

EAST PROVIDENCE, R.I.

This report is published by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission as a part of the program set forth in Rhode Island's "Historic Preservation Plan," first edition, which was issued in 1970 as the first statewide plan for historic preservation. Commission activities are supported by state and local funds and by the Department of the Interior National Park Service, under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Planning and coordinating services are provided by the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, assisted by federal grants through the Integrated Grant Administration Program and by the Rhode Island Department of Community Affairs. Preparation of this report was in part financed through the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, City of East Providence Community Development Program, Project no. B-75-HS-44-002.

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This document is a copy of the original survey published in 1976. 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.

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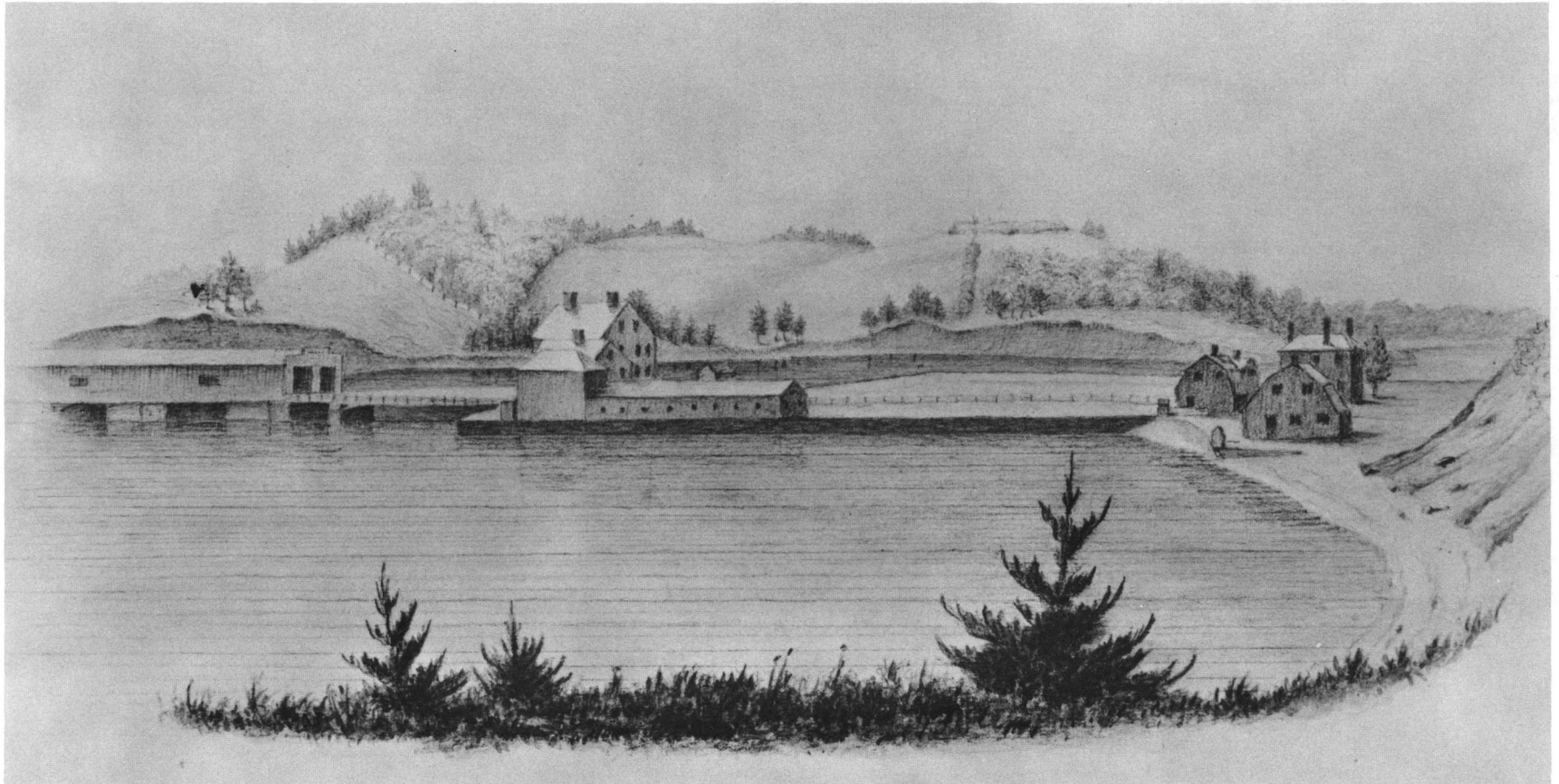
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The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission is your state agency for historical preservation. The Commission identifies and protects historic buildings, districts, landscapes, structures, and archaeological sites throughout the State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

