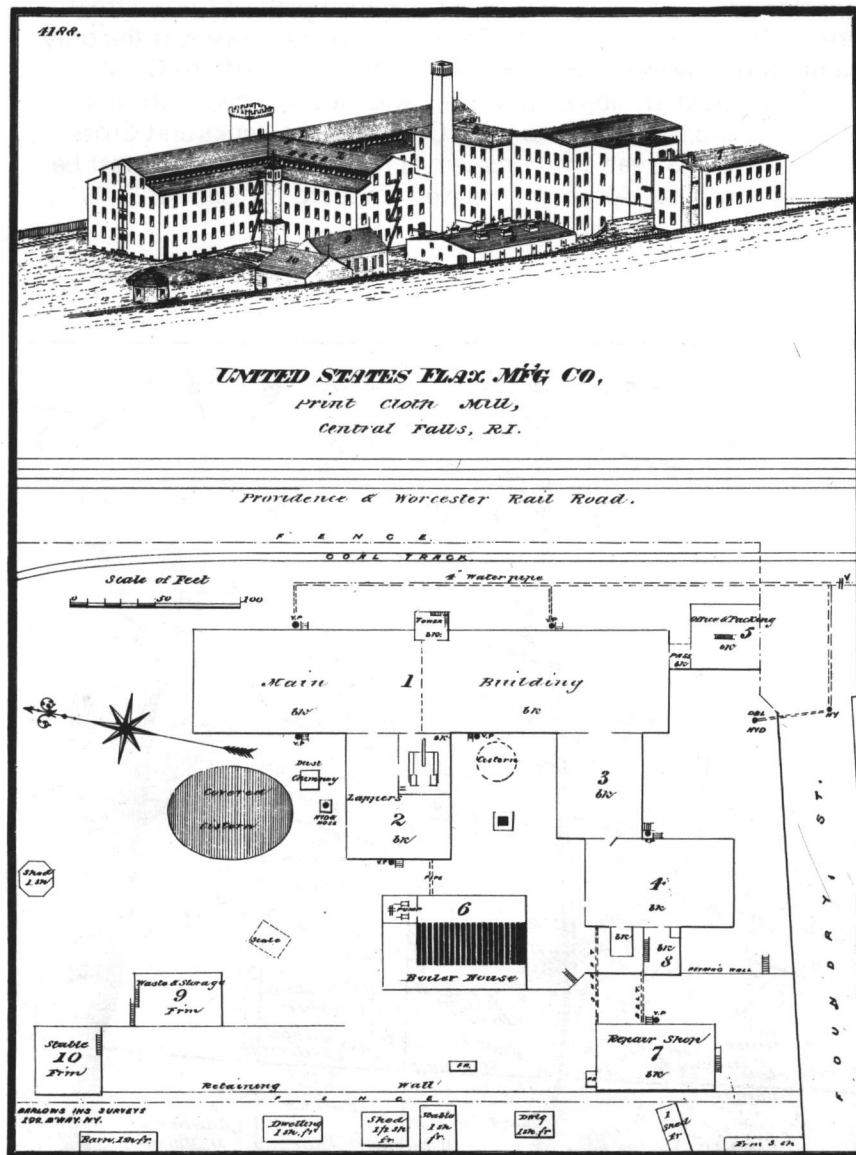


Figure 17: Fales and Jenks Mill, 1863; drawing, c. 1885; 27 Foundry Street.

was largely undeveloped, a few houses appeared on Washington and Illinois Streets.

As in the years preceding the Civil War, Central Falls' economy continued to be based upon the textile and metal trades. Although the number of firms did not grow spectacularly, there was a great increase in the average size of manufacturing plants and in their work force. The average textile shop in 1850 employed 85 workers; by 1860 the figure was 106 and that number had more than doubled by 1878.

Small early nineteenth-century factories were replaced by large mill complexes during this period of expansion. Whereas the older structures had often been plain, unprepossessing, wooden buildings, the new brick mills were built on an expansive scale and were so prominently sited that they became visual landmarks. For example, the massive, monitor-roofed, three-story brick Fales and Jenks Mill (1863) (Figure 17) on Foundry Street, originally built for textile machinery production but quickly converted to linen manufacture, dominated the surrounding area; its central, castellated, five-level tower can be seen easily from many points on the eastern side of the city. The construction of the Fales and Jenks Mill adjacent to the railroad also suggests the role the line played in future industrial development. The availability of coal-fueled steam power as an alternative to water power now allowed mill owners to build on sites other than those near the Blackstone and to enjoy the financial advantage of not having to pay to cart their materials and goods to and from the railroad.

Several of Central Falls' largest extant mill complexes date from the 1860s and 1870s. The Stafford Mill (1824, 1860s), the Phetteplace and Seagrave Mill (1870) and the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill (1864), all ranged together north of Cross Street between the Blackstone River and Roosevelt Avenue, create an impressive industrial river front (Figure 18). The Stafford Company, which had enlarged the old Kennedy Mill in the 1860s, built a new dam in 1863 at the middle falls and rebuilt the power trenches, increasing the available water power and making the waterfront mill sites as attractive as ever despite the availability of steam power.

Architecturally, the finest of the Central Falls mills dating from the Civil War era is the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company factory (see cover) adjacent to the Phetteplace and Seagrave building on Privilege Six at the corner of Roosevelt Avenue and Cross Street. Designed by the prominent architect William R. Walker, the building's brick, three-story, gable-roofed mass is set behind an assertive central stairtower capped by an airy belfry. Large, multi-paned, segmental-head windows light the structure's open interiors and the carefully scaled corbelled cornices and the blind arches of the tower bring refreshing lightness to the exterior. The Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company was the first in the United States to automate the weaving of haircloth. Its power looms were at first fed by hand, but, in the 1860s, Isaac Lindsley invented a self-feeding, haircloth loom and, with his patents, the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company soon engrossed the market for haircloth upholstery fabric. Withal, this is an unusual building, both for

its architectural quality and its history as the nation's leading manufactory of haircloth.

Just south of the Stafford complex (behind 523 Roosevelt Avenue) is the Phetteplace and Seagrave (1870) (Figure 19) woolen mill built on the old Fales and Jenks lot. A fine, four-story, red brick, monitor-roofed mill, its street side originally had an end tower; its relationship to the other mills on the river is now obscured by a twentieth-century industrial building which parallels Roosevelt Avenue.

The Fales and Jenks Mill became part of the great financial empire of the A. and W. Sprague Company in 1865. The Sprague family of Cranston, though basically engaged in the manufacture of printed cotton textiles, had extensive interests in railroads, shipping, land and banks both throughout New England and in the

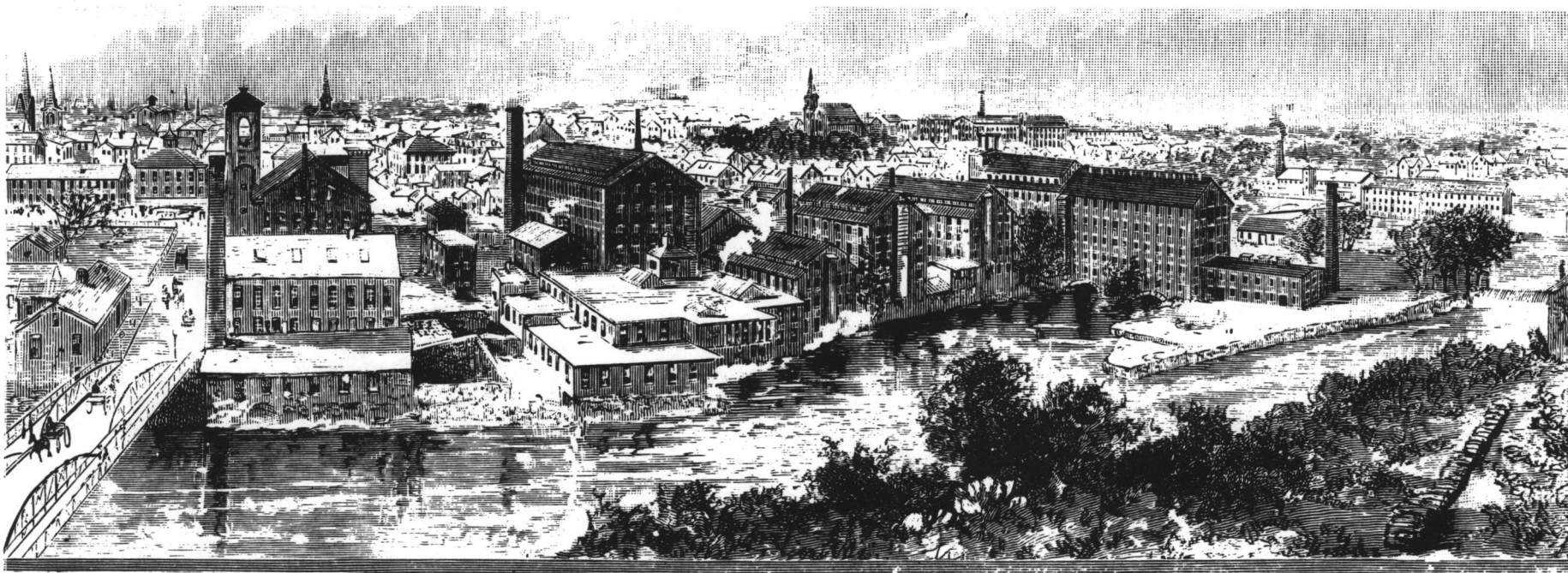


Figure 18: Central Falls Riverfront; drawing, c. 1886.



West, and their vast enterprises were a cornerstone of Rhode Island's economy in the 1850s and 1860s.

The failure of the Sprague firm signaled the beginning of a severe, nation-wide depression in 1873. It brought to a halt the post-war prosperity and caused a levelling-off of major mill construction in Central Falls. It is estimated that in 1860, 1059 people worked in the industries of Central Falls and by 1870 that number had more than doubled to 2253. Eight years later, the figure was only 2641 — an indication of the slackened pace of growth. A few smaller structures were added to the industrial plant in the 1870s and 1880s, such as the 1875, two-and-a-half-story, wooden factory at 1420 Broad Street built by Myron Fish for the production of textile supplies. For the most part, Central Falls' manufacturers relied on the mill complexes built in the earlier decades. Not until the 1890s did industrial construction recover

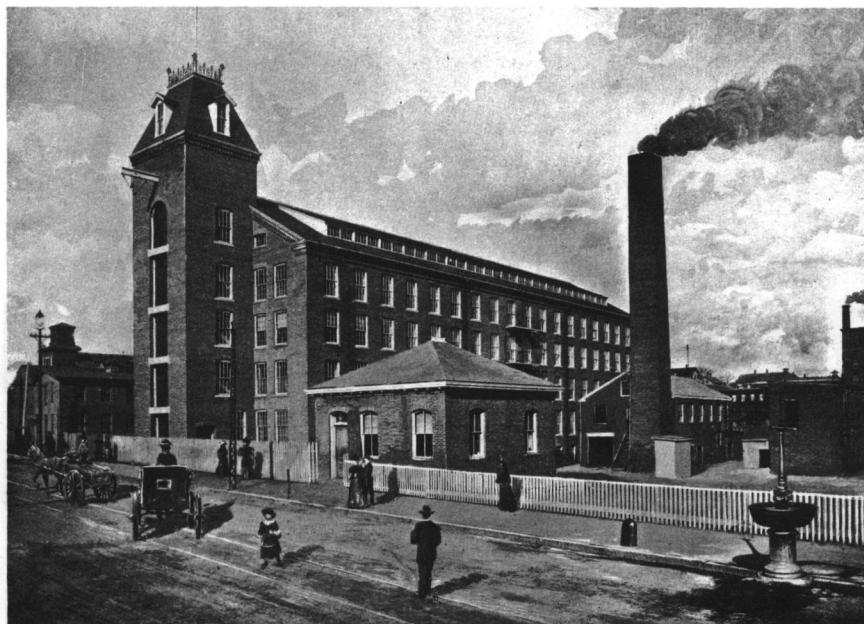


Figure 19: Central Falls Woolen Mill, 1870; photograph, c. 1897; 523 Roosevelt Avenue.

from the depression of the 1870s, and much of the industrial establishment was located in buildings which remain today, including the Stafford Mill, the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill, the Fales and Jenks Mill and the Farwell Worsted Mill.

Concurrently, the production of upholstery fabric, woolens and linen at Central Falls' factories reflected a shift in emphasis in the Rhode Island textile industry from the manufacture of cotton goods to a variety of textiles. Diversification into other fibers and products provided a measure of protection for industry because Rhode Island's industrial firms were small compared to the great cotton factories of Massachusetts and northern New England and could not withstand direct competition. During the 1860s and 1870s, there were many smaller concerns producing goods needed by the textile industry — Weatherhead and Thompson made spools and leather belting in a factory on the river between Clay and Cross Streets; Albert Frost began making thread boxes in a building at Elm and High Streets in 1868; and Robert Plews' company continued to manufacture his patented tin cylinders.

#### **A Community Emerges: Political, Social and Civic Developments (1860-1890)**

The expansion of the industrial capacity of Central Falls was reflected in its growing population. Early figures are imprecise, but, by 1870, an estimated nine thousand people lived in the area; by 1890 the population had jumped to nearly fourteen thousand. Much of this increase was accounted for by the great influx of French Canadians who constituted the largest group of immigrants to Central Falls in the second half of the nineteenth century. Prompted by an agricultural depression in eastern Canada and by the opportunity for work in the expanding mills, workers journeyed south to settle in the manufacturing towns of the Blackstone River Valley. The continuing arrival of Irish (although immigration from Ireland had peaked before the Civil War) and Scots also swelled the population figures. Of the nine thousand people in Central Falls in 1870, 40 per cent were foreign born and an additional 10 per cent had at least one foreign-born parent.

Church buildings of this period reflect the general prosperity

of these decades and the community's increasing heterogeneity in nationality and religion. Scattered throughout the city, often at the center of a residential neighborhood, these churches dominated their surroundings just as the large mills dominated the industrial areas. Already existing Protestant churches served a largely native-born population and, in addition, newer churches, both Protestant and Catholic, served the immigrant communities.

St. George's Episcopal congregation was organized in 1865 and, in 1872, its members erected a church at Clinton and Central Streets on the site of their present building. The austere, wooden, Embury Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1868 and expanded in 1875, still stands on Cross Street.

In addition, the two Protestant congregations founded before the Civil War built elaborate new church buildings in the post-war decades. In 1877, the Central Falls Baptists erected an impressive



Figure 20: Central Falls Congregational Church, 1883; 376 High Street.

church, on Broad Street, which has since been demolished. One of the finest extant church buildings is the 1883 Central Falls Congregational Church (Figure 20) now used as a parish center by St. Joseph's Church. Located on High Street across from the original Congregational church, the structure, built in the fashionable Queen Anne style, is indicative of the wealth and social prominence of its members. Constructed of wood and covered with clapboards and patterned shingles, it exhibits the irregular massing and complex surface ornament which are characteristic of the style; its louvered belfry was originally capped by a steeple. The importance of this handsome building has been recognized by its entry in the National Register of Historic Places.

With Irish and French-Canadian immigration, the Roman Catholic population of Central Falls expanded rapidly. The new arrivals had to travel to St. Mary's in Pawtucket until 1861; thereafter, they could also attend St. Patrick's in Valley Falls across the Blackstone. In the late nineteenth century, two Catholic parishes were formed; one was predominantly French Canadian (Notre Dame) and the other was Irish (Holy Trinity). For these Catholic immigrants the church was the institutional center of neighborhood life since social, as well as religious, functions took place there. For them, the construction of a large church near their homes provided not only a visual focus in the neighborhood but a social and cultural center as well.

Notre Dame parish was organized in 1873 under the leadership of Father Charles Dauray, Rhode Island's pioneer French-American priest, and built its first church (Figure 21) on Fales Street in 1875. Though demolished and replaced, this was the first parish church completed and occupied by a French-speaking congregation in Rhode Island. By 1890, Notre Dame Church had become one of the largest French congregations in the region. The parish began a school in 1891 in the Sprague Store building on Broad Street, which later became Sacred Heart Academy. The large mansard house at 664 Broad Street served as a rectory; in 1910, the parish built the red brick school on Fales and Fletcher Streets, which was then the largest Catholic school in the diocese. The Stephen Jenks House, dating from the 1870s, was used as the Notre Dame convent until 1919 when the present red brick convent was opened.



Figure 21: Notre Dame Church, 1875; photograph, c. 1915; formerly on Fales Street, now demolished.

In 1889, Irish Catholics formed the parish of Holy Trinity and began construction of their building (Figure 22) at Hedly and Fuller Avenues — a red brick, stone-trimmed, Victorian Gothic structure, dominated by its five-level tower. Upon completion, it rivaled in size and prominence the major Protestant churches of the city.

In 1868, the Moshassuck Cemetery, a private corporation, was chartered. The only surviving cemetery in the city, it replaced several smaller burial grounds, including one near the Sprague Mill. Its principal ornament is the 1888 Soldiers and Sailors' Monument

memorializing Central Falls and Lincoln's Civil War dead.

The number of institutional and civic buildings which were erected between 1860 and 1890 to accommodate the demands of the expanding population of the area reflect the change in Central Falls' character from industrial village to small city. The institu-

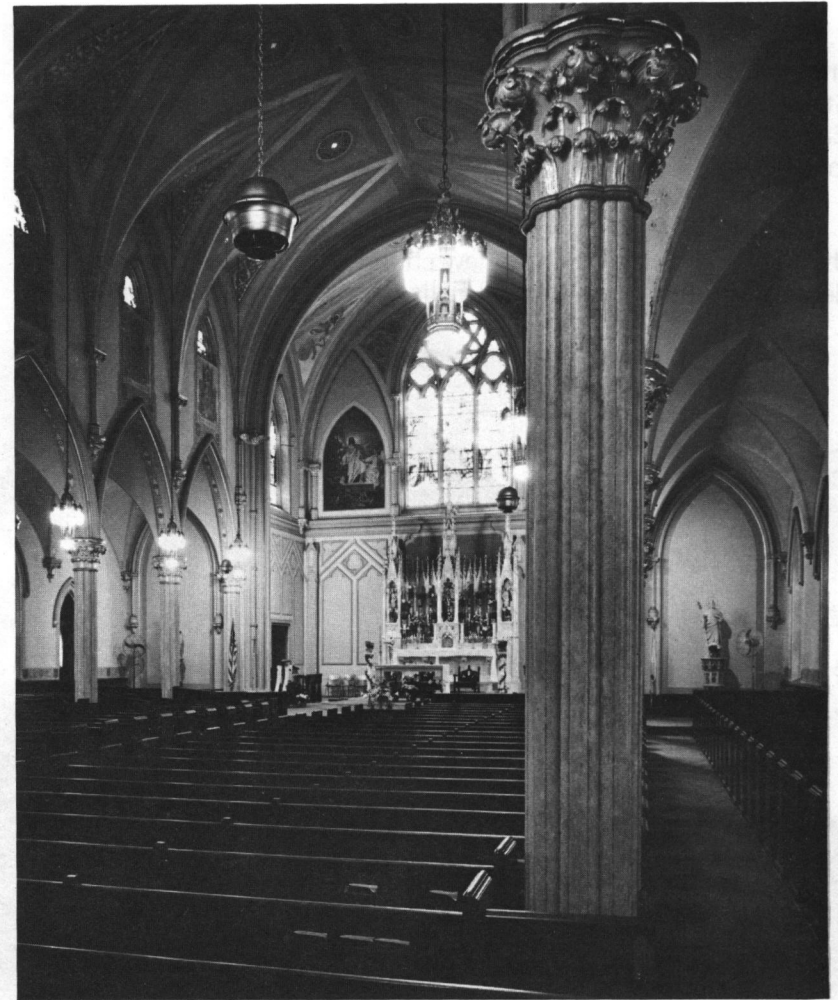


Figure 22: Holy Trinity Church, 1889; 135 Fuller Avenue.



tional and governmental needs occasioned by urban development were manifested in the political controversy of these three decades. The urban-rural dichotomy that had led in 1847 to the creation of the Central Falls Fire District continued. Citizens of Central Falls disliked the double taxation they endured as residents of Smithfield and of a fire district.

Agitation to reorganize the government led to the division of Smithfield in 1871. Part of the town was annexed to Woonsocket and two new towns, North Smithfield and Lincoln, were created. Central Falls, once the largest industrial section of Smithfield, now occupied the same position in the new town of Lincoln.

The political difficulties of Central Falls were mitigated somewhat by the state legislature's extension of the powers of the fire district. The district was authorized to provide for a water supply in 1874. It constructed a city water system between 1887 and 1889 with water purchased from Pawtucket. Fire hydrants were installed in Central Falls in 1890, and a storm sewer system in 1891. Police protection by the fire district was authorized in 1875; previously, the town sergeant had provided protection and complemented private forces maintained by several of the mills. The district police department was quartered in the old fire station on Cross Street, where it remained until 1914. Until the 1880s, library services had been provided on an informal basis; some mills maintained lending libraries, and a few private library associations existed. In 1887, the fire district was authorized to provide free library services and the collection was located in the Cross Street fire station.

The decision to locate Lincoln's town hall (Figure 23) on Summit Street in Central Falls was a reflection of the village's civic and economic preeminence. Built in 1871 and enlarged in 1890, the handsome two-and-a-half-story, gable-end, wooden structure has classical details including quoined corners, a modillion cornice and paired, pedimented windows over the entrance. After Central Falls was incorporated, the building became the Central Falls City Hall and later it served as a city trade school; today, it is a furniture store. The building has suffered from unsympathetic modifications and additions in recent years but it has had a long record of service

to the town and is still an historically significant structure.

The Central Falls hand-operated fire engines were replaced by steam equipment in 1871. A permanent fire department, with a combination of professional and volunteer fire fighters, was established in 1887. The equipment was moved in 1889 to a new station (Figure 24) at 551 Broad Street. Designed by Albert H. Humes of Pawtucket in the Queen Anne style, the structure is built of red brick with a mansard roof, punctuated by a series of pedimented dormers, some of which contain decorative panels with foliate designs. A five-level bell tower rises from the rear. The engine doors were originally arched. This handsome and gracious old city building is one of the very best in Central Falls, important both for its historical associations and for its visual interest as an impressive landmark.

Entertainment and informal educational functions took place in a number of large semi-public halls; Colonial Hall, across Broad

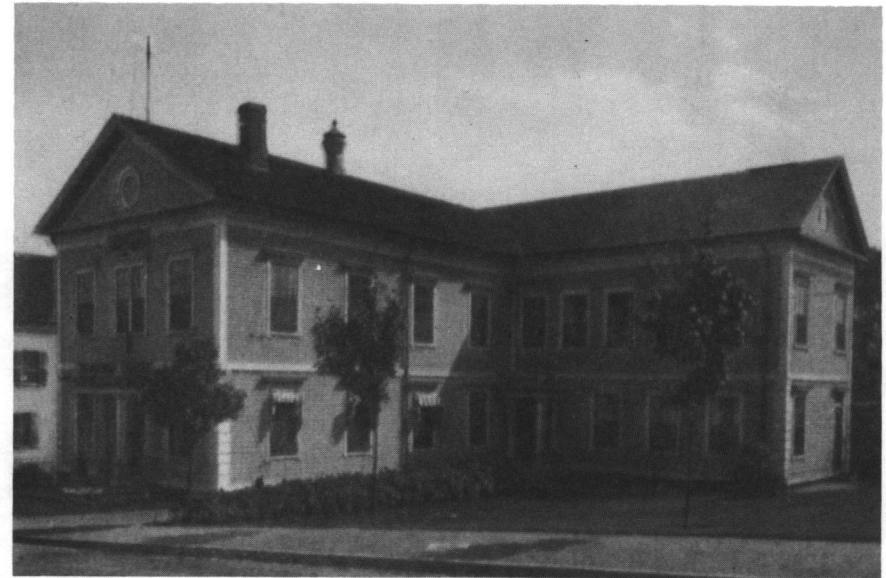


Figure 23: Lincoln Town Hall, 1873, 1890; post card view, early twentieth century; 26 Summit Street.



Street from the fire station, and Temperance Hall (the old Congregational Church), on High Street, were the scene of club meetings, dances, lyceum lectures and, in the case of Temperance Hall, wrestling and boxing matches and some other less savory activities, such as gambling. By the 1890s, Central Falls could even boast of a local orchestra — the “Philharmonic Band,” led by J. A. Bourgeois — which entertained at social and civic events. In addition, many Central Falls residents were members of popular fraternal and ethnic organizations, but the headquarters for many of these were located in Pawtucket.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Central Falls was the home of two notable reformers. Elizabeth Buffum Chace was one of Central Falls’ most prominent citizens. As a Valley Falls resident (on the Cumberland side), she had been extensively involved in the abolition movement and her home was a stop on the underground railroad for escaping slaves. She was later a leader

in the temperance movement and in the agitation for women’s rights. The wife of Samuel B. Chace, an early developer of the Valley Falls area, she moved to the Central Falls side of the river in 1858. The Chace house stood on the site of the present Corning Glass Works, at Hunt and Broad Street. Chace’s daughter, Elizabeth B. C. Wyman, was also a noted author and reformer, taking particular interest in women’s rights. Her house still stands at 1192 Broad Street.

During this expansionist era, Central Falls developed many of the services which characterize an urban center. A post office was opened in a building (since demolished) at the corner of Central and High Streets in 1867; before then, Central Falls residents had used the Pawtucket and Valley Falls post offices. Electricity became available in 1882, although the city’s streets were not lighted by electricity until 1913. Other urban services were not provided in Central Falls until the twentieth century. For example, Central Falls lacked local, regularized, banking facilities throughout the

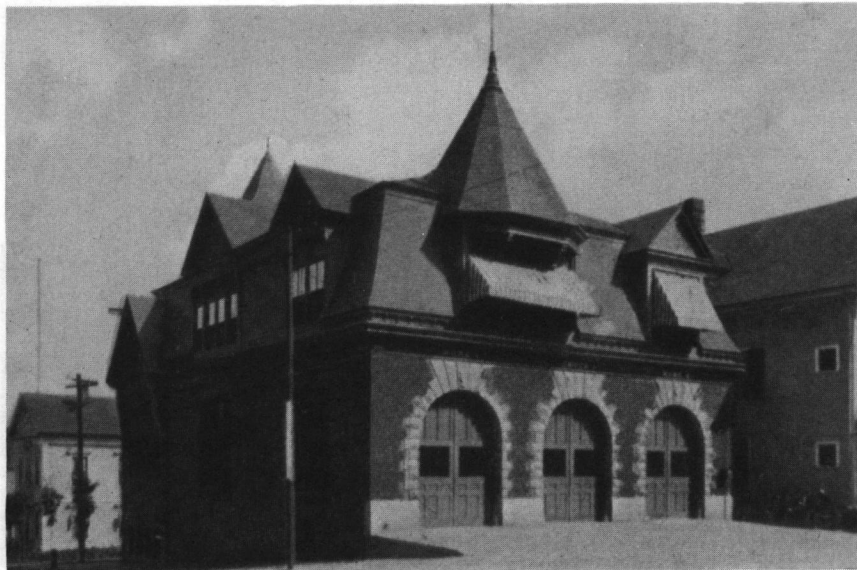


Figure 24: Broad Street Fire Station, 1889; post card view, early twentieth century; 551 Broad Street.

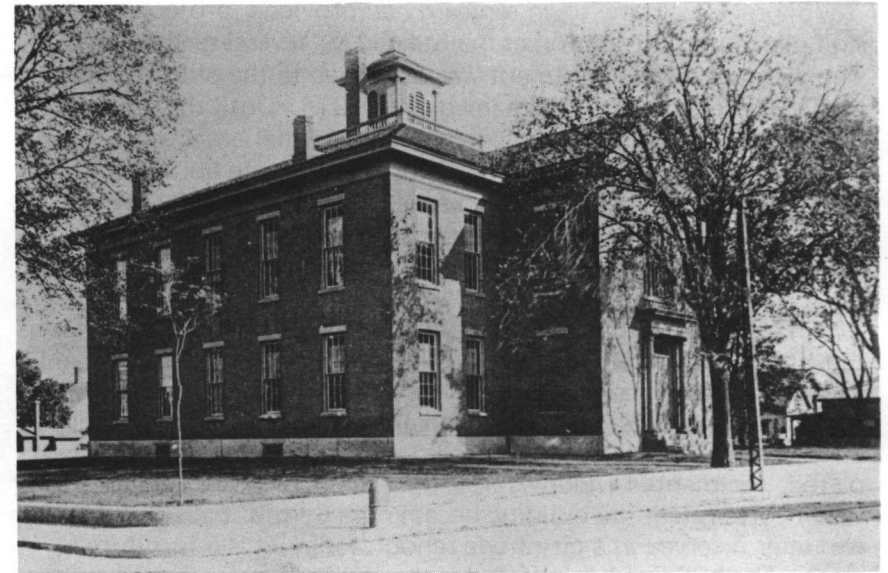


Figure 25: Broad Street School, 1861, 1877; post card view, early twentieth century; 405 Broad Street.

nineteenth century; Pawtucket banks served Central Falls' banking needs. Like many communities, Central Falls had no hospital during these years, but the town of Lincoln set up a "pest house" near Lonsdale Avenue for the isolation of communicable diseases.

An increasing population caused a dramatic growth in educational facilities. During the 1840s, two small district schoolhouses, which no longer stand, had served the area — the South Schoolhouse near the present Broad Street School and the North Schoolhouse at Elm and High Streets. To supplement these schools, Smithfield built the Broad Street School (Figure 25) in 1861 (enlarged in 1877) to accommodate not only the elementary grades but the "high school" grades as well. This substantial two-story, red brick, school building, whose entrance is set within a central portico, was the most imposing civic structure in the area and was indicative of the village's growth and economic well-being. As the population continued to increase even more rapidly in the 1870s and 1880s, further expansion of the educational facilities was mandatory. Between 1875 and 1886, Lincoln built four, small, four-room, schoolhouses in Central Falls: the Hedley Avenue School (1875, enlarged 1884), the Kendall Street School (1877), the Central Street School (1881) (Figure 26) and the Dexter School (1886). Of these, the Central Street and Hedley Avenue Schools remain; both are simple, two-and-one-half-story, wooden structures with paired, bracketed entrances. The Hedley Avenue School now houses administrative offices, and a Head Start program occupies the Central Street School.

The red brick, Queen Anne building on Broad Street now serving as the city hall was built in 1889 as the Lincoln High School (Figure 27), the first school in the town built exclusively for secondary education. The most distinctive feature of this large brick structure is its four-level corner tower. Its siting on the prominent knoll at the corner of Broad and Summit Streets defined the center of the village and provided a much needed visual focus for an emerging civic center consisting of the fire station, town hall and Colonial Hall. Still the most imposing structure on Broad Street, the city's major thoroughfare, it functions visually as a key civic landmark.

In 1890, Alvin Jenks donated four acres of land on Broad

Street to memorialize his family which had contributed significantly to the early development of Central Falls. The first, and still the major, park in Central Falls, Jenks Park (Figure 28) is adjacent to City Hall. Located on a deep, narrow site, it is threaded with broad paths which meander among its rock outcrops. The small, picturesque park is a popular retreat for residents. In vivid contrast with the dense development surrounding it, it is the city's "breathing space." Many of the park's original ornaments, such as the fish ponds, have been lost, but the iron umbrella-shaped gazebos cast by Fales and Jenks remain. The focus of the park is the massive, stone Cogswell Tower (Figure 29) which was originally capped by a large carved eagle. Given by Caroline Cogswell, a former resident, and designed by Albert Humes, a Pawtucket architect who was Mayor of Central Falls in 1903-1904, it stands atop Dexter's Ledge and is visible for miles. Its observation balcony under the four-faced clock provides an unusual view of the city. Since its completion in 1904, the tower has become by common assent an important symbol, the



Figure 26: Central Street School, 1881; 379 Central Street.



Figure 27: Broad Street High School, 1889; post card view, early twentieth century; 580 Broad Street.

sign and emblem of the city and a source of pride and civic identity. Decked with lights annually, it is the city's Christmas tree. The cultural significance of Jenks Park has been recognized by its entry in the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 28: Jenks Park, 1890; Broad Street.

### Commercial Development (1860-1900)

Until the Civil War, Central Falls residents relied upon Pawtucket for many of their shopping needs. As the population expanded, however, the nucleus of a commercial district grew up along the western side of Main Street (now Roosevelt Avenue) to serve the workers in the mills on the east side. Samuel Hawes and Sabin Allen had operated a grocery business opposite the Kennedy Mill since the 1820s, and, in the 1830s, Moses Moss opened a grocery nearby. Main Street's role as a commercial center was soon eclipsed by Central Street, however, which remained the retail hub of the village until the 1880s and 1890s.

Leot Smith had operated a confectionary on Central Street as





Figure 29: Cogswell Tower, 1904; photograph, c. 1960; Broad Street.

early as 1832, and, by the 1860s, the length of Central Street (and especially the intersection of Central and High Streets) was crowded with shops where, close to the mills and their homes, Central Falls residents could patronize dry-goods stores, bakeries, groceries, confectionaries, a variety of other shops and, by the 1870s, a billiards hall.

Today, little remains of this commercial development. Of the several large business blocks which stood here, only the Edgerton-Gooding Block (Figure 30) at 51-61 Central Street remains. A severe, three-and-a-half-story, red brick building, it was constructed in 1864 by two dry-goods dealers. Although the first story of this structure has been severely altered, it is still a handsome reminder of Central Street's days as the shopping center of Central Falls.

In addition to this expanding commercial life which answered the needs of a growing population, a number of small workshop

industries operated in Central Falls during the second half of the nineteenth century. Several small factories produced carriages and wagons for local sale. Two lumber companies operated saw-and-planing mills by the 1880s — the H. B. Wood Company off Broad Street, and the Central Falls Lumber Company on Elm Street.

In the 1880s and 1890s, commercial activity had begun to shift westward toward Broad Street. This shift was influenced in part by the continued residential development in the western side of the city. Of more particular importance, however, was the creation of a street railway along Broad Street.

In 1861, the Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls Railroad Company was chartered to construct a horse-drawn street-car line, running north from Providence through Pawtucket. The original line, opened in 1864, ran through Central Falls along



Figure 30: Edgerton-Gooding Block, 1864; 51-61 Central Street.



Broad Street. Later streetcar lines operated on Dexter Street and Roosevelt Avenue. This inexpensive and convenient mode of transportation encouraged expansion of residential and commercial development; people no longer needed to live within walking distance of employment or stores.

By 1900, Broad Street was the site of most of the city's retail and professional activities. Some older houses were modified to accommodate shops, and a few imposing three- and four-story commercial buildings were constructed late in this period. Among the latter, the largest are the Monast Building (1895) at 753 Broad Street and the DeNevers Building (c. 1895) at 702 Broad Street. The three-story Jacques Cartier Building (1893) (Figure 31) at 708 Broad Street, despite the almost complete alteration of the first-floor facade, is one of the most handsome commercial structures in the city, with its shallow, two-story bay and its wide triple windows. It was built as the headquarters of an active French-Canadian social group, the Cercle Jacques Cartier.

Central Falls' commercial life at the turn of the century reflected the continued reliance upon the horse for transportation. *The Central Falls Reference Book*, published in 1895 when the city was incorporated, listed in its business directory a number of enterprises which served horse owners — including six blacksmiths, two grain and feed stores, two horseshoers and two harness makers. Most of the business carried on by these establishments was with factories and stores which used horses to pull freight and delivery wagons; only relatively affluent families could afford to own a horse, and there was really little need for this luxury in an urban area like Central Falls where good public transportation was available.

### **Residential Development (1860-1900)**

Rapid growth of population and continuing industrial prosperity combined to produce a period of expanded residential construction in Central Falls in the late nineteenth century. In the 1860s, development was concentrated in the southeastern corner

of the community, but by 1870 construction on Central, Cross, Clay and Washington Streets was pushing into the western and northern areas of Central Falls (Figure 32). An 1880 map (Figures 34 and 35) shows that most land had been platted except for the northernmost tier and a few scattered large estates, such as those of Pardon Miller and R. S. Darling, and an extensive tract on Broad Street owned by the Dexter family heirs. By 1895, even these had been broken up into building lots. This extraordinary expansion of residential development, unequalled in any other period of the city's history, was a result of Central Falls' industrial prosperity, reflected in the architecturally ambitious dwellings of Central Falls' wealthy citizens and in the modest and much more numerous houses of the thousands of newcomers. This late nineteenth-century housing stock still dominates the city's environment.



Figure 31: Cartier and DeNevers Buildings, 1893, c. 1895; 708 and 702-706 Broad Street.

Several of the city's textile and metals magnates constructed large houses on the tree-lined streets of Central Falls' southern section which soon became the community's most prestigious

neighborhood. In the large, central section of the city, more modest single- and multi-family houses were built along the narrow blocks favored by real-estate developers for efficient land use. No housing code or zoning ordinance existed, and developers, for the most part contractor-builders possessing modest amounts of capital, operated with few legal controls. As a result, many of the neighborhoods built up between 1860 and 1900 have a hetero-

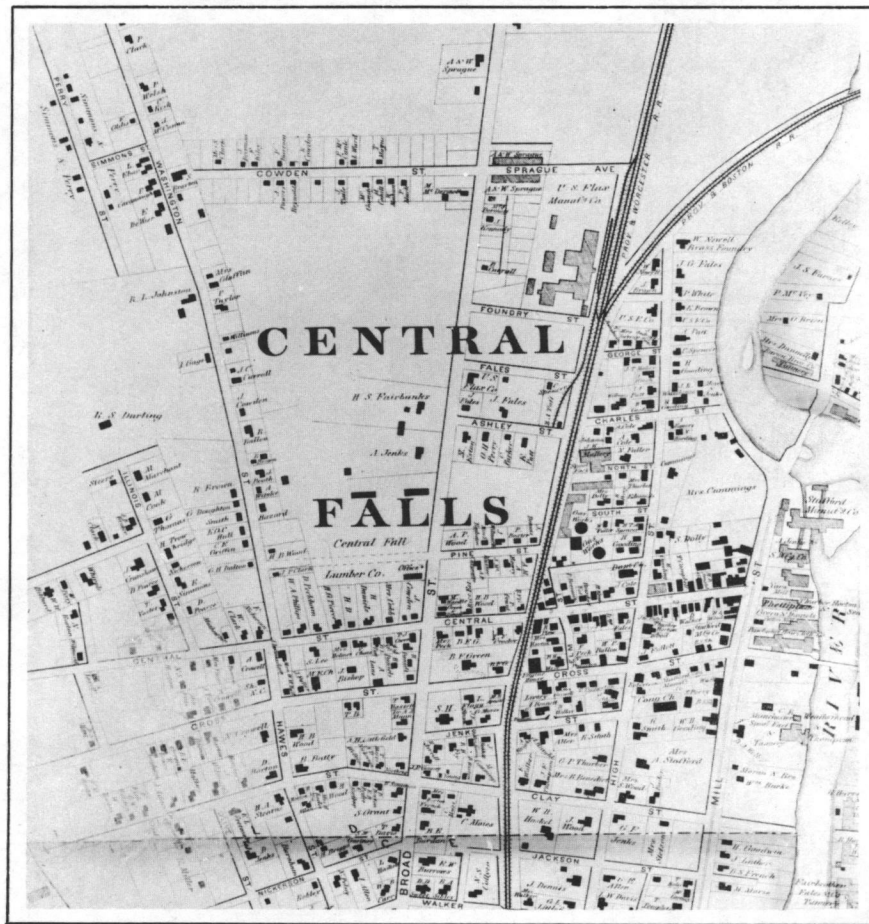


Figure 32: Detail of 1870 Map, by D. G. Beers and Company.

geneous mixture of building types and reflect numerous variations in siting, plan and style.

There remain today some fine examples of houses built in a variety of fashionable revival styles, including the Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, but the greater number of two-, three- and four-family dwellings have no particular stylistic treatment. They are direct and unadorned.

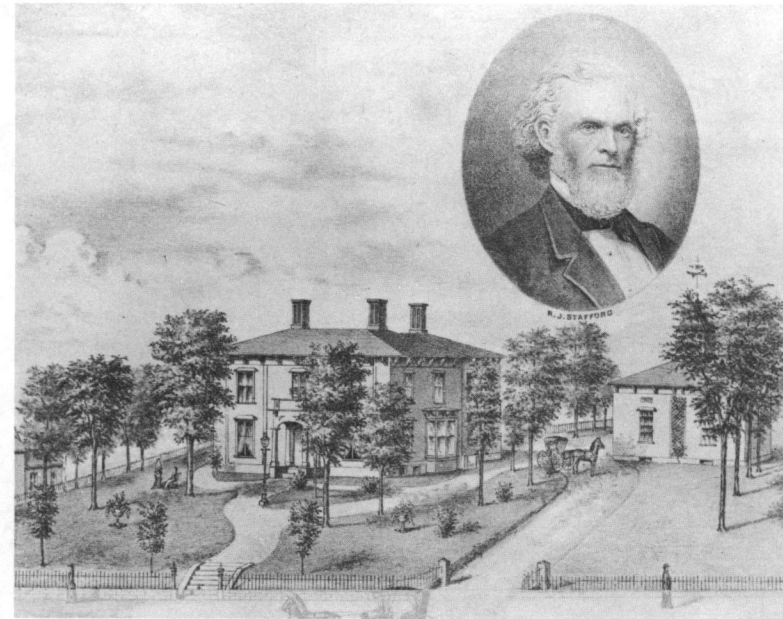
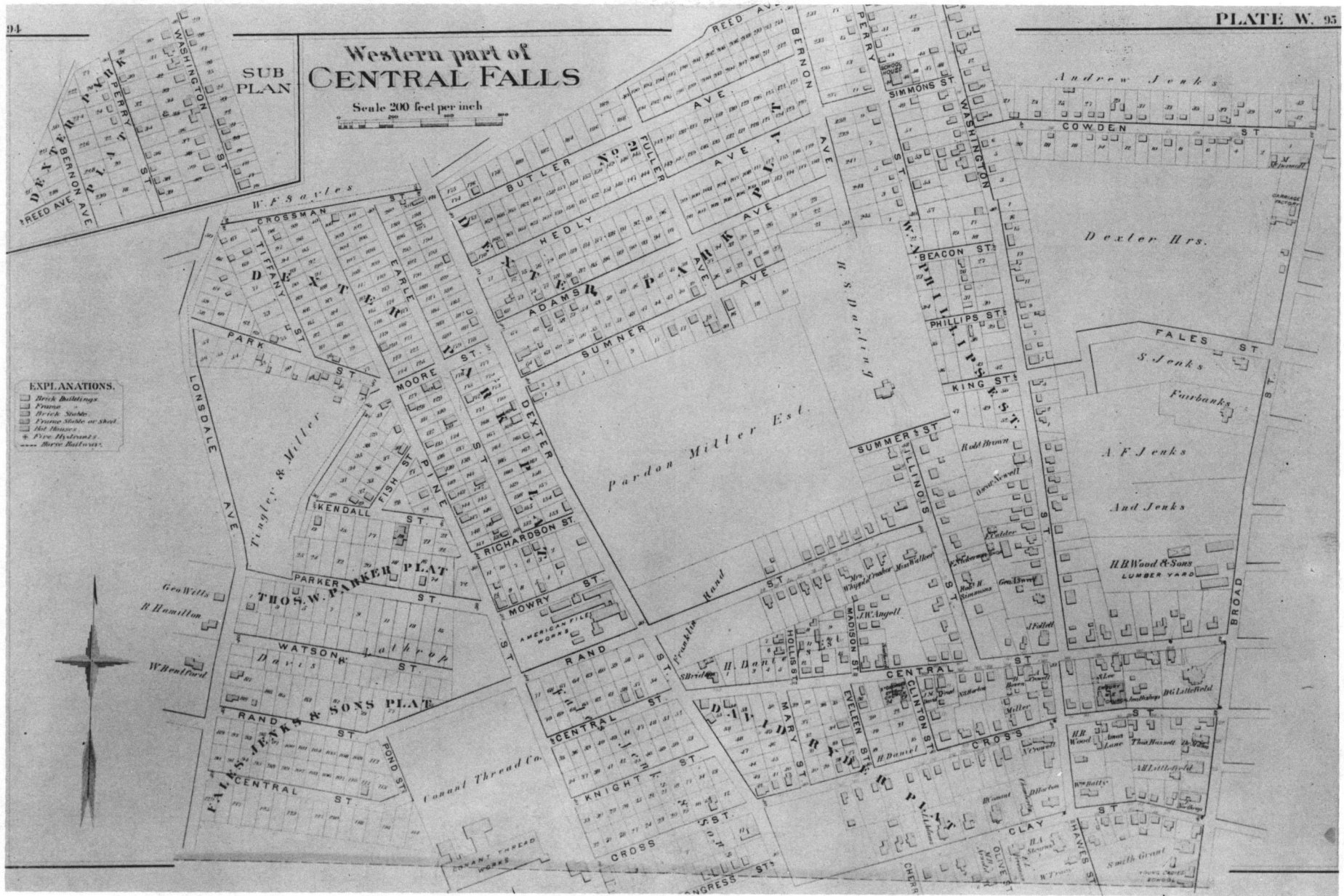


Figure 33: Stafford House, c. 1860; drawing, c. 1878; 371 High Street.