East Providence, Rhode Island
Statewide Preservation Report P-EP-1



Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
September 1976



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Old State House
150 Benefit Street
Providence, R. I. 02903
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August 1, 1976

The Honorable Philip W. Noel, Governor
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Governor Noel:

It is with pleasure that I transmit herewith East Providence, Rhode Island-Statewide Preservation Report P-EP-1, the sixth publication in the Statewide Preservation Report series.

The product of intensive research, this report provides an analysis of the historical and architectural growth of East Providence, with consideration given to current development problems. It recommends a preservation program which can be incorporated into the city's overall planning effort.

Although 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 all thirty-nine 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,

Antoinette F. Downing

Mrs. George E. Downing
Chairman

AD/dn



Weaver house (ca. 1868), 31 Grove Avenue.

PREFACE

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission was established in 1968 by an act of the General Assembly to develop a state preservation program under the aegis of the National Park Service Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, United States Department of the Interior. Citizen members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor, and one representative from the House and Senate Finance Committees of the General Assembly, the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Development Council, and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources serve as ex-officio members. The Director of the Department of Community Affairs has been appointed by the Governor as State Historic Preservation Officer for Rhode Island.

The Historical Preservation Commission is charged with the responsibility of: conducting a statewide survey of historic sites and places and, from the survey, recommending places of local, state, or national significance for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places; administering federal grants-in-aid to registered properties for acquisition or development; and developing a state historic preservation plan. Additional duties include: reviewing the impact on cultural resources of government-sponsored projects, administering important structures and sites, compiling and maintaining a State Register of Historic Places, assisting state and municipal agencies in the area of historic preservation 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 was inaugurated in June 1969. It is designed to locate, identify, map, and report on buildings, sites, areas, and objects of historic and architectural value. In line with the current movement among preservationists, planners, and architectural and social historians, the total environment is considered, not only the outstanding structures and historic sites. Buildings of all periods and construction types which constitute the fabric of a neighborhood are evaluated together with consideration of siting, scale, landscaping, and geographical features.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The survey of East Providence was conducted by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in conjunction with the City of East Providence, Department of Planning and Urban Development. Funding was provided by the City, in part from a Community Development Block Grant, and by the Preservation Commission through its survey and planning grant from the National Register Program administered by the National Park Service.