By the 1860s, the simple form and the classical decoration of the Greek Revival style had been succeeded in popularity by the Italianate. The Stafford House (c. 1860) (Figure 33) at 371 High Street, built for Rufus J. Stafford, owner of the mill at the north end of Roosevelt Avenue, is a good example of this Italianate style, although it has been somewhat altered. A symmetrically arranged, two-story house, it displays many characteristic Italianate details, including brackets under the wide eaves and wide frames surround-







**EXPLANATIONS.**  
 [Symbol] Brick Buildings  
 [Symbol] Frame  
 [Symbol] Brick Sheds  
 [Symbol] Frame Sheds or Shed.  
 [Symbol] Mill Houses  
 [Symbol] Fire Hydrants  
 [Symbol] Street Railways

Figure 35: 1880 Map, by G. M. Hopkins.



ing paired, hooded windows. The Horace Daniels House (c. 1865), at the corner of Broad and Cross Streets, is another Italianate mansion and was originally sited in the center of its block. Although the first floor has been extensively altered to accommodate commercial use, its second and third stories still exhibit many handsome details, including quoined corners and bracketed window caps. The house was built for one of the original partners of Greene and Daniels and was later owned by D. G. Littlefield, a Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island (1889-1890). The Italianate style continued to be popular in Central Falls long after it had gone out of fashion in larger urban areas; more modest and less altered later examples can be seen on many streets in the southern half of the city. The small one-and-a-half-story, gable-end-to-the-street, Italianate cottage was especially popular and many were built through the 1870s. This form (Figure 36), with its eave brackets, fancifully bracketed



Figure 36: Horton House, 1850s; 78 Jenks Street.



Figure 37: Greene House, 1868 (Central Falls Baptist Church on right); photograph, c. 1897; 85 Cross Street.

door hood and usual first-story bay window, is found in many neighborhoods in Central Falls. There are handsome examples at 9 Madison Street, 39 Bagley Street and 543 High Street, and a concentration of them were built on Cross (at 156 and 183) and Central (at 217, 278 and 323) Streets.

Contemporary with the Italianate style, and reflecting the same desire for the picturesque and romantic, was the Gothic Revival. Only one fully developed Gothic Revival house, the Earle House (c. 1865) at 1084 Broad Street, remains in Central Falls. This one-and-a-half-story house has a symmetrical three-bay facade with a low, hipped roof interrupted by a high, center gable with Gothic bargeboard details over the entrance. Although the porch has been unsympathetically altered, the handsome house retains the label molds over the windows and the two unusual Gothic garden trellises on the north side.

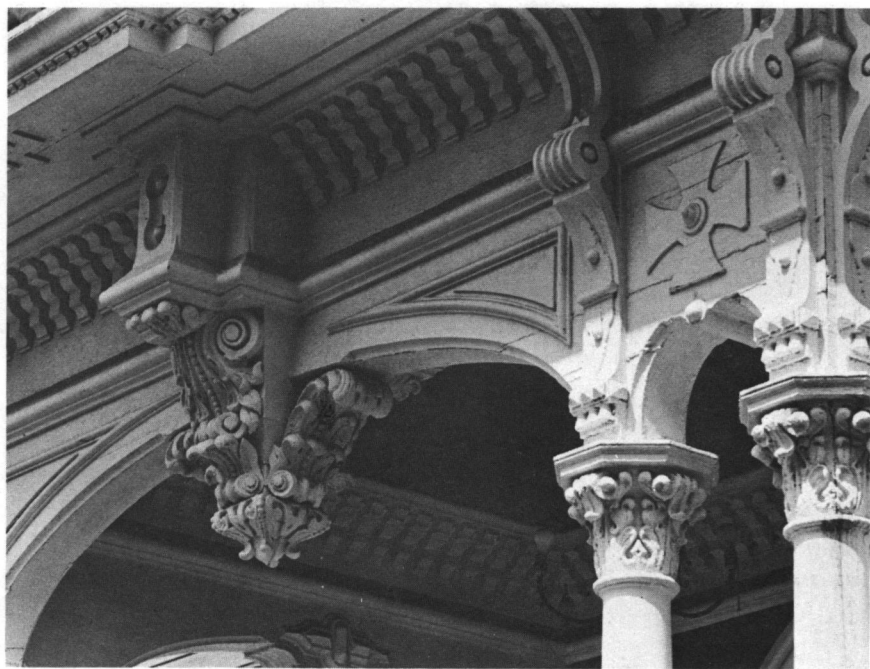


Figure 38: Detail of Greene House, 1868; 85 Cross Street.

The formal elegance and symmetry of the Second Empire style gained widespread popularity in the United States following the Civil War. Influenced by French architecture of the period and characterized by the mansard roof (which offered an extra floor of living space), the Second Empire style was especially favored for large, pretentious houses. Benjamin F. Greene's extravagantly decorated house (1868) (Figures 37 and 38) at 85 Cross Street is a notable example. The two-and-a-half-story, mansard, main block is interrupted by a central pavilion, defined by a boldly ornamented first-story porch supported by trios of columns with elaborate Corinthian capitals and a sunbonnet gable over triple round-head windows on the second story. Less elaborate and more formal and severe is the D. G. Fales House (Figure 39) at 476 High Street built in the late 1850s and updated in 1867 by the addition of its flaring mansard roof. Both houses are excellent examples of



Figure 39: Fales House, c. 1858, 1867; 476 High Street.

their style and are important for their association with two of Central Falls' premier industrial magnates. Some modest adaptations of the mansard roof appear in the 1870s in Central Falls, as on the small, one-and-a-half-story cottage at 39 Jenks Avenue.

The variety of wooden ornament and trim, found on such pretentious houses as Benjamin Greene's and also on the many smaller, more modest dwellings in the city, was often mass produced; in fact, two woodworking mills in Central Falls made window frames, doors and decorative work — R. H. Simmons on Illinois Street and T. D. Rice on High Street.

While the Italianate and Second Empire styles represented a tradition of formality and symmetry, a parallel development of romanticism and eclecticism held sway in the later decades of the nineteenth century. The Stick Style, for example, though never very popular in Central Falls, is represented by the Wyman House



Figure 40: Wyman House, 1880s; 1192 Broad Street.



Figure 41: Wood House, 1894; photograph, c. 1897; 153 Central Street.

(Figure 40) at 1192 Broad Street. This is a two-and-a-half-story, cross-gable house with applied nailing strips.

The Queen Anne style, popular in Central Falls and across the nation in the 1880s and 1890s, represented the height of the picturesque tradition with its contrasting shapes and eclectic ornament. The varied rooflines characteristic of the style may be seen on the Wood House (c. 1885) (Figure 41) at 153 Central Street, a three-story, cross-gable house with a conical-topped tower. The handsome house (c. 1889) at 158 Cross Street exhibits characteristic contrasting materials and textures with its banded-clapboard and patterned-shingle surface. The Queen Anne style, although best expressed in large and expensive residences, was also utilized in simplified form for even the most humble dwellings.

The Conant House (1895) (Figure 42) at 104 Clay Street is the most fully developed example of the Colonial Revival style in





Figure 42: Conant House, 1895; 104 Clay Street.

Central Falls. The elaborate exterior details of the red brick and clapboard house evoke the early nineteenth-century Federal style. The gambrel-roofed dwelling's bulky form is emphasized by the two broad curves of the facade between which is set the handsome door with leaded top and side lights under a balustrade porch.

Surrounding these grand houses were the smaller, single-family residences built by Central Falls' middle-class foremen, managers and professional businessmen. With the rise in population during the second half of the nineteenth century and the necessity of housing several thousand new residents, land values increased rapidly and several forms of multi-family housing became popular. Double houses, such as the one at 140 Cross Street, were built from the 1860s through the succeeding decades, and several examples remain. The most common form was a two-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed house with entrances set at either end of the facade. They were often plain in decoration with ornament reserved for doorways, as on the house at 11-15 Summit Street (c. 1885). The double house (Figure 43) at 234-236 Central

Street, dating from the 1880s, is unusual not only for the handsome treatment of its paneled bays but for its central entrances.

By far the predominant form of two-family dwelling, however, is the two-and-a-half-story, side-hall-plan house, divided horizontally into two flats so as to resemble a single-family house (Figure 44). Built from the 1860s through the 1890s, this standard form was decorated with a variety of machine-made, stock ornament, including such Italianate details as the ornate door hoods and bracketed bays on the houses at 75 and 98 Hawes Street (c. 1865), 7 Fales Street (c. 1875) and 14-16 Evaleen Street (c. 1875). The progression of architectural tastes evident in Central Falls' grand houses was reflected in later decades in these more modest dwellings. Those built in the 1870s and 1880s, such as 76 Clay Street and 112-114 Cross Street, exhibit the contrasting wall covers of shingles and clapboard typical of the Queen Anne style. While the gable-roofed form is most common, there are occasional examples with the mansard roof, as on the house at 118-120 Cross Street.



Figure 43: House, 1880s; 234-236 Central Street.



By the 1880s and 1890s the two-and-a-half-story form had evolved into a full three-decker, and three-family houses constitute a large part of the residential building of this period; the most popular housing for the mill workers of Central Falls, they were an expedient way of housing the influx of industrial workers in an era of rising land values. Often several were built at one time by a developer who then sold each one to an individual owner who would reside in the house and rent the other units. Some three-deckers were built as investments for owners who lived elsewhere. The two houses at 395-397 and 399-401 Central Street (1890s), for example, were built by Samuel Briden, an emigrant from England, who rented them to mill workers.

While some three-deckers are unusually austere, many built in the 1880s and 1890s and in the first decade of the twentieth century have a variety of porches with spindle rails, bays and decorated



Figure 44: House, 1880s; 311-313 Central Street.



Figure 45: House, c. 1890; 59-61 Cross Street.

cornices reflecting the details of grander one-family Queen Anne houses. On the house at 89 Sylvian Street (c. 1890) a three-story porch is set into the mass of the house; while on the handsome examples at 92 Lincoln Street and 59 Cross Street (c. 1885) (Figure 45) three-story porches with slender, turned posts are applied across the facades. The porches of three-deckers, which are often the buildings' principal ornament, provided each family with a small, semi-private outdoor space.

The interior living areas available to the families who lived in typical three-deckers are a marked contrast with those of the city's grander houses. Samuel Conant's house at 104 Clay Street has on its first floor four large formal rooms arranged symmetrically around the great central hallway which contains a handsome, curved staircase. The rooms are decorated with elaborate cornices and mantels reflecting the imposing character of the house's exterior. By comparison, the plan of the three-decker (Figure 46) shows that a tenant was likely to have a double parlor (one of which was probably used as a bedroom), a kitchen, tiny bedrooms and rear hall — a convenient, if not spacious, living area.

Such compact dwelling units coupled with the density of building in Central Falls made it one of the most thickly populated areas in the state. In 1875, for example, the town of Lincoln as a whole had 875 people per square mile while Central Falls' population density was 3,576 people per square mile.

The Colonial Revival style, examples of which are uncommon in the city, did influence the later multi-family houses built in the 1890s and 1900s, when the more massive Tuscan porch column or the simple square post tended to replace the lighter Queen Anne spindle work, as on the three-decker houses at 211-213 Cross Street and 61-63 Pacific Street.

In a few cases, the three-decker form was expanded to a full four stories in the 1890s as, for example, at 39-41 Fales Street and 38 Fletcher Street. But houses for more than three families were built only rarely during the 1890s in Central Falls. Only a few large tenement buildings were constructed, such as those at 5 Darling Street and 66-68-70 Richmond Street.

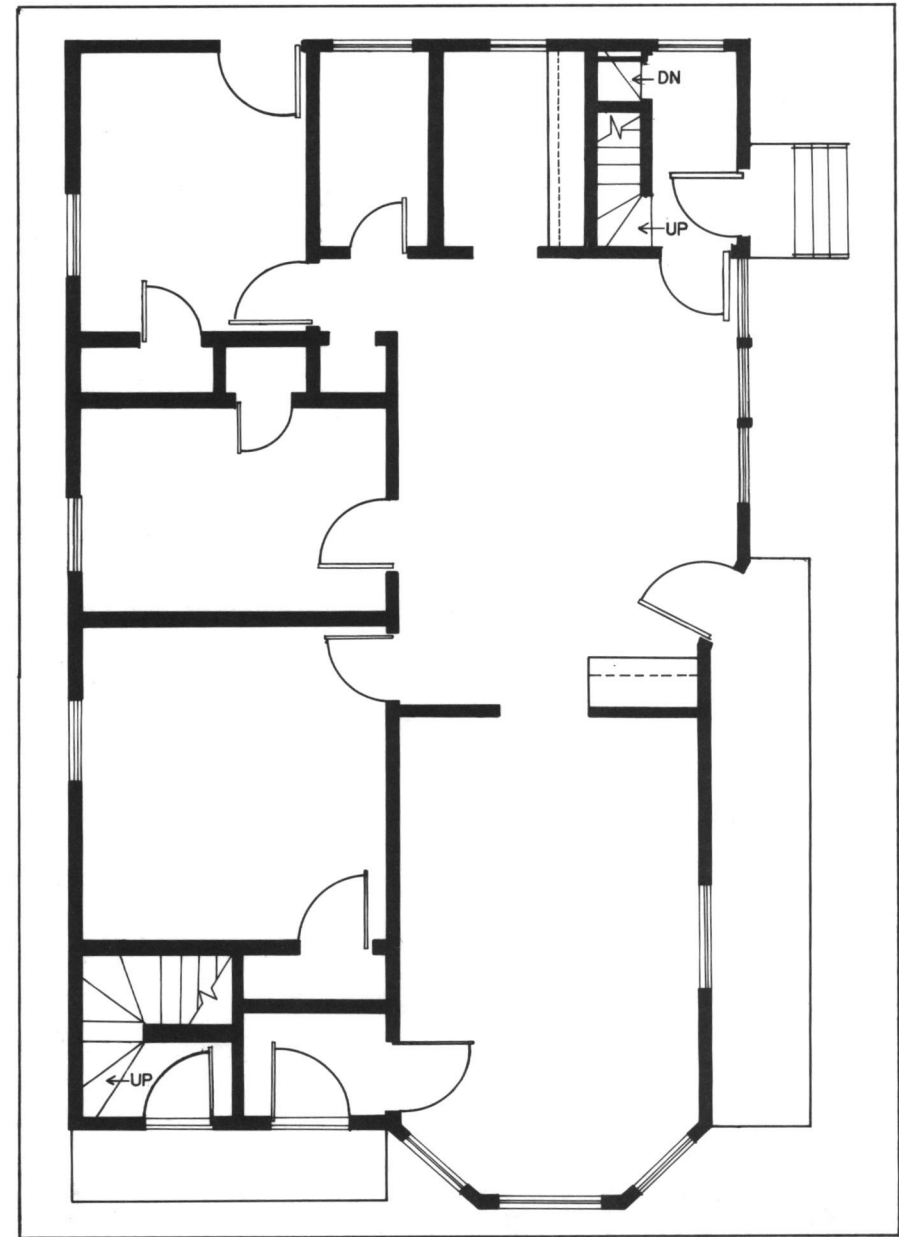


Figure 46: A Typical Three-Decker Floor Plan.



Figure 47: 1895 Map, by Everts and Richards.

### Continued Prosperity (1890-1920)

By the 1890s, Central Falls was a well defined urban community. Yet, despite this fact, it remained part of Lincoln and the divergence of urban and rural interests within the town was a continuing source of political difficulty. Local government had long been dominated by rural interests and by the manufacturers, who were mostly Republican and feared the potential political strength of the thousands of newly arrived immigrants. The problem was resolved when the General Assembly placed the question of the incorporation of Central Falls on the town ballot. Incorporation as a city was itself a tactic to exclude naturalized citizens from complete participation in local government — since the Rhode Island constitution excluded foreign-born citizens who did not own \$134 worth of taxable property from voting in elections for councilmen.

On election day, February 27, 1895, Central Falls residents split exactly evenly on the vote for independence — 749 to 749. Some believed that Central Falls should be absorbed by Pawtucket; others hoped that the fire district would continue. But the rest of Lincoln's voters overwhelmingly favored its independence — 1531 to 794 — and Central Falls was incorporated as a city and did, in fact, remain a Republican stronghold until the 1930s.

The new municipality was based on a mayor and city council form of government; Charles P. Moies was elected its first mayor. The city acquired all of the property of the former Central Falls Fire District and extended beyond those bounds to include the part of Valley Falls on the southern bank of the river. The northern section of that village had become part of the town of Cumberland. The extensive industrial complex of Saylesville, however, was excluded from the new city's boundaries and thus from its tax base, despite the fact that many Central Falls residents worked there.

An 1895 map (Figure 47) of the city shows that much of the available land had already been developed in the expansion of the previous thirty years. In the older, southeastern section of the city, there was little undeveloped space. Mills lined the river bank from the middle falls southward, and the land enclosed by the river and

the railroad branch was occupied by a variety of residences and small shops. Broad Street, especially the northern section, was still the site of several large, imposing houses situated on spacious lots. The commercial section of the city that had always been located on Central Street was beginning to expand to Broad Street which, in the twentieth century, became the major commercial artery. The southern end of Broad Street was the focus of the city's governmental life — within short distances of each other were the city hall, the fire station and the high school. The Pawtucket and Central Falls Railroad Station (Figure 48) was added to this group

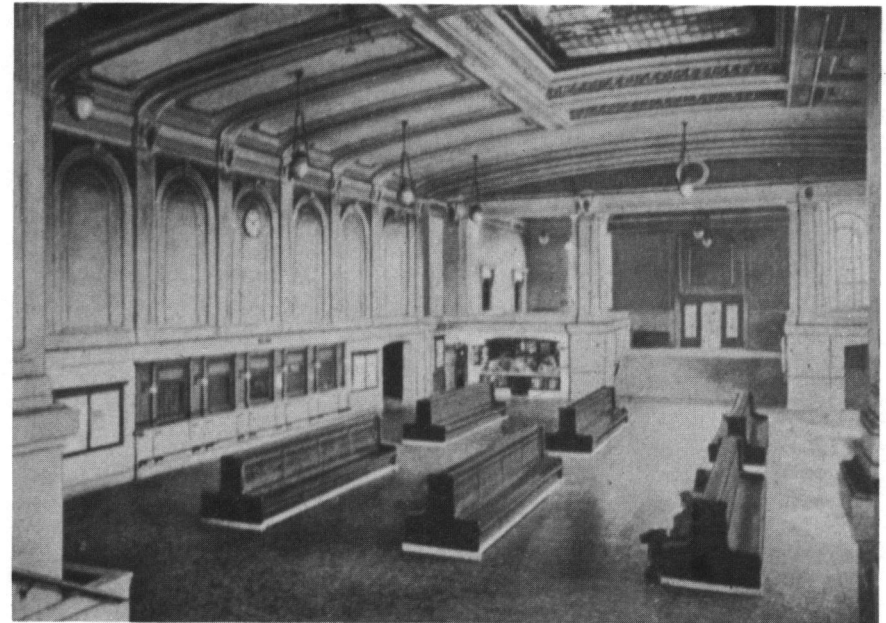


Figure 48: Pawtucket and Central Falls Railroad Station, 1916; post card view, early twentieth century; 307 Broad Street.



when the railroad tracks were re-laid in 1916. The handsome building with its great central lobby was built on the city line. Closed since 1959, it is in very poor condition. Except for the few houses along Lonsdale Avenue and in the Valley Falls area, there was little development north of Hunt Street. Although some changes have taken place in the street pattern since 1895, its basic character was established by that time, with long shallow blocks filling in the spaces between Broad and Dexter Streets and Lonsdale Avenue.

When Central Falls was incorporated, nearly half the population was foreign born. The three early ethnic groups, the French Canadians, English and Irish, retained their numerical superiority during the next twenty-five years. Many of these immigrants and their children lived near their countrymen in ethnically cohesive neighborhoods where familiar language and customs were main-

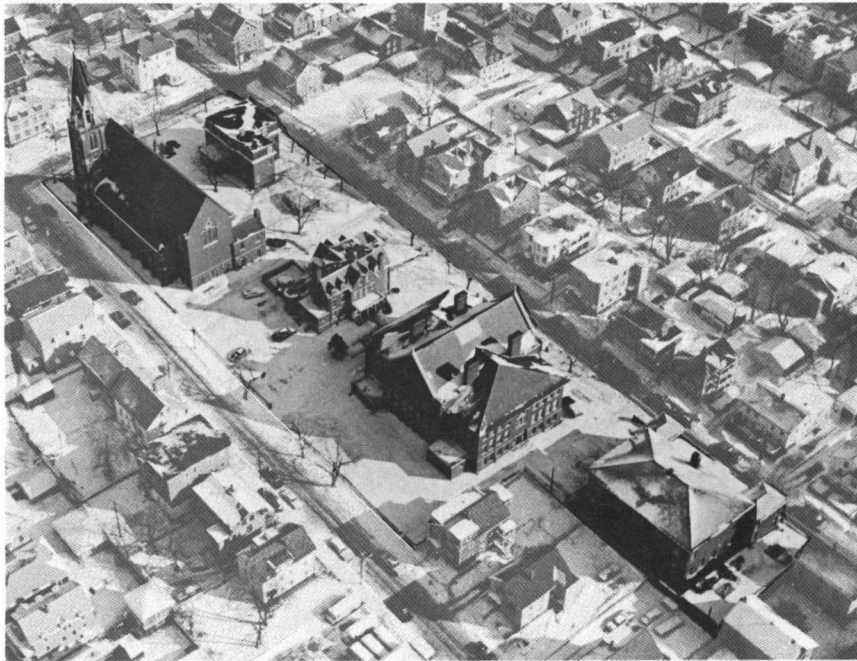


Figure 49: Holy Trinity Church Complex, 1889 and later; 135 Fuller Street.

tained. The central portion of the city was the home of much of the Irish population; the French Canadians tended to settle in the eastern and western section of the city; the English were concentrated in the south.

By the early twentieth century, the French-speaking population of Central Falls had grown so large that a second parish, St. Matthew's, was created on the western side of the city in 1906 and construction of a chapel was begun the next year.

In 1905, Irish Catholic parishioners of Holy Trinity opened a new school and convent near their church and rectory on Fuller Avenue. The addition of such auxiliary structures as schools, convents and rectories to the areas near these major churches produced the characteristic church complex, called a "church estate" by one historian, in which a large church building became the centerpiece of a complex of buildings, often, as in the case of Holy Trinity (Figure 49) and Notre Dame, occupying almost an entire block.

These older ethnic groups were also joined by newcomers from other areas who came to Central Falls to fulfill the labor demands of the mature industrial economy of the city and to escape the economic and political difficulties they faced in their homelands.

By 1920, there were large Polish and Syrian communities in the city, as well as smaller numbers of immigrants from Russia and Portugal. These new immigrants continued the tradition of ethnic cohesion in Central Falls; many Syrians lived in the central section of the city, while the Polish community located on the southern end of High Street. Again, the center of each of these neighborhoods was a church. Syrians belonging to the Melkite Rite organized the parish of St. Basil the Great soon after their arrival; their first church, completed in 1911, has recently been replaced by a new structure on Broad Street. St. Ephraim's Syrian Orthodox Church was begun in 1913 and the church building was erected on Washington Street. A new St. Ephraim's, completed in 1963, now stands on the site. Two churches were built by the Polish community — the Church of St. Joseph (Figure 50)



Figure 50: Church of St. Joseph, 1919; 391 High Street.

in 1919, on the site of the first Congregational Church, and the National Polish Catholic Church of the Holy Cross on High Street, begun in 1919 and completed in 1935.

Residential building to accommodate the still increasing population in these decades followed patterns set in earlier years. Between 1900 and 1920, Central Falls' population rose from 18,167 to 24,174 and the city was well on the way to becoming the most densely populated municipality in the nation (Figure 51). Multi-family housing continued to predominate; the two-and-a-half-story, two-family houses built along Pacific Street during the 1900s and 1910s, for example, illustrate in simplified form and detailing the characteristic building types of these decades.

As the pressure on limited land grew stronger, scattered vacant areas were built upon; some landowners subdivided an already established lot into front and back lots and built behind existing buildings. Such divisions fortunately were not widespread, but occasional back-lot buildings do exist. More common was the use of small side lots between older houses. This "filling-in" process has resulted in a mixture of styles along many of the city's streets. As one travels along Cross Street, for example, buildings dating from the 1860s to the 1910s may be seen; such heterogeneity, the product of an increasing population, adds to the distinctive character of the city.

Most Central Falls workers continued to be employed in manufacturing plants. Depressions in 1893 and 1907 slowed industrial growth somewhat, but there was further diversification in productive capacity and, for the most part, these were prosperous years in Central Falls and in the nation as a whole.

The Standard Seamless Wire plant was built on Roosevelt Avenue in 1890 and, two years later, the New England Electrolytic Copper Company began its plating business in a building on High Street. In 1897, the Royal Weaving Company opened its plant (Figure 52) on Roosevelt Avenue and Cross Street; the red brick building was designed by Dwight Seabury for silk weaving. Like many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century weaving sheds, it is a single-story building with a north-facing, saw-toothed roof with skylights.



Figure 51: Aerial View of Central Falls.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, the Bryan Marsh Company introduced a new industry to Central Falls, glass manufacture. From 1913, the parent company of Bryan Marsh, General Electric, produced lightbulbs in the old Stafford mill and in its new mill on Roosevelt Avenue. The glass industry, which continues to be an essential part of the city's economy, is today carried on by Corning Glass Works. Since 1924, when Corning began the manufacture of various glass products (including tubing and blownware), a number of major additions have been made to the Broad Street plant (Figure 53).

From 1900 to 1920, Central Falls once again experienced a boom as it geared up for World War I. The demand for goods and the corresponding requirements of industry for a large labor force spurred a third period of economic expansion.



Figure 52: Royal Weaving Mill, 1897; 471 Roosevelt Avenue.





Figure 53: Corning Glass Works, 1937 and later; 1169-1223 Broad Street.

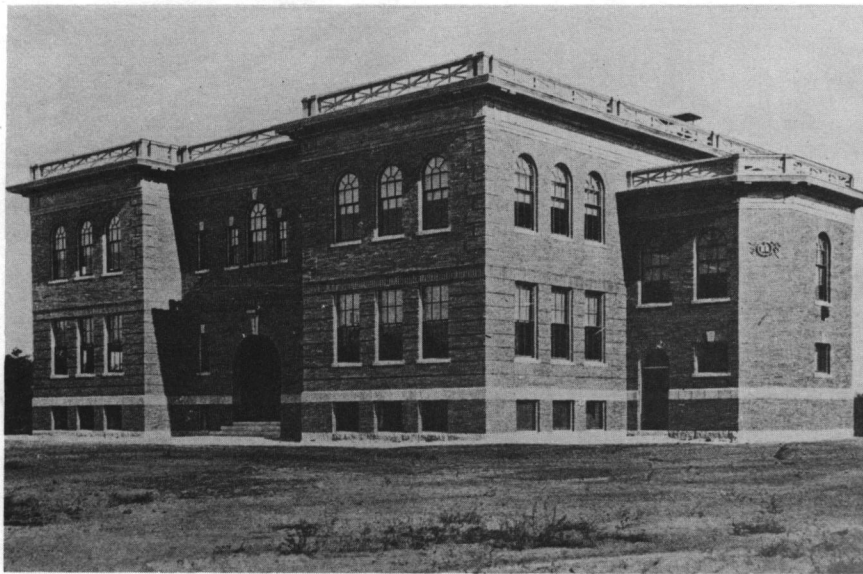


Figure 54: West Side School, 1905; post card view, early twentieth century; 949 Dexter Street.

The prosperity of these decades was reflected in improvements and additions to the public services and buildings of the city. Three new schools were built: the Garfield Street School (1892), the Washington Street School (1895) and the West Side (Ella Risk) School (1905). Of this group, only the yellow brick West Side School (Figure 54), at 949 Dexter Street, remains. In the early twentieth century, the Central Falls school system conducted a notable program of classes for the city's foreign-born residents.

Three major new civic buildings were constructed in Central Falls in these years. The Kendall Street fire station was built in 1891. A bequest from Stephen L. Adams, whose family had for decades been prominent manufacturers in Central Falls, provided a new library for the city; in 1910 the books were moved from the old fire house near the tracks to the handsome Adams Library (Figure 55) on Central Street. Designed by McLean and Wright of Boston, and classical in inspiration, the building is executed in buff-



Figure 55: Adams Library, 1910; 205 Central Street.



Figure 56: Police Station and Court House, 1914; 507 Broad Street.

colored brick with pale limestone trim and has a columned, pedimented portico emphasizing its symmetrical, monumental facade. The gray brick Police Station and District Court House (Figure 56) on Broad Street, designed by William R. Walker and Son, was opened in 1914. It was built in the same simplified classical mode as the Adams Library. Together they reinforce the civic identity of Broad Street between Cross and Fales Streets.

As for many American cities, World War I had a harsh impact on Central Falls. Many of its citizens served in the armed forces; Quinn Square at West Hunt and Dexter Streets was named in honor of James Quinn, a Central Falls resident who died in the war. Here is located the Central Falls war memorial. Economically, the era of World War I was a prosperous one for Central Falls. The boom of the war-time economy was reflected in the increased production of the city's mills. The requirement for a full labor force to meet the demand for goods extended this industrial prosperity to other sectors of the city's economy.

The years between 1890 and 1920 were, in many ways, the

high-water mark of Central Falls' economic development and community self-esteem. A dramatic increase in population reflected the general prosperity of the decades. Between 1900 and 1920, the population rose by 33 per cent. The vitality of the city's commercial life was reflected in the number and variety of its shops — in 1920, for example, there were 130 stores on Broad Street (Figure 57). The industrial sector of the city's economy seemed sound, despite the fact that over 75 per cent of the work force was employed in the single category of textiles and textile-related concerns and well over half of Central Falls' workers were women and children. The manufacturers of the city could rely on established transportation routes, an experienced work force, relatively inexpensive power and few legal controls.

With a varied production of textile goods, a bustling commercial life and an increasing wealth and population, the citizens of Central Falls were confident of the continued prosperity of their city.



Figure 57: Broad Street Scene; post card view, early twentieth century.

## The Shifting Economy (1920-1950)

Such optimism, however, proved to be unfounded and the decades following the first World War were difficult years for the city. Until then, the growth and prosperity of Central Falls had been based on the expansion of its manufacturing. The three decades following World War I were characterized by economic decline, as the boom of the war years gave way to a downward momentum among the city's manufacturing interests. Central Falls shared in the region-wide problem of a depressed textile industry. The manufacture of cotton goods, especially, was adversely affected by the rapid industrialization of the southern states. The decline of the New England textile industry, though briefly delayed by the demand of the World War I years, became evident in the depression of 1920-1921. The 1920s, prosperous years for much of the nation's economy, saw a continued weakening in Central Falls' textile industry. Manufacturers were confronted by many of the problems typical of older industrial cities – increasing competition from

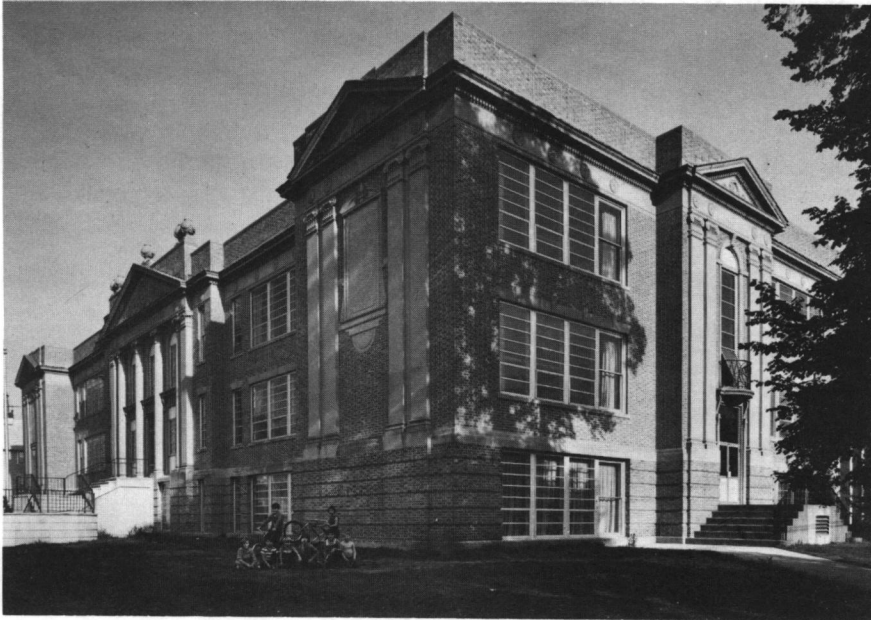


Figure 58: Central Falls High School, 1927; 24 Summer Street.

southern and western states, outmoded machinery, a drop in the level of investment and cautious business practices. The general depression of the textile industry multiplied its effects in Central Falls by influencing the city's other industrial keystone, the manufacture of textile machinery.

During these years, the great expansion in the number of municipal buildings which had characterized the previous three decades drew to an end. The only major municipal undertaking was the yellow brick, Neoclassical, Central Falls High School (Figure 58) on Sumner Street, completed in 1927.

Despite the effects of local and regional economic difficulties, several congregations added to, or replaced, their buildings. The Episcopalian St. George's Church began construction in 1922 of the Gothic church built of gray stone at Clinton and Central Streets, on the site of their first church building. In 1925, Holy Trinity congregation built its parish house (now converted into a Neighborhood Facilities Center by the city) to provide social and recreational facilities for both its parish and the community. Both French Catholic parishes created major visual landmarks. St. Matthew's had completed its imposing brown and red granite, Gothic church (Figure 59) with its pinnacle-capped tower on Dexter Street by 1929. In 1933, Notre Dame parish completed its church adjacent to Jenks Park. Recently, it has been altered by the removal of the handsome bell tower and the flattening of the facade. Parishioners of Notre Dame were also involved in the creation of Central Falls' only hospital: Notre Dame. Built in 1925, it is a utilitarian, red brick structure whose deep setback from Broad Street creates a pleasant, grassy setting.

Developments in transportation technology occurring in the first part of the twentieth century have had a radical effect on Central Falls. Streetcars were replaced in 1928 by trackless trolleys which soon gave way to buses. The advent of the automobile had an unusually harsh impact. The city's narrow streets, built in an era of pedestrians and streetcars, were not designed to handle the large number of automobiles which soon congested both commercial and residential areas. The prevalence of automobiles eventually led to building demolition to provide space for parking lots and added



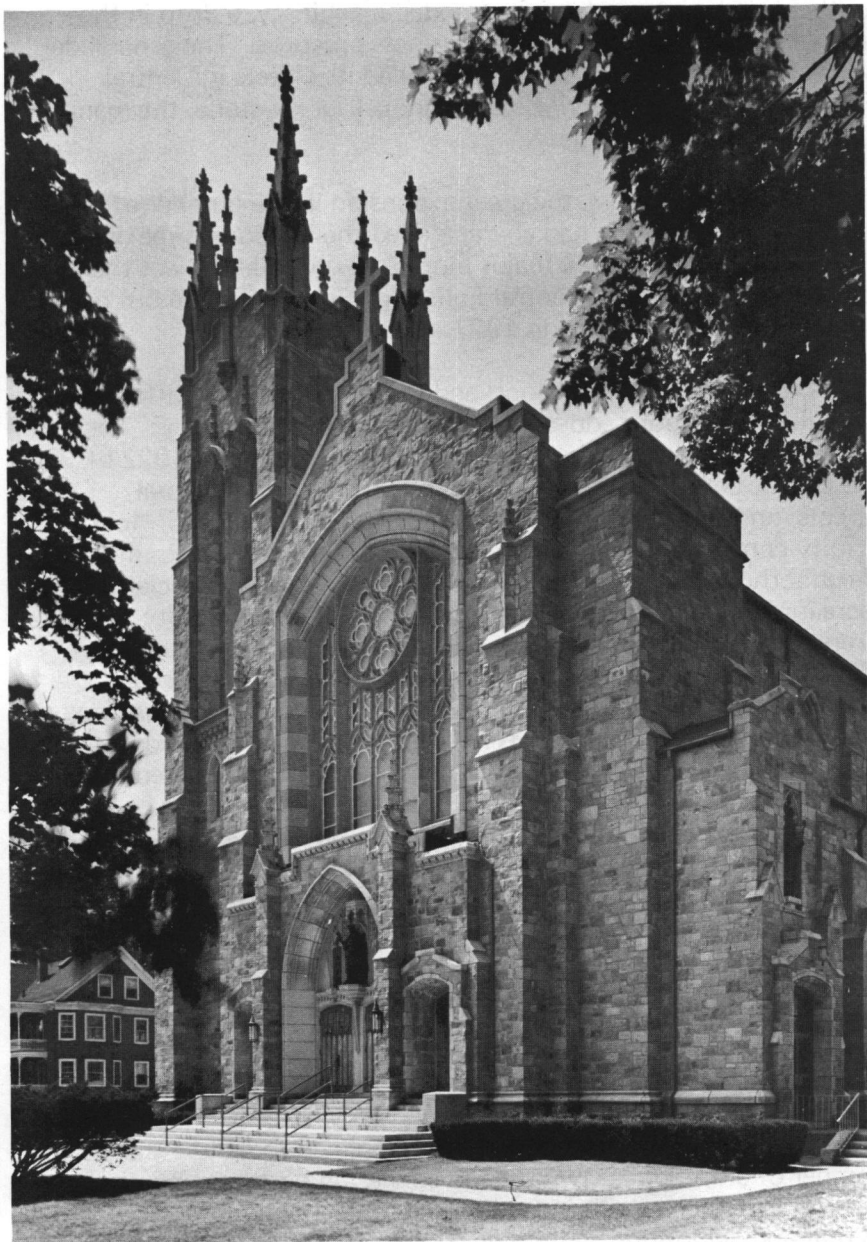


Figure 59: St. Matthew's Church, 1929; 1018 Dexter Street.

a new building type to Central Falls, the service station. The patterned-brick station at 913 Broad Street, one of the first in the city, was constructed in 1922 and is typical of those built in this period.

As in other Rhode Island industrial cities, the Great Depression of the 1930s posed particular difficulties. Already faced with a weakened economy, many industrial concerns closed and increasing unemployment and declining trade ended Central Falls' last period of economic expansion. In 1933, at the worst of the depression, there were 1400 unemployed residents of Central Falls.

The unrest of labor disputes complicated the city's economic difficulties. The textile industry had already experienced a bitter strike in 1922 when a 20 per cent wage cut was instituted. In 1934, under the impetus of Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act which allowed workers to organize and bargain collectively, an even more violent strike occurred in Rhode Island mills including those at Saylesville where many Central Falls residents worked. The strike, which was part of a nation-wide shutdown of textile plants, had begun in North Carolina when the United Textile Workers attempted to organize southern workers. In Rhode Island, the National Guard was called up by Governor Theodore F. Green when local police and sheriffs could not control the disturbances in Saylesville and Woonsocket. A violent confrontation between the Guard and the strikers and their sympathizers spilled over from Saylesville into Central Falls' Moshassuck Cemetery where a rock-throwing battle took place on the night of September 11, 1934. Demonstrators broke windows and attempted to keep workers from entering the mills. Eventually, they were forced to retreat before the tear gas and fire hoses of the sheriffs and the Guard. The strike was eventually settled on the national level by a commission appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

With fewer jobs available, the population of the city actually declined between 1930 and 1936. Many workers left Central Falls to try to find work in other areas, and some French Canadians, unable to find the economic security they hoped for, returned to Canada; the foreign-born population of the city decreased 22 per cent during these years. The problem of unemployment was relieved slightly by the creation of a Works Progress Administration

office in the city. While it operated, this federal public-works agency sponsored the construction of Macomber Stadium, on the east side of the city near the site of the Pierce Fight, and built sidewalks for many streets which are identified by small markers. The WPA also built several new streets in the Valley Pond area and thus opened for development the last major tract of vacant land in the city. Since that time, single-family houses have filled the area.

The necessity for such public programs was mitigated somewhat during the early 1940s. Although in the 1940s, the population of the city declined again, by 6.7 per cent, Central Falls' economy experienced a slight recovery in this decade as it shared in the general prosperity associated with World War II. However, these gains were minimized by the recession of 1951-1952.

World War II affected not only the economy of Central Falls

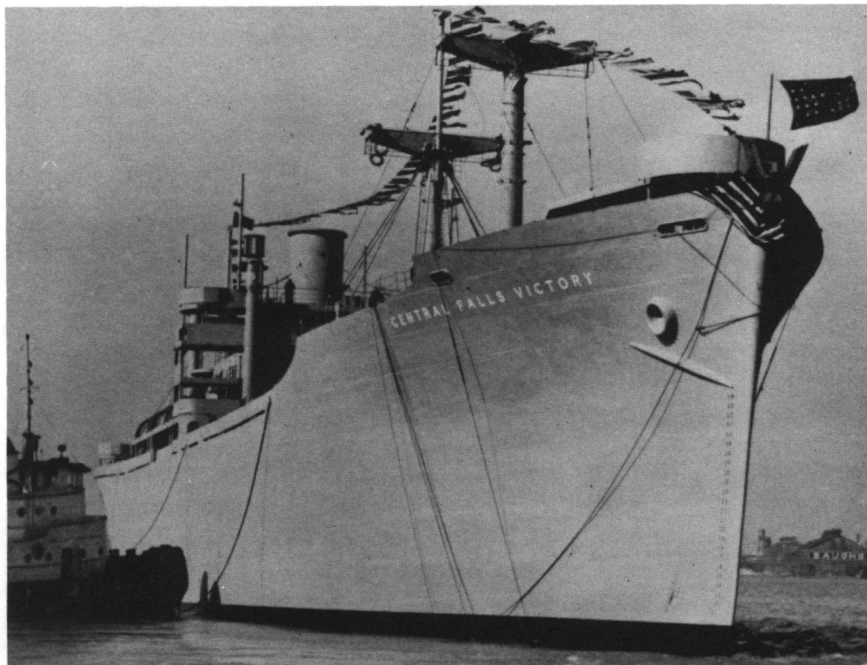


Figure 60: S.S. *Central Falls Victory*, 1945.

but facets of its civic and social life as well. Along with the rationing of food and fuel, "Victory Gardens" appeared on many of the city's already small building lots. Several war bond drives were unusually successful – so successful that the federal government named a ship (Figure 60) for the city; it was christened the *Central Falls Victory* by Mrs. John Healey, the mayor's wife.

During the mid-twentieth century, Broad and Dexter Streets continued to function as the major commercial areas of the city. Broad Street, the primary through street to Pawtucket, had a variety of shops and served out-of-town shoppers as well as residents of nearby neighborhoods; in 1930 there were 257 retail establishments on Broad Street. Dexter Street, on the other hand, was largely a pedestrian-oriented shopping area and was the site of many food, fruit and variety stores and the entertainment facilities of the city – restaurants, bowling alleys, a small movie theater (the Bellevue, opened in the 1920s) and a skating rink (opened in the 1930s near the Garfield Street intersection). Despite the absence of controls over development, such commercial uses tended to concentrate on these two streets, with small, neighborhood, commercial "pockets" scattered throughout the city.

The transition from residential to commercial uses on Broad and Dexter Streets is evident in the form of many of the buildings there today. Houses have been converted to shops and have often been substantially altered in the process. In many cases, older house fronts were stripped of their architectural details and new first-floor store fronts have been built out to the sidewalk edge to create more commercial space. The proliferation of such uses to the northern end of Broad Street encouraged the construction of streetside shops on the front lawns of many older houses; unfortunately, these stores block the view of these fine structures. Since the 1940s, new single-story commercial and office structures, such as the flat-roofed, brick Corbi Building (1946) at 444 Broad Street with its large store-front windows, have been built.

Central Falls and its citizens had not only economic problems during this era but political difficulties as well. The "Noble Experiment" of prohibition had never been popular in Central Falls or Rhode Island and its lack of public support engendered

tolerance for those who transported and sold illegal liquor in the city. After the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, this toleration extended to illegal gambling. The well known reputation of Central Falls as a haven for gambling received attention in the national press during a bitter episode which followed the war. *Newsweek Magazine* described the city in 1946:

In most towns, the stream of scuffed-shoed youngsters sauntering into the shoeshine parlor would have surprised and gratified a mother's heart. But in Central Falls, Rhode Island, it gratified few and surprised none of the . . . inhabitants. For the boys never hesitated but went directly to the rear of the parlor, where the illegal slot machines were . . .

The incident began on July 19, 1946, when four recently returned veterans, serving on the city police force, seized two slot machines from a shoe-shine parlor opposite the railroad station on Broad Street.

The seizure of the machines by the off-duty policemen, who challenged the city's forbearing attitude toward gambling, was ruled illegal by a judge. The policemen, John Byrnes, John Gorman, Lucien Tessier and Frank Klich, who quickly became known as the "Fearless Four," appealed to the press; when the police chief suspended the officers the city was thrown into an uproar, which included a scuffling fracas at a mass meeting. Veterans' groups lent support to them in the widely publicized and fiercely debated attempt to have their suspensions overturned. With the help of several prominent attorneys, the four officers were eventually reinstated. The long-range result of the incident (combined with the increasing role of returned veterans in the city's government) was the creation of a charter commission and the acceptance of a new city charter in 1954, which restructured the relationship between the mayor and the council.

### **Recent Developments (1950-present)**

As it has been throughout the history of the city, the economy of Central Falls continues to be based upon manufacturing. Even in 1970, most workers were still employed in manufacturing, and, of these, the majority were employed by textile and apparel con-

cerns. Of special importance are the Corning Glass Works at Hunt and Broad Streets, constructed in various stages over the last forty years, and the Health-Tex Company, located in a twentieth-century, red brick mill at 558 Roosevelt Avenue, which manufactures childrens' clothing.

One of the most important recent developments has been the ever increasing popularity of the automobile which has resulted in the widening of many narrow streets and the diminishing of originally small building lots by the construction of driveways and garages. On the commercial strips of Broad and Dexter Streets, parking spaces are at a premium and have been metered since the early post-war years. Spot demolition has occurred to create parking spaces. Concurrently, new commercial construction has reflected these parking requirements; new buildings are frequently set at the rear of a lot behind a paved parking area, disrupting the building line and destroying the continuity of the nineteenth-century streetscape.

The construction of Interstate Route 95 through Pawtucket, slightly to the east of the Central Falls boundary, has caused demographic changes in the community since it has increased accessibility to other residential areas. Like many cities, Central Falls has experienced the out-migration of its younger residents. As the grandchildren of earlier immigrants became more affluent, they tended to move out to newer suburbs to the north, in Cumberland and Lincoln, where a federal policy of maintaining low mortgage rates for new houses enabled them to take advantage of new construction after World War II. As a result, the city's population contains an unusually large proportion of older people, those who chose to remain near friends and familiar institutions. These two trends, decreasing population and a large percentage of older people, have been reflected in the size of the labor force. Like the total population, which was 19,800 in 1960 and 18,700 in 1970, the labor force is decreasing.

Today, Central Falls is one of the poorest communities in Rhode Island; a substantial number — 14 per cent — of the city's households in 1970 had incomes below the poverty level and the average income of the city's residents is well below that of Rhode Islanders in general.



Municipal and institutional building has accounted for many of the changes in the physical fabric of the city during the last two decades. Two new churches have replaced older structures. A branch bank and two credit unions, the Central Falls Credit Union and the Dexter Credit Union, have located on Broad Street, so that local banking facilities are available to residents. Some municipal buildings which were outmoded have been replaced; a new fire station and school have been built. The most extensive city construction projects have been the Forand and Wilfrid Manors (Figure 61), high-rise housing for older residents supported by loans from the Federal Housing Authority. While increasing the opportunities for Central Falls' elderly citizens to remain in the city, these buildings are out of scale with the neighborhoods in which they are located. Private services for the elderly have also been added, including a new four-story nursing home on Broad Street.

In the last ten years, a new group of immigrants has come to Central Falls. Now a significant Hispanic community — mostly from Colombia, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic — has been added to the city's population. Having settled, for the most part, in the northern section of the city, they, like earlier immigrants, are often employed in the textile industry. The next chapter in Central Falls' future will no doubt include the integration of these new citizens into the ethnic and social heterogeneity of the city.



Figure 61: Forand Manor, 1962; 30 Washington Street.

#### IV. ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As has often been observed, Central Falls is a virtually "completed city." It has an extensive industrial plant, densely developed residential neighborhoods and two important commercial spines; but it has only insignificant pockets of open land available for new development. It is clear that if new construction takes place it will be for the most part on the sites of demolished buildings. The population of Central Falls will probably remain stable or grow very slowly, and it is likely that the city will continue to attract immigrants seeking jobs in its factories. Unlike expanding areas of the state, the city will not have to deal with the difficulties of suburban sprawl or widespread development in the coming years; rather, it faces the problem of adaptation and maintenance in conserving its existing fabric.

Central Falls retains much of the physical evidence of its many stages of growth. Handsome mill buildings, extensive church complexes, important civic buildings, commercial areas and a variety of housing — all contribute to the city's unique character. Time and change have not yet destroyed these valuable assets; they must be conserved in order to retain the special character, identity and sense of place of the community. There is a pressing need for a coordinated program to increase awareness and recognition of these assets and to provide for their protection.

The following discussion of preservation issues may serve to identify the particular preservation problems which face Central Falls. Each subsection consists of an assessment and a list of recommendations which could stimulate a program of action which will help residents of Central Falls to maintain and preserve the irreplaceable physical elements of their community. These recommendations are made on the premise that broadly based community action and energetic municipal direction are necessary to implement an effective preservation program. Agencies exist at the state and federal levels which can assist in various capacities, but long-lasting results can only occur with community initiative and determination.

#### HOUSING

**Assessment:** During the decade of the 1960s, the city for the first time instituted a series of controls on land use and maintenance. The passage of the 1964 zoning ordinance may be less vital in Central Falls than in expanding communities, since most of the area is built up and land-use patterns were largely established before the ordinance was passed. But the passage and enforcement of building codes have great potential for upgrading the physical environment. A program of code enforcement and the creation of the Central Falls Division of Planning now give the municipal administration the capacity for coordinating rehabilitation programs.

The decline in population and in the number of jobs available has meant that the demand for housing and property values have not kept pace with other areas of the state. Thus, while individuals and families have had to contend with serious economic problems, the city has also been compelled to deal with a tax base and a total property valuation which have not risen proportionately with its needs. Consequently, the availability of federally funded programs to institute improvements since the 1960s has had special importance for the city. In the late 1960s, the Central Falls Redevelopment Agency was created to administer a variety of federal redevelopment programs. Selective acquisition and demolition resulted in the loss of several important buildings. However, Central Falls escaped widespread destruction and retained many of its residential and commercial neighborhoods. Since the projects of the CFRA have now been completed, the city is moving beyond merely providing vacant land for developers to the realization that it is far more important to conserve the already existing building stock. The substitution of Community Development funds for redevelopment money holds significant potential since it could expand the resources available to property owners who wish to conserve and rehabilitate residential buildings.

The Central Falls Division of Planning is now operating a program of low-interest loans to aid homeowners in arresting the decay of their properties; this program may be a vital tool for the preser-

vation of an important resource — the extensive housing stock of sturdy, commodious structures. The houses of Central Falls provide a variety of living situations, including apartment buildings and multi- and single-family houses; over 90 per cent of these houses pre-date 1939. While there are several architecturally outstanding structures, most are modest, vernacular buildings, important for their associations with earlier eras and valuable as living space. Although only a few are unusually distinctive, many could be attractive and most could be useful.

Many buildings have outmoded mechanical systems and would benefit from repair and maintenance, but they are, for the most part, well constructed. Minor repairs on these houses would improve Central Falls' appearance, raise the values of properties and create pleasant and desirable neighborhoods. Improvements in the housing stock would certainly be less costly than replacement.

Some efforts are already being made by homeowners. Unfortunately, many renovations are unsympathetic and destroy the visual character of houses. Such changes, which diminish the property's appearance and value, have included the insertion of picture and casement windows into Victorian houses, the elimination of distinctive architectural details, such as roof brackets and door hoods, the replacement of original clapboards by vinyl or aluminum, the creation of a half-timbered effect and the removal of porches from three-deckers. In many cases, unsympathetic changes have been the result of good intentions hampered by lack of expertise and appreciation for the character of the house. Where respect for the fabric of the house guides repair and renovation, the expenditure of renovation money often adds substantially more to the value of the house than the mere dollar amount spent.

In addition to many modest houses, there are several which are architecturally outstanding and should be regarded as important cultural resources for the entire city. Among these are the Conant, Greene and Fales Houses. The Conant House (1895) at 104 Clay Street is an imposing Colonial Revival house, one of Central Falls' most elegant and best-preserved mansions. The Greene House (1868) at 85 Cross Street is an elaborate, Second Empire mansion and was originally the home of Benjamin Franklin Greene of the Greene and Daniels Company. A more severe, but equally elegant,

example of the Second Empire style is the Fales House (c. 1858, 1867) at 476 High Street, built for D. G. Fales of Fales and Jenks. As fine examples of their architectural styles and for their associations with some of the leading manufacturers and businessmen of the city, each of these buildings merits consideration for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

These handsome buildings are important visual landmarks and are of critical importance for Central Falls. Their special character and importance should be recognized by municipal authorities and, where feasible, special consideration should be given them in future planning for the city. While entry in the National Register would offer some protection to such structures, they also deserve interest and care from the city's government and citizens.

#### Recommendations:

1. Continue and expand the low-interest loan program for rehabilitation. Provide loans for the repair and maintenance of original exterior features (such as wall cover, porches and decorative work) and for new work which is sympathetic to the existing scale and materials of structures.
2. Provide guidance, through the Central Falls Division of Planning, to home owners undertaking rehabilitation projects, whether funded by the city or not. An architect skilled in restoration and renovation should be consulted in the administration of the loan program since this would help to ensure that home owners do not diminish the soundness and value of their houses by making inappropriate changes.
3. Discourage the use of vinyl and aluminum siding. It is now becoming clear that these materials may present a real threat to the buildings on which they are applied by disguising problems of condensation or wood rot and by adding to the difficulties encountered in extinguishing fires.



4. Prepare a conservation and renovation manual of practical advice for Central Falls homeowners who are considering changes in their houses' exteriors; such a manual would aid in the choice of appropriate windows, doors, wall materials and so on.

## INSTITUTIONAL AND CIVIC BUILDINGS

**Assessment:** Central Falls lacked a real civic center until the late nineteenth century when a number of public buildings were constructed along several blocks on the southern end of Broad Street. Beginning with Lincoln Town Hall in 1870 on Summit Street, followed in the next decade by the Lincoln High School (now City Hall) and the fire station, and later by Jenks Park, the Police Station and Court House and the Adams Library on Central Street, the blocks between Central and Fales Streets on Broad Street emerged as the center of the village and, later, the city.

This collection of institutional and municipal buildings and spaces which now stretches along both sides of the city's main street should be the visual focus of Central Falls, since the area is the major entrance to the city and contains some of its most important buildings. Of special importance are the three structures at Cross and Broad Streets — the Broad Street School, the new St. Basil's Church and the Daniels House. The City Hall and fire station are key visual landmarks; both are handsome buildings whose importance is enhanced by their proximity to each other and to the Police Station and Court House and Adams Library.

Just north of the City Hall is Central Falls' major open space, Jenks Park. In the thickly settled city, Jenks Park is an essential resource and a major asset; as the nomination of the park to the National Register says, it is the front lawn as well as the quiet rear garden of the city, whose numerous memorial and ornamental accretions testify to the pride the city's residents take in their park. Cogswell Tower atop Dexter's Ledge has, since its construction in 1904, become the emblem of Central Falls and its symbol of civic pride. Completing the civic center are the massive Notre Dame Church and its rectory at the corner of Broad and Fales Streets. In addition, there are a number of private buildings which

enhance the visual character of the area. Among these are houses at 449, 547, 597, 663 and 641 Broad Street.

This important combination of buildings and spaces which form the governmental and civic center of the city has been somewhat compromised since its development during the expansionist period of the city's history. Inappropriate commercial development, consisting of single-story buildings which front on parking lots, has intruded into the area. And some of the civic structures no longer serve their original functions.

Central Falls suffers from a lack of physical and visual identity and this problem is addressed by this group of buildings in a way which cannot be duplicated and which should not be diminished. When an older structure is no longer suitable for its original purpose (as in the case of the fire station), planning for appropriate re-use should be considered a priority.

The institutional life of Central Falls is rich and varied; it is centered to a large extent on the churches and schools and the remarkable cultural and ethnic heterogeneity of the city is reflected in the handsome institutional buildings scattered throughout the neighborhoods. They are an extensively used resource as well as a source of civic pride and identity. Where such structures have not been utilized to their full potential, adaptation for new functions has been an important trend. The use of the Central Street School for a Head Start Center and the conversion of the Central Falls Congregational Church into a parish hall for St. Joseph's Church are examples of the opportunities available for re-use of buildings.

### Recommendations:

1. Conserve and re-use the Broad Street fire station to fully realize its potential. The fire station should be adapted for re-use as city offices or as commercial space to be leased to a private operator.
2. Monitor current and new commercial users in the civic center of the city in order to aid them in ensuring that

their buildings are compatible with their surroundings.

3. Preserve the exterior appearance of City Hall, the Police Station and Court House and the Broad Street fire station. While interior renovations may be required to accommodate changing municipal needs, the exteriors of these handsome buildings should not be modified.

## INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

**Assessment:** The industrial buildings of Central Falls represent a potential, but under-used, resource; a number of architecturally distinctive mill structures, which are vacant or only partially occupied, have spacious work areas designed for flexibility and ease of operation. Of particular importance are the historic mills which line the river side of Roosevelt Avenue.

Because many of these mills seem to be outdated, demolition and replacement are often suggested. However, renovation can be less costly and will also preserve these handsome reminders of Central Falls' industrial past. Many of these mills have a long history of adaptation, renovation and additions. The land between the mills has in the past been used for storage, for outdoor work, for small temporary buildings and for parking. All of these uses are suitable to the character of these buildings and the availability of such small parcels is a particular advantage.

A program of economic development and a concerted campaign to locate new industrial users for these mills is necessary. The city can aid such a program by offering incentives to encourage owners to adapt their properties to suit new users; for example, light manufacturing operations could be brought in and further subdivision of the buildings could accommodate such small concerns. Given the current rate of unemployment in the city, a continuation of industrial uses for most mill structures would be doubly beneficial: it would increase the viability of this rich heritage of mill buildings and promote employment.

When no industrial use is feasible, the city should offer encouragement to non-industrial developers, as in the case of the

Valley Falls Company Mill at the north end of Broad Street. One of the largest and handsomest mills in the city, this structure enjoys the advantage of an unusually attractive site on the river near the Broad Street Bridge. It is expected that this mill will soon be adapted into a housing complex, and this important building, one of the earliest remaining in Central Falls, will then continue to serve the community in a different, but sympathetic and appropriate, way.

### Recommendations:

1. Encourage the continued and expanded use of historic mill buildings for industrial purposes, especially those on Roosevelt Avenue. Of particular importance are the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill and the Stafford Mill.
2. In cases where industrial use of a mill building is no longer economically viable, explore the potential of converting mills to commercial and residential uses.

## THE BLACKSTONE RIVER

**Assessment:** The Blackstone River, whose historic importance to the city dates from its very earliest settlement, has great potential as a recreational and visual amenity. In past years, the river has been regarded as a resource to exploit rather than to respect and preserve. Like many industrial cities, Central Falls has turned its back to the river. Although the Blackstone has served a variety of functions in the past, it is not now used to its full potential.

With a change in attitude, the river could become a major recreational resource and a valued natural feature. In densely developed Central Falls, there is a need to conserve and enhance even limited natural spaces and a small investment would be justified by increasing the open space and recreational areas of the city. At present, the major problem is accessibility; places should be created where access to the Blackstone is easy, inviting and convenient.

### Recommendations:

1. Landscape selected areas of the river bank and provide

convenient walkways and benches to increase the use of the river as the site of passive recreation.

2. Acquire (through purchase or donation) pedestrian easements along strips of land between High Street and the river so that access to the Blackstone is increased.
3. Give particular attention to landscaping sections of the river which provide views of the dams at Broad Street and Roosevelt Avenue. There are at present few places where residents and visitors may easily view these historic engineering works which were the original source of the city's livelihood.

## BROAD AND DEXTER STREETS

**Assessment:** The commercial areas of the city on Broad and Dexter Streets are a potentially valuable resource (Figure 62). Both streets contain a mixture of shops, restaurants and housing, and both suffer from the stagnation which characterizes many older commercial areas. Since 1930, over 30 per cent of the shops on Broad and Dexter Streets have closed, and declining demand has left many structures vacant. While retail centers in Pawtucket, Providence, Lincoln and Warwick compete with these streets, they could still have an important role as neighborhood shopping centers offering residents the opportunity to shop on streets which retain their pedestrian scale and are within walking distance of most of the city.

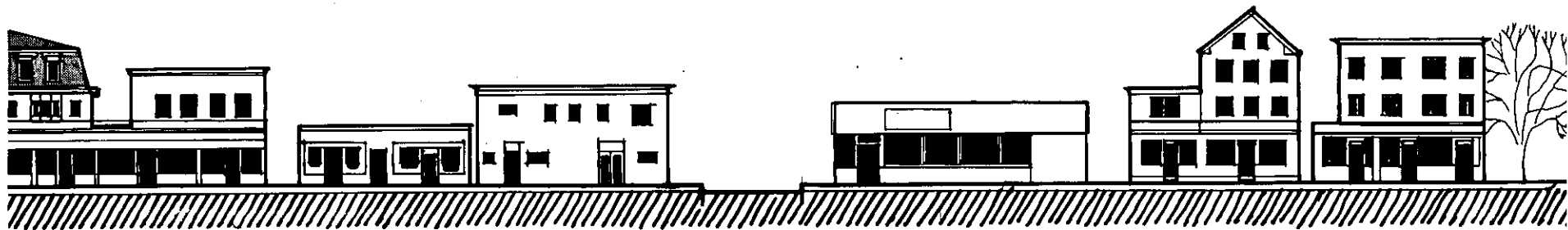


Figure 62: Dexter Street Store Fronts.

Restoration and conservation of store fronts could have a real economic value in attracting new customers and encouraging in-town shopping. Recognizing this potential, the Central Falls Division of Planning (assisted by the Rhode Island Committee on the Humanities) recently completed a study of Broad and Dexter Streets which examines them in light of their history, design and economics and makes proposals to ensure their full use. The study report recommends consolidating retail areas, improving city services and establishing a communication network among city officials, business owners and residents. A co-ordinated program of conservation and economic development could increase the visual and commercial potential of the city and aid in the restoration of a lively and vital commercial life.

### Recommendations:

1. Promote conservation of appropriate commercial facades along Broad and Dexter Streets, thereby improving the visual quality and the property values of the business area.
2. Encourage the restoration of appropriate surface materials and architectural detail where these have been removed or disguised by asphalt siding, asbestos tile, artificial stone or other inappropriate covering.
3. Enact a sign ordinance which would coordinate commercial signs on these streets without eliminating the variety



which makes them interesting.

4. Monitor the design of new structures along Broad and Dexter Streets; encourage owners to build structures which maintain the street's traditional scale and building line.
5. Supplement present on-street parking with small lots screened by landscaping; large new parking lots should be discouraged.

## THE CITY'S IMAGE

**Assessment:** One of the major problems facing Central Falls in preserving its physical heritage is that the city suffers from a negative image. As with many older industrial cities which are beset by economic problems, too little notice is given to its assets and advantages.

Central Falls has a number of outstanding buildings and spaces and, in addition, many less distinguished but still worthy structures. All of them should be given care and maintained in a way which is sympathetic to their character. The unique qualities of the city derive both from its landmark buildings and from its familiar neighborhoods, which only concerted action on the part of Central Falls citizens can maintain.

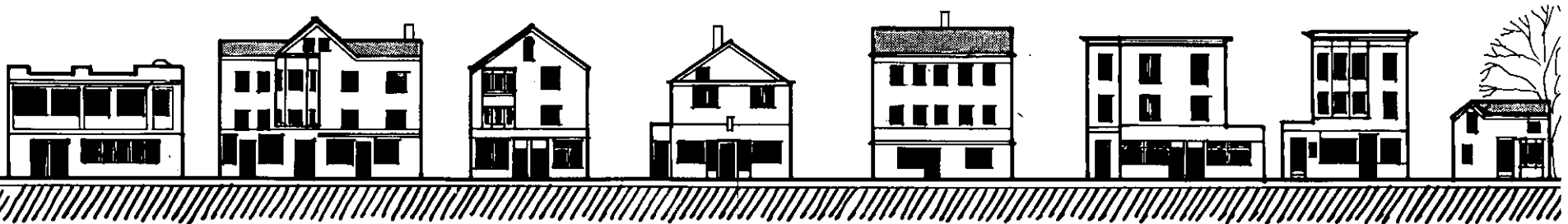
An educational program designed to increase public awareness

of such assets could confirm the conviction of many residents that Central Falls is a good place to live and work, would increase their pleasure and pride in the city and, in addition, enlighten others who are presently unaware of what Central Falls has to offer — they too will know that this is an historic and interesting community.

Recent events suggest that awareness of the heritage of Central Falls is increasing. The entry of Jenks Park and of the Central Falls Congregational Church in the National Register of Historic Places offers a measure of recognition and protection for these landmarks. An important study of the city's commercial areas and a survey of their resources have been completed by the Community Focus Project, administered by the Central Falls Division of Planning. This historical survey and report are, in themselves, part of the process of evaluating and appreciating the city's assets. Further steps will ensure a wider participation in preservation and conservation efforts and encourage public interest and pride in Central Falls.

## Recommendations:

1. Promote awareness and provide protection for the historic resources of Central Falls by nominating Central Falls' most significant historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places, including those listed in Appendix A.
2. Identify historic buildings and sites in the city with markers.



3. Organize street fairs, ethnic heritage festivals, commemorations of important events in Central Falls' history and walking tours.
4. Prepare a simple fold-out map of Central Falls, identifying its historic buildings and sites, which could be used for walking tours.
5. Organize a program of tree planting on streets in residential and commercial neighborhoods. Old photographs of Central Falls indicate that many streets were originally lined with trees. Such a program would increase the cohesion of many streets and is an inexpensive way of dramatically improving the living environment.
6. Expand the teaching of local history in the public and parochial school systems to develop a stronger awareness of the historic resources of Central Falls and to acquaint students with the elements of the city which their parents and grandparents built.
7. Gather the various materials on Central Falls' history (older city records, books, scrapbooks, letters and photographs) and deposit them in appropriate repositories such as the state archives or the Rhode Island Historical Society where they would be protected, organized and made available for study.

## APPENDIX A: PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

The National Register of Historic Places is a record maintained by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, of structures, sites, areas and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology and culture. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as the official inventory of the cultural and historic resources of the nation, it includes historic properties in the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks and properties of national, state and local significance nominated by states or by federal agencies and approved by the Secretary of the Interior. It is an authoritative guide for federal, state and local governments, planners and private groups and individuals everywhere, identifying those properties which are worthy of preservation throughout the nation. Registered properties are protected from federally funded and licensed activities by a state and federal review process. Listing in the National Register is a prerequisite for eligibility for matching funds administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (see Appendix B).

Income-producing buildings, including commercial, industrial and residential rental properties, which have been nominated to the National Register individually or are included in a National Register historic district are also eligible for the tax incentives of accelerated depreciation provided by the Tax Reform Act of 1976. A taxpayer may now amortize over a five-year period any capital expenditures incurred in rehabilitating a National Register property which produces income or is used in his business or trade. The new law also provides that an owner or lessee cannot deduct amounts expended for demolition of a structure listed in the Register.

Jenks Park (1890) and Cogswell Tower (1904) were entered in the National Register in July, 1972, a recognition of the importance of the small picturesque park at the heart of the densely developed city and the significance of the tower as the symbol of Central Falls. The Central Falls Congregational Church (1883), now the parish center of St. Joseph's Church, was added to the National Register in August, 1976. Both of these properties have received grants in aid from the Rhode Island Historical Preserva-

tion Commission; some stabilization work has been performed on Cogswell Tower and the Congregational Church has recently been awarded a grant for exterior restoration.

This survey has identified a number of additional structures and sites as potential National Register entries.

#### Proposed Central Falls Mill Historic District

The proposed Central Falls Mill District (Figures 63 and 64) contains a large concentration of architecturally and historically important industrial structures. Its boundaries are drawn to include the six original water-power privileges along Roosevelt Avenue created in 1823 and the stone dam constructed in 1863. Among the notable buildings within this proposed district are:

Stafford Mill Complex, 581 Roosevelt Avenue, 1824 and 1860s.

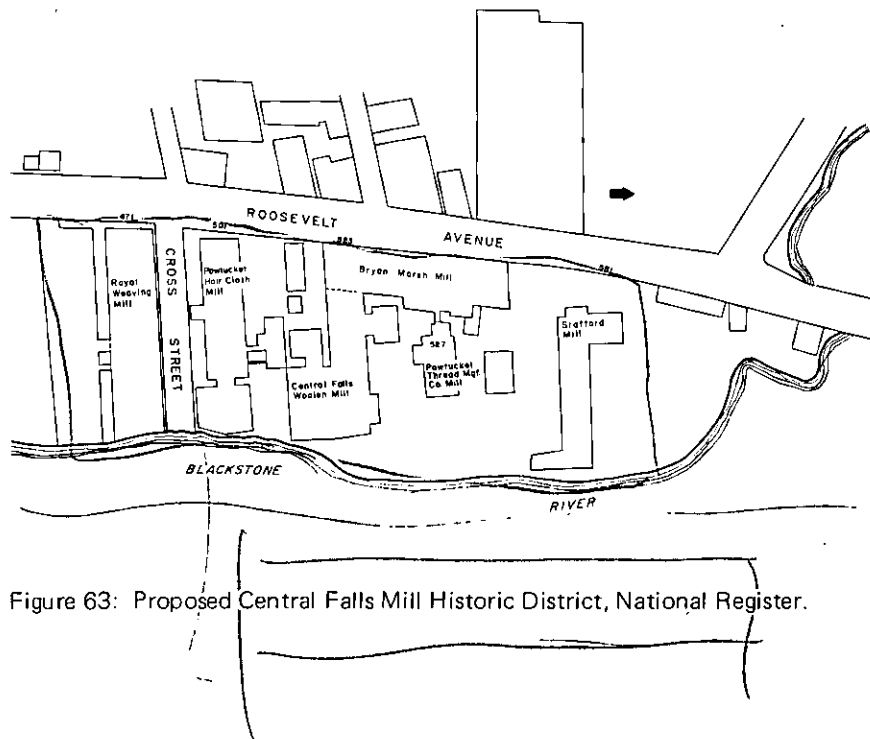


Figure 63: Proposed Central Falls Mill Historic District, National Register.

Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill, 527 Roosevelt Avenue, 1825.

Central Falls Woolen Mill, 523 Roosevelt Avenue, 1870.

Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill, 501 Roosevelt Avenue, 1864.

Royal Weaving Mill, 471 Roosevelt Avenue, 1897.

Individual buildings recommended for consideration for the Register include:

Valley Falls Company Mill, 1363 Broad Street, 1849.

Central Street School, 376 Central Street, 1881.

Samuel B. Conant House, 104 Clay Street, 1895.

Benjamin F. Greene House, 85 Cross Street, 1868.

St. Matthew's Church, Dexter Street, 1929.

Fales and Jenks Mill, 27 Foundry Street, 1863.

Holy Trinity Church Complex, 134 Fuller Avenue, 1889, 1892, 1905 and 1926.



Figure 64: Aerial View of Proposed Central Falls Mill Historic District, National Register.



Hedley Avenue School, 19-23 Hedley Avenue, 1875, 1884.  
D. G. Fales House, 476 High Street, c. 1858, 1867.  
Pierce Fight Site, High Street, 1676.

As part of its on-going program, the Review Board of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission will eventually consider all of these proposals for nomination. Upon approval, the Commission staff will prepare the nomination form. Persons desiring to have a property entered in the Register by a certain date either for grant eligibility or because the property is threatened should contact the Commission to request that action be initiated. The more historical data the owner of a property and other interested parties can supply, the more expeditiously the nomination forms can be prepared.

The listings above are based on material collected during the course of the survey; as additional research is conducted, new information may come to light which would justify additional proposals for the Register.

## **APPENDIX B: GRANTS-IN-AID PROGRAM**

Since 1971, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has awarded, through the National Park Service, 50 per cent matching grants for the restoration or acquisition of properties listed in the National Register. To date, over one hundred grants have been awarded to local historical societies, community organizations, the state of Rhode Island and private individuals for projects throughout the state. These grants have usually ranged in amount from \$1,000 to \$50,000 with the grantee providing an equal sum. Grantees also benefit from consultation with architectural and historical professionals working on the Commission staff.

Allowable work under this program includes exterior and interior restoration, installation or updating of utility systems, architectural fees, research, archeology, structural repairs and the installation of protective systems. New construction, furnishings and modern landscaping are not allowable costs. To ensure an accurate restoration and a high standard of work, an architect must be engaged to prepare plans and specifications and supervise the project work. The Historical Preservation Commission has the responsibility of selecting, based on analysis, all paint and mortar colors. The high standards of the National Park Service and the cost of older building materials and methods mean that the program sometimes increases the total cost of the project. Applicants should, therefore, be interested in obtaining professional guidance for their projects as well as financial assistance.

An easement designed to protect the property after project completion and to ensure its continuing public benefit must be signed by the owner of the property receiving a grant. This agreement is for a minimum of twenty years and requires the owner to maintain the building and grounds, make no alterations without the prior approval of the Commission and allow the public to view the property at least twelve days a year. When the grant work is limited to the exterior, these restrictions apply only to the exterior.

Matching funds may come from either private, local or state sources. Federal funds available under the Housing and Communi-

ty Development Act of 1974 may also be used for matching purposes.

For further information about the grants-in-aid program, applicants are encouraged to call (277-2678) or write the Grants Administrator at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. Owners of historically significant properties which are not yet listed in the National Register but who desire aid should contact the Commission about nomination so as to be eligible for this program in subsequent years.


HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE SURVEY		COUNTY	
FILE NO. _____ PLAT 1 _____ LOT 124 _____ LUS _____			
ADDRESS 1 Pacific Street			
OWNER Roger A. Noury			
PRESENT USE: 1 fam _____ 2 fam <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> multi _____ pub _____ comm _____ indus _____ retl _____ agr _____ mixed _____ other _____	NEGATIVE NO. P-CF-4-15, 13-9	CITY/TOWN	
NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE: res <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> comm _____ indus _____ pub _____ agr _____ woods _____ other _____	KNOWN AS _____		
PERIOD/STYLE: P C F GR (EV) LV ET MT LT	ARCHITECT _____		
DESCRIPTION: Stories: 2; Roof: gable (flank <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> end _____ cross _____) gambrel (flank end cross) htp _____ monitor mansard flat _____ other _____	DATE & SOURCES c. 1840's-50's		
Walls: clapboard _____ brick _____ stone _____ shingle _____ modern comp <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other _____	ORIGINAL USE Single-family house		
Foundation: height _____ stone _____ brick <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other _____	HISTORY & SOURCES: 1862-on map 1870-on map; J. Dennis 1880-on map; J. R. Dennes; lacks west extension 1895-on map	ROAD	
Alterations: good _____ poor _____ none major _____ Rare bldg. _____ Typical of its area _____	John R. Dennis -- worked for Atwood-Crawford Comp; leader of Republican Party in C.F.; never held office, but was a "boss" and controlled patronage.		
COMMENTS: Multiple additions and alterations; windows-DW 2/2, 1/1; picture window, first story; flat, wide window surrounds; main section of house is 5 bays, center door and chimney; wide cornice band; aluminum door hood.	ORIGINAL OWNER _____		
SURVEYOR PK _____ AV Checked RL, DC _____ SUPERVISOR DC _____ HV Checked _____	EVALUATION: Physical Condition Structure 5 (3) 2 0 6 grounds 2 (1) 0 neighborhood 3 (2) 0 Architectural value 38 30 20 (10) 0 10 Importance to neighborhood 14 (10) 5 0 10 Historical value 38 30 (20) 10 0 20 Total Score 46	MAP NO.	
DATE: 7/75		PRIORITY	

Figure 65: Sample Survey Sheet.

## APPENDIX C: SURVEY FORM

A standard form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet" (Figure 65), has been prepared by the Historical Preservation Commission for use throughout the state. Each surveyed property is identified by plat and lot numbers, address, ownership at the time the survey was conducted, present use, neighborhood land use and at least one photograph.

A property is also identified by one or more broad period time frames, which denote the original construction date, and by date(s) of major additions or alterations: P = prehistoric (before 1636), E = early (1636-1715), C = Colonial (1700-1800), F = Federal (1775-1840), GR = Greek Revival (1825-1865), EV = Early Victorian (1840-1870), LV = Late Victorian (1870-1910), ET = early twentieth century (1900-1940), MT = mid-twentieth century (1940-1975) and LT = late twentieth century (1975-present).

The "COMMENTS" section is used for brief notations regarding a building's style, structure, details, function, present condition, architectural significance and relation to its physical environment.

The "HISTORY & SOURCES" section includes notes on individuals, organizations and events associated with the building; dates and nature of significant additions or alterations; and selected bibliographical references, including identifications on historical maps and in city directories.

The four "EVALUATION" sections appraise various aspects of a property's preservation value. The numerical ratings used for historical evaluation are the same as those used for architectural evaluation, but, for the purpose of this survey, these ratings should be kept separate. In general, the key reason for preserving a structure should be its visual significance, recorded as "Architectural value" and "Importance to neighborhood." A low "Historical value," for instance, should not militate against the preservation of buildings deemed of architectural significance or of importance to the neighborhood's fabric. Equally, a building of little architectural interest, but of greater historic significance, should be preserved.

The evaluation of a building's exterior physical condition is rated on a 0, 2, 3, 5 scale, without regard to its architectural merit. These ratings are based upon observation of the exterior only and do not reflect interior appearance or structural, electrical and mechanical conditions.

The evaluation of the grounds, either of a building or a site, is rated on a 0, 1, 2 scale. Those that are in good condition and are a visual asset to the environment are assigned "2." The "1" rating indicates that the grounds do not detract from the surrounding area. The "0" rating applies to grounds that have a negative impact on their environs.

The evaluation of the neighborhood's physical condition is based on a 0, 2, 3 scale. "Neighborhood," in this context, denotes the immediate area surrounding a surveyed property and does not necessarily reflect physical features such as street blocks or demographic boundaries. Neighborhoods rated "3" are characterized by a uniformly high standard of maintenance of both buildings and grounds. Those assigned a "2" have well kept properties in much of the area but also have sections where the need for improvement is readily apparent. The "0" rating is used for areas which, for the most part, detract from the visual quality of the community as a whole.

Architectural ratings are assigned on a 0, 10, 20, 30, 38 scale. Such ratings are made in the context of Central Falls and do not imply that these buildings have been judged against a national or statewide standard. The "38" rating is reserved for a generally small number of buildings deemed of outstanding importance to the community and which, in most cases, are also of at least regional significance. The "30" rating indicates a building of meritorious architectural quality, well above the local norm. The "20" and "10" ratings are of local value by virtue of interesting or unusual architectural features or because they are good representatives of building types which afford an index to the community's physical development. Buildings rated "30" and "20" are essential to the historic character of Central Falls. They provide a visual context which defines the historic quality of the city and create an important background to the key structures rated "38." Buildings rated

"0" are undistinguished architecturally and make no positive contribution to the physical environment. Structures that have been extensively and unsympathetically altered are given lower ratings than similar buildings in their original state.

A property's importance to its neighborhood is rated on a 0, 5, 10, 14 scale, with "neighborhood" used according to the above definition. The "14" rating denotes a property that is a key visual landmark, of the utmost importance to the visual integrity of its environs. Those rated "10" make an important visual contribution either by virtue of individually distinguished qualities or due to characteristics of form, scale and massing which help maintain the visual continuity of the surrounding area. The "5" rating indicates a minor, but positive, contribution in either of the above respects or a property which may be of visual interest unto itself, but one which is not especially compatible with its physical environment. The "0" rating applies to properties which have a decisively negative effect on the neighborhood.

Historical value is rated on a 0, 10, 20, 30, 38 scale. The "38" rating is assigned to properties associated with individuals (including architects), organizations or events which are of historical significance on the national level. Those of regional or primary local importance are rated "30." The "20" rating applies to buildings related to less significant local developments and also includes buildings about which little is known at present but which, by virtue of their age, are considered to make a major contribution to the community's historic environment. The "10" rating denotes limited local historical value. The "0" rating is used to designate properties of no known historical interest at the time the survey was undertaken.

For planning purposes, surveyed buildings, monuments and sites are depicted on a map of Central Falls (Figure 66). For quick reference, each building is identified by its address, period-style designation and architectural and historical ratings. If an "A" has been added after a building's architectural rating, the property is deemed important to the neighborhood's visual fabric and its loss would result in damage to the environment.

Upon completion of the survey, duplicate copies of all materials are submitted to the Historical Preservation Commission. After final approval, one set of the survey forms and map is placed on file at the Commission's office (150 Benefit Street, Providence) and another set is placed at the Central Falls Division of Planning (580 Broad Street, Central Falls). Survey maps will also be on file at the Division of Statewide Planning (265 Melrose Street, Providence).



Figure 66: Detail of Survey Map.



Pres Sec of NC

**APPENDIX D: PERTINENT AGENCIES**

Many organizations and agencies — both public and private — have made valuable contributions toward preservation in Rhode Island and several offer their resources and aid to individuals interested in the preservation and maintenance of historic properties.

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903) is the state agency charged with conducting the statewide survey, nominating structures to the National Register, administering grants in aid and reviewing the impact of publicly sponsored projects on cultural resources. The Commission staff is able to answer most questions about preservation in the state and stands ready to assist citizens in a variety of ways. The Commission has compiled and published a guide to historical organizations in Rhode Island, which lists organizations and agencies concerned with historical properties and programs. In addition, the Commission publishes a series of reports on individual cities and towns and issues a bi-monthly newsletter.

The following is an abbreviated list of other organizations and agencies which may be valuable as a source of additional aid and information in dealing with preservation and historical issues.

**Local:**

Blackstone Valley Historical Society, North Toll Gate, Louisquissett Pike, P. O. Box 6, Lincoln, Rhode Island 02865. Organized in 1958, the Society holds a series of monthly meetings on the last Wednesday of the month with speakers on historical topics and also holds a number of social and fund-raising activities each year. The Society's library is open to interested researchers.

**State:**

Rhode Island Department of Administration, State House, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. The Division of Public Buildings, within this department, maintains state-owned buildings, many of them historically significant.

Rhode Island Department of Community Affairs, 150 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. This department coordinates local government programs and offers planning assistance to the cities and towns of the state. It encourages the inclusion of historical preservation programs in comprehensive community plans. The director of this department is the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Rhode Island Department of Economic Development, 1 Weybosset Hill, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. The Tourist Promotion Division of the department prepares and distributes material on Rhode Island's historic assets.

✓ Rhode Island Historical Society, 52 Power Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906. Since its founding in 1822, the Society has collected books, newspapers and manuscripts relating to Rhode Island history. This unique collection is located in its library at 121 Hope Street, Providence, which also contains an archive of film relating to Rhode Island. Its quarterly publication is *Rhode Island History*.

Rhode Island Oral History Program, History Department, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island 02881. This program is a joint venture sponsored by several educational and historical institutions whose purpose is to compile a series of taped interviews with people who have had experience in the state's textile mills. The tapes are deposited in the U.R.I. archives.

Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, 265 Melrose Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02907. This agency is responsible for preparing plans for the development of the state, for providing planning services to agencies and officials of the state and for coordinating public and private actions with the state's development goals. This area of concern includes preservation.

**Regional:**

Slater Mill Historic Site, Roosevelt Avenue, Pawtucket, Rhode

Island 02860. The Slater Mill Historic Site includes Samuel Slater's mill, the Sylvanus Brown House and the Wilkinson Mill and is a fine example of industrial archaeology, restoration and preservation. Research into Rhode Island history and the use of water power is part of the on-going program of the Slater Mill. The book and manuscript collection of Slater Mill are open to interested parties.

✓ Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02114. SPNEA was founded in 1910 by William Sumner Appleton. Besides owning a number of historic buildings, SPNEA co-sponsors with the National Trust a Field Service Office which is a clearing house for information and advice about preservation issues. In addition, SPNEA's Consulting Services Department can provide technical assistance and recommendations for owners of historic buildings.

#### **National:**

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), 1400 Eighth Avenue South, Nashville, Tennessee 37203. The AASLH was founded in 1940 and is a private, educational organization open to people interested in localized history. Its members include historical agencies and amateur and professional historians. Among its professional services, the AASLH serves as a clearing house for questions, provides consultant services to local historical societies, makes annual awards for contributions to the field of local history and co-sponsors an annual training seminar for historical administrators as well as regional workshops. Among its many publications are *History News*, a monthly magazine of news and ideas, and the Technical Leaflet series which helps to solve particular problems.

National Trust for Historic Preservation, 740-748 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. The National Trust is a nationwide organization which was chartered by Congress in 1949 to "further the national policy of preserving for public use America's heritage of historic districts, sites, structures,

and objects." Both individuals and organizations may become members of the National Trust. In addition to owning and maintaining a number of historic properties and offering a variety of training programs, the National Trust provides advice and services to preservation groups and planning officials and disseminates information on preservation legislation and projects. The Trust publishes *Preservation News* each month. The National Trust's New England Regional Field Office is located at 141 Cambridge Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02114.

United States National Park Service (NPS), 18th and C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240. The National Park Service is a bureau of the Department of the Interior and has special responsibilities and powers in the field of preservation. Within the NPS's Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, several divisions have charge of particular programs. The Division of the National Register administers this list of the nation's important districts, structures, sites and objects. The Division of Historic and Architectural Surveys operates the Historic American Buildings Survey (which records especially important buildings), the Historic American Engineering Record (which conducts surveys of engineering works, such as dams, bridges and mill complexes) and the National Historic Landmarks Program (which maintains a list of properties with nationwide significance). The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, whose members include the secretaries of many federal departments, the heads of other governmental agencies and citizens appointed by the President, is an independent agency. The Advisory Council reviews and comments upon the effects of projects, undertaken, funded or licensed by the federal government, on National Register properties.

## APPENDIX E: INVENTORY

The inventory is a list of sites, structures and districts of cultural significance in Central Falls. Each of these entries has historic or architectural significance, either in itself, by association with an important person or group or as a representative example of a common architectural type.

In reviewing this list of important structures, it should be recognized that they represent those properties most essential to Central Falls' historical and architectural identity. Surrounding and supporting these properties are many other buildings which enhance the overall historic and visual character of the city and contribute to an understanding of its growth and development.

The name associated with each building is either its current name or the name of the earliest known owner or occupant, taken from the street directories. More extensive research may indicate that another name would be more suitable. Most building dates are based on stylistic analysis, map histories and street directories.

Entries are listed alphabetically by street and then in numerical order by street number. Entries having no street number (bridges, parks, monuments, etc.) have not been assigned a number but have been included in their normal sequence. Those structures and sites in the National Register or recommended for nomination (see Appendix A) are marked by an asterisk (\*).

### BAGLEY STREET

9, 13,  
21, 23

**Houses:** 1880s. These four small, gable-roofed, 2-story, 5-bay houses were probably built for workers. All have characteristic bracketed door hoods.

39

**House:** 1880s. A handsome, small, gable-end, 1½-story house with Italianate details.

### BROAD STREET

307

**Pawtucket and Central Falls Railroad Station:** 1916. A once handsome, red brick structure, actually constructed over the tracks which were re-laid and lowered in the early 20th century, the railroad station has since fallen into disuse. Built on the city line, the station served both Pawtucket and Central Falls until its closing in 1959. The station, which once marked the entrance into the Broad Street civic center, has been seriously compromised by lack of maintenance, vandalism and the construction of a gas station on its Broad Street side which obscures the view of its west facade. The great central lobby is the most remarkable interior feature. (Figure 48)

324

**Grant House:** 1880s. This simply detailed, Queen Anne house was built for Smith Grant, a grocer who later became a dealer in coal, wood, brick and lime; it replaced his earlier house on the same site. Owned in the 1890s by A. A. Mann, a doctor, the Grant House has served as the city YWCA since the 1920s.

405

**Broad Street School:** 1861, 1877. This rather plain, 2-story, hip-roofed, red brick schoolhouse with an entrance portico was built by the town of Smithfield during the Civil War when the population of the Central Falls area expanded greatly. It is of unusual size for its date (the rear section is a later addition) and reflects the dominance of Central Falls in the largely rural town of Smithfield. The Broad Street School supplemented two earlier district schools, dating from the 1840s, and served both the elementary and the

high school grades. It is the earliest extant school building in the city. (Figure 25)

428

**Daniels House:** c. 1865. A once-handsome Italianate mansion designed by William R. Walker, now altered on its first floor and moved from the original site in the center of its block. It was built for Horace Daniels of Greene and Daniels, the large textile firm located just across the Blackstone in the Fairlawn section of Pawtucket. The Daniels House was later owned by D. G. Littlefield, another of Central Falls' leading manufacturers. In the 1840s, Littlefield had been engaged in a number of textile and metals concerns in Massachusetts, but in 1863 he came to Central Falls to manage the newly successful Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company. He directed the construction of the company's large mill on Roosevelt Avenue and remained in Central Falls for the rest of his life. Littlefield traveled widely in Europe for the company and made several trips to Russia to purchase horse hair from the great horse markets there. Like most industrialists of his era, he was a Republican from the 1860s onward; Littlefield was elected Lieutenant Governor of the state in 1889.

**Broad Street Civic Center.** The blocks along Broad Street between Central and Fales Streets are the civic center of Central Falls. Here are located the principal municipal buildings, major institutional structures and the city's largest park. Though somewhat compromised by inappropriate modern intrusions, this group of buildings and spaces is of critical importance to the city and deserves especial attention from the city government, residents and business people.

507

**Police Station and Court House:** 1914. Built jointly by the city and the state and designed by William R. Walker and Son, the Police Station and Court House is a large, 3-story, gray brick, hip-roofed structure, of classical design, whose dual

function is represented by the entrances leading into the two separate wings. In 1977, it became city owned and will be renovated for use by various municipal agencies. (Figure 56)

- 551 Broad Street Fire Station:** 1889. Built by the town of Lincoln, the fire station (now vacant) is a Queen Anne structure with a mansard roof; the roof line is broken by a series of pedimented dormers and the 5-level bell tower in the rear. The original arched doors have been modified to accommodate larger fire equipment. In 1887, the fire department had been reorganized with a combination of volunteer and professional fire fighters. The Broad Street station was the first of two new fire stations opened in 1889 and 1891 — the other was built on Kendall Street. Both were designed by Albert Humes, a Pawtucket architect responsible for a number of other Central Falls buildings. (Figure 24)
- 580 Central Falls City Hall:** 1889. This red brick, Queen Anne building with its tall tower was built as Lincoln High School and its construction in Central Falls reflected the preeminence of the industrial area when it was part of Lincoln. After 1895, the building continued as Central Falls High School until 1927 when the city offices were moved there from a building on Summit Street. The location of City Hall on a small knoll near other major public buildings gives it a special importance on Broad Street as the center of the city's municipal life. (Figure 27)
- 597 Falcon House:** c. 1880. A cross-gable, shingle-covered, Queen Anne house, with a rectangular tower set at an angle on the south corner. It was built for Abraham Z. Falcon, a doctor who emigrated to Central Falls in 1879 from Quebec. In addition to his medical practice, Falcon operated a drugstore on Broad Street.
- \* **Jenks Park and Cogswell Tower:** 1890, 1904. This small, 4-acre park was the

gift of Alvin Jenks to the city in which his progenitors had pioneered the manufacture of textile machinery. The designer of the park is unknown. Despite the loss of many of the park's elements (its fish ponds for example), it retains the Fales and Jenks' iron umbrellas, the tall clock tower and its rambling, picturesque walkways. The tower, a gift of Caroline Cogswell and designed by Albert Humes, has been the symbol of the city since its construction in 1904. Cogswell Tower is eighteen feet square and nearly seventy feet tall, with a clock face on each of its four sides. Observation balconies with iron rails under each of the clocks provide an unparalleled view of the city. The tower is supported by a brick barrel vault resting atop the historic Dexter's Ledge, from which, it is said, Pierce's progress was observed by his Indian enemies before they met in battle at the river's edge. The tower's lower level is surrounded by a pergola of delicate iron work. (Figures 28 and 29)

- 666 Notre Dame du Sacre Coeur:** 1933. This imposing, brick, Romanesque church building, designed by Ernest Cormier of Montreal, was originally dominated by its tall bell tower over the entrance. The street front was modified in 1971-1972 by the removal of the tower and the flattening of the facade. This church replaced an earlier 1875 wooden building on Fales Street, the original home of the Notre Dame parish and the first church built and occupied by a French-Canadian congregation in the state. The parish was organized by a young Canadian priest, Reverend Charles Dauray, who later helped form the Church of the Precious Blood in Woonsocket — the first French-Canadian parish in that city. Dauray was one of the most important leaders of the French Canadians in Rhode Island. The Sprague Store building at Broad and Lincoln Streets was converted in 1892 to a convent and school and later became

Sacred Heart Academy. The 1870s Stephen Jenks House on Broad Street serves as the rectory; the simple, red brick convent, designed by George F. Hall, was built in 1919. The 4-story, red brick, stone-trimmed, school building at the western end of the block occupied by the church complex was designed by Walter F. Fontaine, a Woonsocket architect of French-Canadian parentage whose practice included much work for French parishes. When it opened in 1910, the school, with its high, arched windows and portico entrances, was the largest in the diocese.

- 693 Central Falls Credit Union:** 1974. Designed by Fenton, Keyes Associates, this new financial building is indicative of the shift of Broad Street's commercial life from a pedestrian orientation to the servicing of automobile-oriented customers; only a single story tall, with narrow windows, it has an expansive parking area and, like other banking facilities, a drive-in window.
- 702-706 DeNevers Building:** c. 1895. This is a 3-story, flat-roofed, commercial block with shallow, 2-story bays on either end, separated from the central round-head windows by pilasters worked in the brick of the facade. The first floor has been extensively modified, but the DeNevers Building, constructed for a family of furniture merchants, is still one of the best of several multi-story commercial buildings erected on Broad Street in the late 19th century which reflect the transition of the city's commercial area from Central Street to Broad Street.
- 708 Cartier Building:** 1893. A massive, 3-story block, the Cartier Building is three bays wide; its central, 2-story bay is flanked by triple windows on either side. Although its 1st-floor facade has been radically altered, it is still one of the best of several large blocks on Broad Street. The DeNevers Building and the Cartier Building form a handsome pair.



The Cartier Building was the headquarters for the Cercle Jacques Cartier, organized in 1886 and one of a number of active French social societies, such as the Institut Montcalm and St. Jean Baptiste Society. (Figure 31)

- 753-755 Monast Building:** 1895. A 3-story, red brick, commercial building with stone trim and a corbeled cornice; there have been some alterations of the 1st-floor facade. It was built for the offices of the Monast family who were lumber dealers, carpenters and real-estate brokers.
- 765 Schiller House:** 1880s. A simple, Late Victorian house, now obscured by a 2-story store front extended to the sidewalk from the original facade. It was owned in the 1890s by Alphonse Schiller, who owned a grocery on Sheridan Street and was a prominent leader of the French-American community.
- 913 Broad Street Garage:** 1922. One of the city's earliest service stations, this 3-bay garage is built of patterned and painted brick. With the advent of the automobile, Broad Street's character shifted in the early decades of the century from residential to commercial, serving both local residents and those traveling through the city. This building illustrates the changes in both land use and transportation mode. The garage was built for Frank and Joaquim Filipe who owned the station until the late 1920s.
- 1000 Notre Dame Hospital:** 1925. A 3-story, flat-roofed, utilitarian, red brick building, with a central entrance in its 7-bay facade, Notre Dame is the city's only hospital. Funds for the hospital were raised by public subscription and supported by many of the French-American parishioners of Notre Dame Church. Though not officially a parochial or diocesan institution, the hospital was built by the public subscription of members of French-Canadian parishes throughout the Blackstone Valley and Rhode Island (led by Notre Dame of

Central Falls, and including St. Matthew's of Central Falls and St. John's, St. Cecilia's and Our Lady of Consolation of Pawtucket). Although hospitals in Pawtucket and Providence also serve city residents, the relatively small Notre Dame Hospital is a source of pride for Central Falls and a testimony to the achievement of its French-Canadian community.

- 1084 Earle House:** c. 1865. This 1½-story house, one of the few Gothic Revival buildings in Central Falls, has unfortunately lost its handsome porch columns. It retains, however, the high center gable with Gothic-inspired bargeboards, label moldings over windows and several unusual Gothic garden trellises. The Earle family were proprietors of a major express and teaming business, which made daily runs between Central Falls and Pawtucket and Providence.
- 1107 Waypoyset Mill:** 1910. A 2-story, red brick mill with saw-toothed roof, designed by John Judson for the Waypoyset Manufacturing Company which was incorporated in 1907. Designed for the manufacture of cotton and silk novelties rather than staple goods, it is now used for the manufacture of toys.
- 1169-1223 Corning Glass Works:** 1937, 1966, 1969, 1972. This sprawling industrial plant was constructed in various stages. At its core is a 3-story, flat-roofed brick mill with single-story extensions and steel-frame additions. Corning Glass is now the major employer in Central Falls. The manufacture of glassware continues an industry begun by Bryan Marsh in the early 20th century. The factory was built on the site of several large houses, including that of Elizabeth Buffum Chace, the prominent abolitionist and feminist, and her husband, Samuel B. Chace, one of the leading industrialists of the 19th century in Central Falls whose Valley Falls Mill still stands at the north end of Broad Street. (Figure 53)

- 1192 Wyman House:** 1880s. This 2½-story, cross-gable house was, in the 1890s, the home of Elizabeth B. C. Wyman, author of magazine stories about factory life and co-author of a noted biography of her famous mother, Elizabeth B. Chace. It exhibits the flat surfaces and detailing of the Stick Style; the nailing strips applied to the clapboard surface are intended to express the interior construction of the house. (Figure 40)
- 1363\* Valley Falls Mill Complex:** 1849. This is a 4-story, red brick mill building with a helm-roofed, projecting central tower. The mill is oriented east-west, paralleling the Blackstone River, just south of the Valley Falls. The mill complex includes a hewn-stone dam (1853); a small gatehouse, which still contains the gate regulating the flow of water through the mill trench; a stone picker house (1860s), just north of the mill; and a stucco-over-brick, slate-roofed building (c. 1870) which was used as a bath house. One of the earliest industrial sites in Central Falls, it was originally developed by A. and I. Wilkinson of Pawtucket in the 1820s. The Wilkinson mill was demolished in the 1860s. The present mill was built for Samuel B. and Harvey Chace for cotton manufacture and was the site of the first use of American-made, Sharp and Roberts, self-actor, mule spinning frames, made by James Brown of Pawtucket; the top floor of the mill was built as a clear space to accommodate these long mules. In 1853, the Chaces incorporated as the Valley Falls Company; they later owned and operated mills on both sides of the Blackstone here and at Albion. The mills on the Cumberland side of Valley Falls were razed in the 1930s, and this mill is thus one of the few remaining elements of the large Valley Falls Mill Complex, which was a key in the development of the village of Valley Falls on both sides of the river. The mill was owned by the Sayles Company in

the 20th century. Workers and foremen's housing built by the company may still be seen on Division Street. The Valley Falls Company was, throughout the 19th century, one of the major employers in Central Falls — in 1860, for example, the company employed 280 workers (150 men and 130 women) and consumed 800,000 pounds of raw cotton. By comparison, the Stafford Mill on Roosevelt Avenue hired 160 people in the same year (60 men and 100 women) and used 300,000 pounds of cotton. (Figures 12 and 67)

**Broad Street Bridge:** 1915. The Valley Falls were first bridged shortly before 1812 when Isaac Wilkinson built the Valley Falls Turnpike passing over it. In 1873, an iron bridge replaced it, and, in 1915, the present, arched, stone bridge was built.

#### CENTRAL STREET

**51-61 Edgerton-Gooding Block:** 1864. One of the earliest large commercial blocks in Central Falls, the Edgerton-Gooding Block was a key structure in the development of Central Street as the retail center of the city during the mid-19th century. A massive, severe, Second Empire block, topped by a flaring mansard roof, the building's 1st-floor facade has been altered and the original entrances obscured. (Figure 30)

**143 Grant House:** c. 1865. A 2½-story, cross-gable, Italianate building, with paired windows, bracketed eaves and bay, an Italianate side porch and a massive door hood. It was originally owned by Preston Grant, a cloth hooker and, later, a clerk. His son, George Grant who owned the house in the 1880s, was superintendent of the Greene and Daniels Mill in Pawtucket.

**144 Crocker House:** c. 1853. This gable-roofed, 2½-story house has well preserved Italianate details. The rear ell was added in the 1870s. It was original-

ly built for Isaac F. Crocker, a jeweler.  
**153 Wood House:** 1894. This 3-story, asymmetrically massed, Queen Anne house has a cross-gabled roof, corner tower and a panel over the doorway decorated in a floral pattern which is repeated along the southwest corner board. The house was built for Alanson P. Wood, son of H. B. Wood who owned a large lumber business on Broad Street. Alanson Wood was the foreman of his father's yard and later a partner in the business. H. B. Wood's house stood on the same site until his son built this grand residence, designed by Albert H. Humes, where he lived until his death in 1902. (Figure 41)

**159 Rice House:** 1840s. This small, center-door, 1½-story, 5-bay Greek Revival house, owned by J. Rice in the 1860s, is one of the few houses extant in Central Falls dating from the 1840s and is one of the oldest houses in the city. The side and rear extensions and the small gabled porch are later additions.

**189 Cobb House:** 1840s. An unusual survival from this period in Central Falls, this small, 5-bay Greek Revival house with a central chimney and entrance, was, by the 1850s, the home of Joseph Cobb, a jeweler.

**205 Adams Library:** 1910. The library building, designed by McLean and Wright of Boston, was built with the bequest of Stephen Jenks, as a memorial to his family, important industrialists in Central Falls throughout the 19th century. The principal ornament of the building is its pedimented entrance; its form and detail reflect the popularity of the Neo-classical style for public buildings in the early years of the 20th century. This was the first building constructed specifically as a library in Central Falls, although the fire district had been authorized since 1887 to provide library services. Until the opening of the Adams Library, the book collection was housed in the old Cross Street fire station. (Figure 55)

**206 House:** c. 1870. Originally the barn and servants' quarters of Horace Daniels' house on Broad Street, this simple, gable-roofed, 2½-story structure has been converted into a residence.

**234-236 House:** 1880s. A duplex of unusual sophistication for Central Falls, two-and-one-half stories, with paired, eave brackets. Prominent bay windows, outlined by flat surrounds, accent its 4-bay facade and flank its central doors. (Figure 43)

**249 Nickerson House:** 1860s. This gable-roofed, Italianate cottage, later updated by the addition of a turreted tower and patterned shingling, was built for Elias Nickerson, a tax assessor. In the 1870s, it was owned by Jabez Follett who, with Silas Steere, operated an express and teaming business transporting freight between Central Falls and Providence from their office on Cross Street.

**252 Crowell House:** c. 1865. This house is representative of a common type in Central Falls — 2-family, 2½-stories, set gable end to the street, with a side-hall plan, bracketed door hood and a 2-story bay window. In the 1860s the house was owned by Augustus W. Crowell, a house painter.

**259 House:** 1880s. A 2½-story, cross-gable, Queen Anne house with a corner tower. There is a carriage house in the rear.

**278 Payne House:** 1868. A 1½-story, end-gable Italianate cottage with paired brackets and a bracketed door hood. The house was built for Phebe Payne, at a cost of \$3000.

**286 Horton House:** 1860s. A 2-story, gable-roofed Italianate house distinguished by its round-head, paired windows. It was owned by N. S. Horton, a carpenter and builder, in the 1870s and 1880s.

**318 St. George's Episcopal Church:** 1922. This gray stone, Gothic church is the second Episcopal church to stand on this site at the corner of Clinton and Central Streets. Although Episcopal services had been held in Central Falls since 1865, the first church was not built until 1872.

*BAB →  
 1870-1877  
 Mumma*

The present church, built in 1922, is dominated by a 4-level, front, central entrance tower with a large Gothic window over the door.

**323 Southwick House:** c. 1875. A 1½-story, end-gable, Italianate cottage, with a wide bay window, bracketed cornice and door hood. This house was owned in 1880 by Daniel W. Southwick, a carpenter and builder.

**379\* Central Street School:** 1881. One of a series of schools constructed by the town of Lincoln in the 1880s, the Central Street School is a 4-room, 2½-story, cross-gable schoolhouse with double, center stairways and simplified Italianate details. Originally, it housed elementary grades; it later served as the headquarters of Central Falls' civil defense unit and is now a Head Start Center. (Figure 26)

**399 House:** 1890s. A typical 3-decker, with a 3-story bay and 3-story porch covering the facade, this house and the extensively modified one next door at 395 were built as rental properties for Samuel Briden, an English emigrant and a telephone operator at the Conant Mill.

#### CHARLES STREET

**Veterans Memorial:** 1964. A simple, gray granite stone set on the bank of the Blackstone, memorializing all of Central Falls' veterans. It was raised by the Central Falls Veterans Council.

#### CLAY STREET

**10 Stetson House:** 1840s. A small 5-bay, center-door, 2½-story, workers' house. It was originally owned by Isaac Stetson.

**69 Moies House:** c. 1890. This 2½-story, Queen Anne-Shingle Style house has lost much of its original quality since its resurfacing. It has a conical-topped corner tower and a simple iron fence. The house was originally the home of Thomas Moies, treasurer of the Pawtucket Institution of Savings. After his death, the house was owned and lived in by his

son, Charles P. Moies, the first mayor of Central Falls. Charles P. Moies had worked for a Chicago railroad early in his career, but in 1866 he became clerk and assistant to his father at the bank until 1886 when he himself was elected treasurer. From 1881 to 1895, he was elected annually as treasurer of the Central Falls Fire District, continuing a Moies family tradition. His uncle Charles (whose picture appears on the city seal) had served as treasurer of the fire district for the previous twenty-six years. Charles P. Moies' father, Thomas, had been treasurer of the town of Lincoln and after his death Charles P. was elected to the post continuously until incorporation in 1895, when he became Mayor of Central Falls. A staunch Republican, he also represented Lincoln in the General Assembly in 1885.

**74 Northrup House:** c. 1860. A 2½-story, 5-bay, end-gable house with a simple Greek Revival central entrance; it was owned in 1870 by Ebenezer Northrup, a mill agent.

**84 Beede House:** 1860s. A 1½-story, 5-bay house with a cross gable; the original center door has been altered. The house was owned in the 1870s by Elias Beede, a florist.

**87 Battey House:** 1850s. This is a vernacular, flank-gable, 1½-story, Greek Revival house, with alterations to porch and attic windows. It was owned in the 1860s and 1870s by William Battey, a foreman.

**88 Stearns House:** c. 1868, 1880s. The home of Henry A. Stearns, vice-president and superintendent of the Union Wadding Company in Pawtucket and Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island in the 1890s, it is a 1½-story, gable-roof Italianate cottage with a 2-story, Stick Style addition to the rear.

**104\* Conant House:** 1895. One of the most elegant houses in Central Falls, it was owned by Samuel M. Conant, the son of Hezekiah Conant of Conant Thread, one of the leading manufacturers of Pawtuck-

et and Central Falls; Samuel M. Conant was the president of Adam Sutcliffe, a printing firm. Built in the fashionable Colonial Revival style, the red brick Conant House is a massive composition set beneath a broad gambrel roof. Its well preserved detailing is derived from the early 19th century. The double door is set under an elaborate porch stretching between the curves of the facade. Many of the interior details, such as the curved, center staircase, are intact. The Conant House is now a nursing home, known as "The Mansion." (Figure 42)

**131 Hemphill Company Mill:** 1909. Built for the Hemphill Company, which manufactured knitting machines, this is a 4-story, red-brick factory, with wide banks of windows set between brick piers. The fourth story, with a corbeled cornice, is a later addition.

#### COTTAGE STREET

**169 House:** c. 1905. A good example of three-deckers built in the first decade of the century, this house exhibits the very simple detail typical of its date. The door is set under a 1st-story porch with simple columns and, as with many houses of the time, the walls are surfaced with clapboards on the first story and shingles above.

#### CROSS STREET

**Cross Street Bridge:** 1905. A cement bridge joining Central Falls and Pawtucket. It replaced an 1853 wooden bridge.

**34-36 House:** c. 1860. A plain, 6-bay 2½-story, mill house with center doors. It was built by the Stafford Company for its workers; originally one of a pair, the other was demolished in 1975. (Figure 10)

**59-61 House:** c. 1890. A relatively unaltered example of an early three-decker; a lightly scaled, 3-story porch extends across the entire street front. (Figure 45)

- 85\*** **Greene House:** 1868. One of Central Falls' most important residences, Benjamin F. Greene's house is an elegant Second Empire composition. The mansard-roofed, 2½-story house displays a variety of bold ornament, including wide window frames and a "sunbonnet" gable over the central entrance pavilion; the porch is supported by trios of Corinthian columns. The main block of the house is three bays wide; on the west side there are two 1st-story bay windows and on the east side is a 2½-story ell with a porch. Designed by Providence architect Clifton A. Hall and built by the Wheeler and Marchant carpentry firm, it cost about \$45,000. Greene was one of the city's pioneer manufacturers. At the age of eight, he had already begun work in the Crompton Mills; in 1840 he went into business with Benedict & Wood, thread manufacturers, and, in 1855, he leased a mill on Roosevelt Avenue to begin a thread-making operation with Horace Daniels. Although the business moved across the river to Pawtucket in 1860, Greene continued to reside in Central Falls until the 1880s. (Figures 37 and 38)
- 86** **Flagg House:** c. 1865. A 1½-story, cross-gable, Italianate house, with cornice brackets, a bracketed door hood and a triple window in the gable. Lysander Flagg was the captain of the Smithfield Union Guard.
- 110, 112-114** **House:** c. 1893. A good example of the 2½-story, end-gable, side-hall, 2-family houses found in many neighborhoods of the city. It has double doors set under a gable-roofed porch, decorative bargeboards at the eaves and cornice brackets. The facade of a similar house at 110 Cross Street is covered by a 2-story porch.
- 156** **Spaulding House:** 1870s. A typical, small, 1½-story, gable-end, Italianate cottage with a bracketed door hood and cornice. It was owned in the 1880s and 1890s by Nathaniel Spaulding, a meat dealer.
- 158** **House:** 1880. This handsome 2½-story house exhibits many of the elements associated with the picturesque Queen Anne style, with its various wall covers, including clapboard and patterned shingling; its steep cross-gable roof; and its variety of windows, including a shallow bay on the first floor and oval and half-round windows in the 2nd-floor porch.
- 211-213** **House:** c. 1920. A little-altered example of later 3-deckers, exhibiting the characteristic 1920s, block-like form, uninterrupted by bays; a 3-story porch, enclosed by parapets; and contrasting wall covers of shingles on the second and third stories and clapboards (covered by asbestos) on the first floor.
- CROSSMAN STREET**
- 67** **House:** c. 1910. An unaltered, hip-roofed, three-decker of unusual center-porch form, with triple windows on either side of the 3-story porch.
- DARLING STREET**
- 5** **House:** c. 1890. This 4-story tenement building, whose long 3-story porches extend between the two front extensions, is of unusually large size for Central Falls. Only the house at 66-70 Richmond Street matches it in size.
- DEXTER STREET**
- 949** **West Side School:** 1905. One of three schools built between 1892 and 1905 in Central Falls, the West Side School is the only one remaining. The last decade of the 19th century and the first of the 20th century were years of marked expansion in the number of municipal buildings, reflecting the growth of the city and the requirements of a maturing urban area. The school is a 2-story, flat-roofed, yellow-brick structure set on a high basement; it has corner quoins worked in the brick and flat- and round-head windows. The roof line was originally topped by a balustrade. (Figure 54)
- 1018\*** **St. Matthew's Church:** 1929. This large, stone, Gothic church is set on a triangle surrounded by Dexter and West Hunt Streets and Lonsdale Avenue. St. Matthew's parish was formed in 1906 and reflected the growth of the French-Canadian community into the western section of the city. Led for the first forty-six years of its history by Monseignor Joseph Laliberte, who had been the vicar of St. Ann's of Woonsocket, the parish first built its 2-story, yellow brick, granite-trimmed chapel-school in 1907 at a cost of \$50,000. It was designed by Kinnicut and Fontaine of Woonsocket. The church, completed in 1929 at a cost of \$600,000, is an imposing structure modeled on French Gothic churches and is built of brown and red Weymouth granite trimmed with limestone. It was designed by Walter F. Fontaine of Woonsocket. Both within and without, this is a beautiful building. Basilican in plan, its facade is dominated by the great traceried rose window set in a pointed arch over the central entry. The interior is decorated with fine marbles; the magnificent interior painting of the church was done by Guido Nincheri of Montreal who was responsible for at least one other extraordinary church interior in Rhode Island — that of St. Ann's in Woonsocket, also a French-American parish. The stained-glass windows depicting scenes in the life of Christ were produced by Mommejean de Paris. There is a small chapel on the West Hunt Street side. A convent (1954) and a rectory (1962) complete the church complex. (Figure 59)
- DIVISION STREET**
- 68, 69, 79, 82, 87** **Houses:** c. 1850, c. 1880. On the north side of Division Street are three, much altered, 2½-story houses built by the Valley Falls Company to house their workers. These buildings, with their large central chimneys, symmetrical 6-bay



facades and unadorned flank-gable design, are in form very like late 18th-century domestic buildings. On the south side of the street are 2½-story, gambrel-roofed houses built for the company's foremen and overseers, with central entrances set in the shallow, gable-roofed pavilions extending from the facades.

#### ELM STREET

- 14 **House:** 1840s. A 2½-story gable-roof, Greek Revival house with a wide cornice and a broad entablature over the door and side lights, this building faces a side driveway rather than the street. It has been somewhat altered by the removal of some windows and the application of asbestos tile over the clapboards.

#### FALES STREET

- 7 **House:** c. 1875. A good, unaltered example of 2½-story, end-gable, 2-family houses built in the 1870s and 1880s in many of the city's neighborhoods. It is distinguished by a bracketed, Italianate door hood and a 1st-story bay.

- 39-41, 47 **House:** 1880s. Four-story houses, such as 39-41, are rare in Central Falls where 2- and 3-family houses predominate. The 2-story house at 47 Fales, in back of 39-41, was built c. 1910; its cove cornice copies the larger house on the front lot.

#### FLETCHER STREET

- 38, 40-42, 44 **Houses:** c. 1910. Two of these (38 and 40-42) are the best preserved of a number of 4-deckers on Fletcher Street, an unusual form in Central Falls. Delicate spindle work porches with turned posts stretch across the facades and are repeated in the 3-decker at 44 Fletcher Street.

#### FOUNDRY STREET

- 27\* **Fales and Jenks Mill:** 1863. One of the largest mills in the city, this is a long, rectangular, 3½-story building of red brick with a 5-level, castellated, projected

central tower and a monitor roof. Originally built for Fales and Jenks and used briefly for the manufacture of textile machinery, it was purchased by A. and W. Sprague in 1865 and, after slight enlargement, was used as a flax mill until the Spragues' failure in 1873. The mill is unusually well preserved, retaining its original windows and several, decorative, iron fire escapes. The small, 2-story, gable-roof building on Foundry Street was the mill office. One of the earliest mills in Central Falls not located on the river's edge, its construction on the railroad line reflected the increasing availability of steam power which relieved mill owners of the necessity of locating on the crowded river and allowed them to build near their transport line. (Figure 17)

#### FULLER AVENUE

- 135\* **Holy Trinity Church Complex:** 1889 and later. This handsome group of brick buildings was constructed over a period of thirty-five years for an Irish Catholic parish formed in the late 1880s. The centerpiece of the complex is the red brick, granite-trimmed Victorian Gothic church dominated by its 5-level bell tower. It was designed by James Murphy, an Irish Catholic architect who based a long career on such work. Ancillary buildings include a mansard-roofed rectory (1892), a school (1905) and convent (1905), both designed by Murphy and Hindle. The tile-roofed parish house (1926), built to accommodate a number of social, religious and athletic organizations in the parish, was designed by Irving Gorman. (Figures 22 and 49)

#### HEDLEY AVENUE

- 19-23\* **Hedley Avenue School:** 1875, 1884. This schoolhouse, one of four, 4-room schools built by the town of Lincoln for the village of Central Falls, is a simple, end-gable, 2½-story structure. Its double en-

trances have bracketed hoods and its cornice is decorated with paired brackets. The rear extension is a later addition. The Hedley Avenue School now houses school administration offices.

#### HIGH STREET

- 371 **Stafford House:** c. 1860. Despite additions and alterations, this 2-story, flat-roofed, Italianate house, with its 3-bay facade, center door and wide bracketed eaves, is still one of the best in Central Falls. It was built by Rufus J. Stafford, owner of the Stafford Mill on Roosevelt Avenue who rebuilt the Central Falls dam in 1863. Since 1963, the Stafford House has been the convent for St. Joseph's parish. (Figure 33)

- 376\* **Central Falls Congregational Church:** 1883. This Queen Anne church was built for the Congregational Society of Central Falls, which had organized in 1845 and was one of the earliest religious associations in the city. The original 1845 church stood on the site of the present St. Joseph's Catholic Church and was enlarged in 1868. When the congregation outgrew the old church, the new structure was built with John Adams and Henry Stearns serving as the building committee. The older church building was later known as Temperance Hall and served as a semi-public hall for meetings and social functions. The Congregational Church is now owned by St. Joseph's and serves as a parish hall. The asymmetrically massed structure is well preserved and exhibits many of the elements associated with the Queen Anne style — an irregular roof line, contrasting wall covers and a variety of windows. (Figure 20)

- 391 **Church of St. Joseph:** 1919. This red brick, modified Gothic style church, with its massive tower, was built for a parish which was organized in 1916. St. Joseph's parish originally occupied the first Congregational Church which stood on the site of the present St. Joseph's

until it was destroyed by fire. The church is dominated by a great central tower and is lighted by eight large stained-glass windows. St. Joseph's Church serves a Polish-American neighborhood which grew up in the High Street area in the first two decades of the 20th century. Under the leadership of Reverend Francis Kreuger, its first pastor, and like other ethnically oriented Catholic parishes, it became the institutional center of its community — a fact which is manifested in the auxiliary buildings it has built and acquired since its founding: the 1921 rectory adjacent to the church, the second Congregational Church (now the parish center) and the Stafford House (now the convent). (Figure 50)

**427** **McCartney House:** 1850s. A simple 2½-story, Greek Revival house; a center door with a flat entablature is visible in the rear. In the street-level story is Frank's Polish Market, located here since 1949, where the Polish tradition of kielbasa-making is continued.

**476\*** **Fales House:** c. 1858, 1867. A handsome, 2½-story, Second Empire house, this was the home of D. G. Fales of Fales and Jenks. Built around 1858, the house was remodelled in 1867, under the direction of architect Clifton A. Hall, into the elegant Second Empire composition seen today. Its tall mansard roof is capped by a square belvedere. It has a 3-bay facade with a central entrance and, to the right of the entrance, the tall parlor window has an ornamental cast-iron balcony. A well designed iron fence surrounds the building. (Figure 39)

\* **Pierce Fight Site:** 1676. Located between High Street and the Blackstone, this is the site of the battle between Captain Michael Pierce's force from Rehoboth and Canonchet's Narragansetts. A marker near Macomber Stadium describes the confrontation, a critical episode in King Phillip's War. (Figure 6)

**Macomber Stadium:** 1934. This baseball field, constructed by the WPA, is located

near the traditional site of the Pierce Fight.

**1279** **Bullock House:** c. 1850. A well preserved example of the Greek Revival style in Central Falls, this 1½-story, 5-bay, center-chimney, flank-gable house had its porch added in the 1860s. (Figure 14)

#### HUNT STREET

**466** **Wilfrid Manor:** 1966. An 8-story, brick and concrete apartment building for the elderly. It is named for Brother Wilfrid, founder of the Sacred Heart Boys' Academy. Like the 1962 Forand Manor, Wilfrid Manor is out of scale with its neighborhood of 1-, 2- and 3-family houses, but has increased the opportunities for Central Falls' older residents to remain in the city.

#### JENKS AVENUE

**39** **House:** c. 1875. A small, 1½-story, mansard-roofed cottage with symmetrical bays on either side of the bracketed porch which has trefoil detailing.

**69** **Babbitt House:** c. 1860. Originally owned by Ebenezer Babbitt, a mill agent, this 1½-story, 5-bay, center-door cottage displays the high central gable characteristic of the vernacular Gothic Revival. A 1-story porch with simple rails and posts extends across the front of the flank-gable house.

#### JENKS STREET

**78** **Horton House:** 1850s. A typical, 1½-story, end-gable, Italianate cottage, with a bracketed door hood and bay and paired brackets at the eaves. The original barn stands behind the house. In 1862, the house was owned by N. Horton who may be N. S. Horton, a carpenter who built and owned several houses in Central Falls (see 286 Central Street).

#### KENDALL STREET

**12** **Hunt School:** 1974. A simple, red brick, 2-story, elementary school building of

contemporary design. It was named for G. Harold Hunt, a city police captain, and designed by Castellucci, Galli Associates.

#### LONSDALE AVENUE

**Moshassuck Cemetery:** chartered 1868. Now the only cemetery in Central Falls, the 7-acre Moshassuck Cemetery replaced several earlier burial grounds. Central Falls' Civil War monument, the Soldiers and Sailors' Memorial, a white granite statue of a soldier standing with his rifle, is on the grounds. It was raised by the Ballou Post of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1888. In 1934, the cemetery was the scene of a confrontation between striking textile workers from Saylesville and the National Guard.

#### MADISON STREET

**13, 15, 17, 19** **Angell Houses:** c. 1870. Four, simple, 2½-story, gable-roof houses with bracketed door hoods, grouped around an interior yard off Madison Street. This small complex was built by John W. Angell, a printer, and owned by him through the 1880s. It is likely that he built them as rental properties since he himself lived on Central Street.

#### PACIFIC STREET

**1** **Dennis House:** 1840s. This extensively altered house was, in the 1870s and 1880s, the home of John R. Dennis. Though he never held political office, Dennis was a leading figure in the local Republican Party during its ascendancy following the Civil War and controlled many of its patronage prerogatives.

**61-63** **House:** c. 1900. A representative and relatively unaltered example of later 3-deckers to be found throughout the city, this hip-roofed house retains the simple columns and railings of its 3-story porch and the 3-story bay set under a small gable.

#### ROOSEVELT AVENUE

**Central Falls Mill District.** The row of mill buildings between Roosevelt Avenue and the Blackstone River are included in the proposed Central Falls Mill District. They are the single most important concentration of historically significant industrial structures in the city. The intensive development of the area dates from the apportionment of the water power into six privileges by the Central Falls Mill Owners Association in 1823, and the mills now standing exemplify industrial building from the early 19th century to the early 20th century. The proposed district includes the mills occupying the original six privileges, the Royal Mill and the stone dam at the central falls. (Figures 18, 63 and 64)

**471\* Royal Weaving Mill:** 1897. This 1-story red brick mill was designed by Dwight Seabury of Pawtucket for silk production. The Royal Weaving Company was started by Joseph Ott, a German who had been a designer and a silk operative before his emigration in 1884. In 1888, he began a weaving business in Pawtucket after perfecting a silk loom. He incorporated the Royal Weaving Company with Daniel Littlefield and Darius Goff and carried on its operations in space rented from the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill across the street until the new mill was constructed. The north-facing, saw-toothed roof of the mill provided the soft, constant light required for the weaving process. (Figure 52)

**501\* Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill:** 1864. This moderate-size, red brick mill, designed by William R. Walker, of three and a half stories occupies the site of the original Greene and Daniels Mill. It is a long, gable-roofed structure with a central stair tower decorated with a blind-arch motif, large segmental-head windows and a lightly scaled, corbeled cornice. The mill is 54 feet by 204 feet and cost \$70,000 when it was built; it housed 540 looms. The Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company had been in oper-

ation for eight years prior to the construction of the mill but had not been particularly successful; with the acquisition of the Lindsley patents for weaving haircloth in 1861, however, the company built up a virtual monopoly on the manufacture of the fabric which was used for furniture coverings, crinolines and interlinings in the late 19th century. Much of the raw fiber was imported from the great horse hair markets of Russia. Purchased in the 1890s by the American Hair Cloth Company, the mill stands today virtually as it was built, excepting only the addition of a new entrance on the Roosevelt Avenue end and the removal of the belfry's peaked roof. In terms of industrial history, this is a unique building in Rhode Island. Architecturally, it is an outstanding early work of a major Rhode Island architect. (See cover.)

**523\* Central Falls Woolen Mill:** 1870. This long, rectangular, monitor-roofed, 4-story, red brick mill was built by Phetteplace and Seagrave of Providence and was one of the few mills producing woolen products (doeskins and cassimeres) in this area dominated by cotton production. Purchased in 1894 by Frederick Farwell, the building was enlarged and renamed the Farwell Worsted Mill. The end tower, on the Roosevelt Avenue side, was removed in the 1910s when a large, brick, 4-story, pier-and-spandrel mill was built parallel to the street, obscuring the Farwell Mill from view. Farwell employed 525 workers in 1901, producing worsted cloth. In the early part of this century, Bryan Marsh used the mill for the production of light bulbs; it is now owned by Elizabeth Webbing. (Figure 19)

**527\* Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill:** 1825. A gable-roofed, 4-story, stone structure, this mill was built for the manufacture of cotton cloth. By 1827, the lower story was leased by the Pawtucket Company to Field and Jacobs, who were the first in Central Falls to

manufacture textile machinery. The Pawtucket Thread Mill is now dwarfed by the Stafford Mill Complex on its north side and the Central Falls Woolen Mill on the south, both dating from the Civil War era. When it was built, however, this mill (78 feet by 44 feet) was similar in size to other Rhode Island textile mills which averaged 80 feet by 40 feet and, like many mills of this period, it is built of stone. By 1881, the Pawtucket Thread Mill was being used for the manufacture of sheeting, printed cloth, thread and yarn by Thurber, Horton and Wood. It is now owned by a manufacturer of narrow fabrics and webbings. With the Kennedy Mill on Privilege One, this is the oldest industrial structure remaining in Central Falls. Though the mill has been modified, its window and door openings changed and the pitch of the roof reduced, it is still an important reminder of the early industrial life of the city. (Figure 8)

**581\* Stafford Mill Complex:** 1825, 1860s. The mill complex, built on one of the first industrial sites in Central Falls, has undergone numerous expansions and additions since 1825 when John Kennedy built the original 4½-story brick building on the first water-power privilege where he manufactured cotton cloth. The building — rare in this region for its early use of brick — has a square end tower and a clerestory monitor. The Stafford Manufacturing Company expanded the mill and made several additions in the 1860s — one of them three stories, 140 feet by 30 feet; the other, four stories, 70 feet by 36 feet. The Stafford Company also built the right-angle dam (1863) and two power canals with separate entry gates. The canals flowed directly under the building and also powered three other mills downstream. In 1965, the canals were filled in. The Stafford Company operated into the 20th century and the mill, no longer used for textiles, is now

occupied by commercial tenants. (Figure 11)

- \* **Roosevelt Avenue Dam:** 1863. This right-angle, stone dam at the central falls was built by the Stafford Company during the Civil War when the trench system was reconstructed. It replaced the earlier 1780 dam built by Sylvanus Brown for Charles Keene. The construction of this dam increased the power available to the river-front mill sites and prolonged the use of water power. (See title page.)

**Roosevelt Avenue Bridge:** 1924. The river was first spanned in 1806 by a narrow footbridge, replaced in 1827 by a cart bridge financed by a public subscription conducted by John Kennedy whose mill stood on Privilege One. This bridge was replaced by an iron bridge in 1871. The arches of the present bridge are built of gray stone which rest on concrete piers.

#### SUMMER STREET

- 24 **Central Falls High School:** 1927. This 3-story, yellow brick, stone-trimmed high school building replaced the red brick structure on Broad Street (now the City Hall) as the city's largest school. The central entrance pavilion, whose pediment is supported by pilasters, is repeated in the two side wings. Recently a major, 2-story, brick extension of handsome contemporary design has been added to the rear of the building. (Figure 58)

#### SUMMIT STREET

- 26 **Lincoln Town Hall:** 1873, 1890. This 2½-story, cross-gable structure originally had handsome Italianate detailing. It was built by Lincoln to house the offices of the newly founded town in 1873. From 1895 to 1928, it served as the Central Falls City Hall. Recent unsympathetic modification has since obscured much of its form and detail. (Figure 23)
- 80 **Linnell House:** 1892. A large, asymmetri-

cal, 2½-story, Queen Anne house with cut-away corners, decorative floral work in the roof gable and on the wide flat tops over the paired windows, a semi-circular porch topped by a turret and a corner tower. It was built for B. F. G. Linnell, secretary of the Greene and Daniels Mill, and was designed by Albert Humes.

#### WASHINGTON STREET

- 30 **Forand Manor:** 1962. This 9-story, red brick apartment building for the elderly is named for United States Representative Aime J. Forand of Rhode Island who supported many federal programs to assist the elderly. While out of scale with their neighborhoods, Forand Manor and the newer Wilfrid Manor on Hunt Street reflect the increasingly large proportion of the elderly in Central Falls' population since World War II and the much increased participation of the federal government in caring for the nation's older citizens. Both of Central Falls' apartment buildings for the elderly were designed by Castellucci, Galli Associates. (Figure 61)
- 165 **Risk House:** 1850s. A 1½-story, gable-roofed house, built in a simplified, vernacular Greek Revival style. The porch is a later addition.
- 215 **St. Ephraim's Church:** 1963. A small church of contemporary design by architect Alfred Kozar, St. Ephraim's was built for a Syrian parish dating from 1913. The Syrian community in Central Falls dates from the early decades of the 20th century; many Syrian families settled in the central section of the city. Two parishes are associated with this community — St. Basil the Great (Melkite Rite) and St. Ephraim's (Syrian Orthodox). The first St. Ephraim's Church was built soon after the organization of the parish and stood on the site of the present church. It was destroyed by fire in 1962.



## APPENDIX F: ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

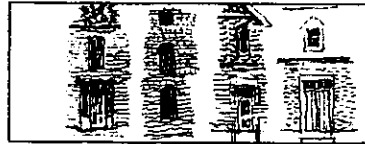
### BARGEBOARD

Decorative boards facing the sloping ends of a gable and occasionally filling a triangle at the peak of the roof; also called vergeboard.



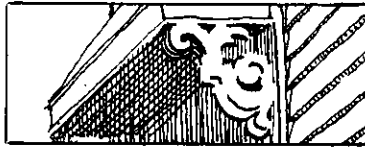
### BAY

A vertical division of the exterior of a building, marked by a window or door.



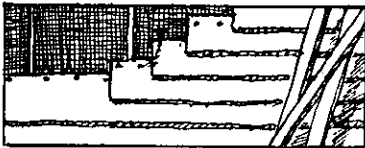
### BRACKET

A support for the cornice, eaves or door hood.



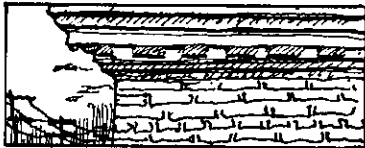
### CLAPBOARD

An exterior wall covering; narrow boards applied horizontally, each overlapping the one below.



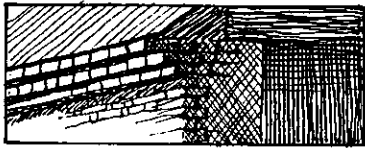
### CORNICE

The projecting and usually molded section at the top of a wall, door or window; on exteriors, the cornice is often ornamented with brackets.



### CORBELLED CORNICE

On brick buildings, a cornice produced by projecting the upper courses of brickwork beyond the wall surface.



### FACADE

A face of a building, usually the front.



### HOOD

A projecting element over a door or window giving protection from the weather; often used as decoration.



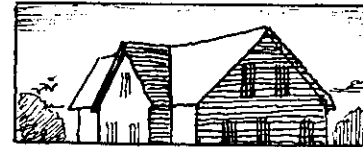
### QUOINS

The projected decorative stone or wood blocks defining either a building corner or the edge of a door frame.

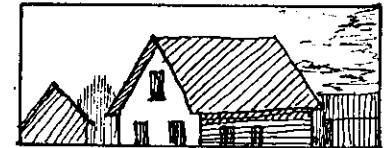


### ROOF FORMS:

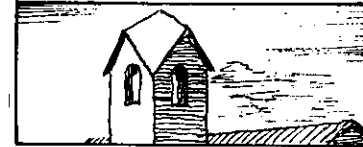
#### Cross Gable



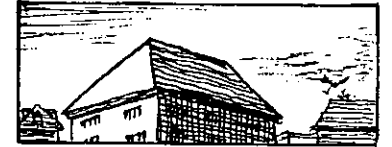
#### Gable



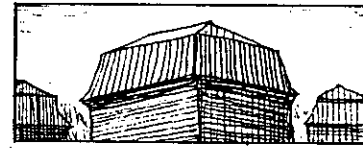
#### Helm



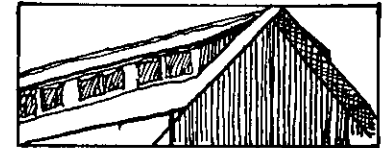
#### Hip



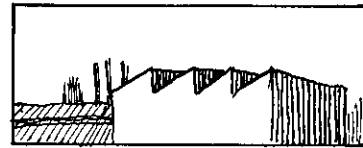
#### Mansard



#### Monitor



#### Saw Tooth

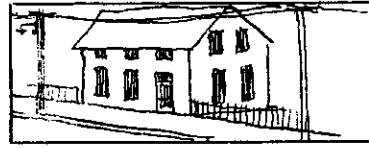


**ROOF ORIENTATION:**

**Gable End to Street**



**Flanking Gable**

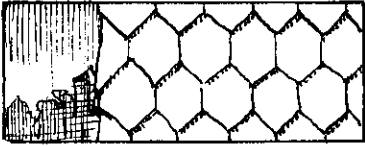


**2½ Story, Side Hall Plan**

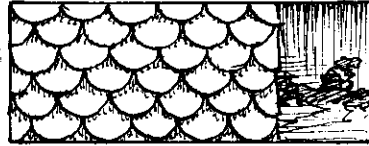


**SHINGLES:**

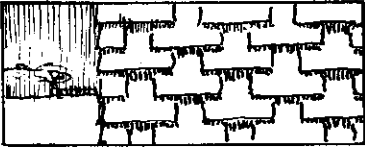
**Pointed**



**Fish Scale**



**Staggered**



**Butt**



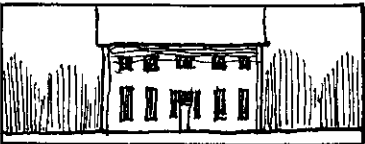
**TURNED POSTS**

Vertical supports for a porch which have been turned on a lathe.



**HOUSE TYPES:**

**Central Entrance Plan**



**Triple Decker**



**WINDOW FORMS:**

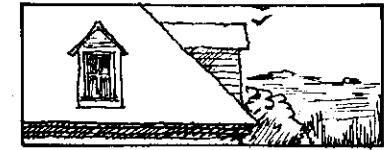
**BAY**

An angular or curved window projecting from the exterior surface of a wall.



**DORMER**

A vertical window in a projection built out from the slope of a roof.



**SEGMENTAL HEAD**

A window whose upper portion forms part of a circle.



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Figure 67: Valley Falls Mill, 1849; 1363 Broad Street.





Figure 68: Benedict and Wood Thread Label.

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