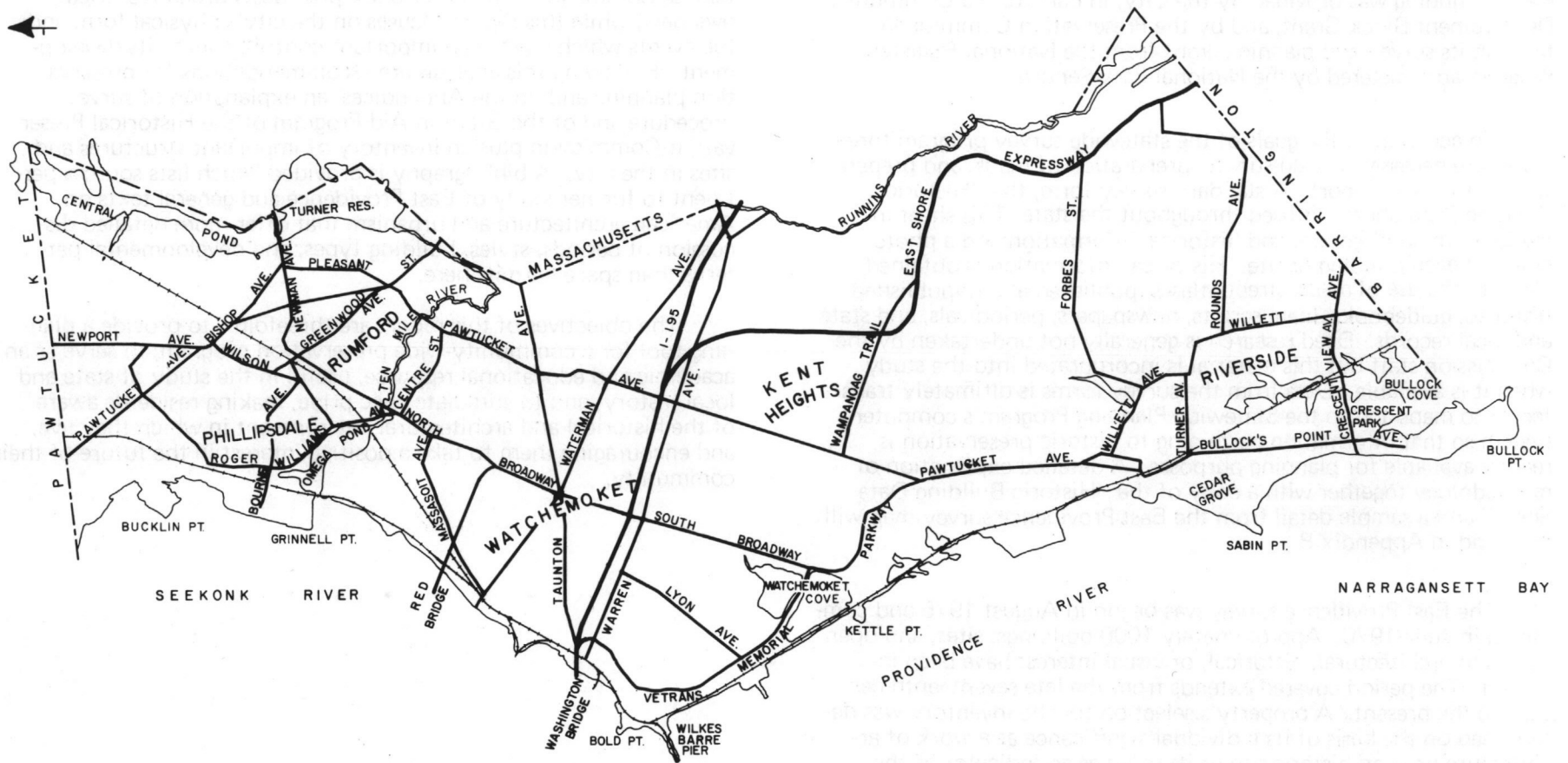
To accomplish the goals of the statewide survey program three stages are necessary: field survey, preparation of maps, and preparation of this final report. A standard survey form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet," is used throughout the state. This sheet includes both architectural and historical information and a photograph of each building or site. Historical information is obtained through the use of maps, street atlases, published and unpublished histories, guidebooks, manuscripts, newspapers, periodicals, and state and local records. Deed research is generally not undertaken by the Commission staff but this material is incorporated into the study when it is available. Data from the survey forms is ultimately transferred to maps and to the Statewide Planning Program's computer system so that information pertaining to historic preservation is readily available for planning purposes. A detailed explanation of methodology together with a copy of the "Historic Building Data Sheet" and a sample detail from the East Providence survey map will be found in Appendix B.

The East Providence survey was begun in August 1975 and completed in June 1976. Approximately 1000 buildings, sites, and open spaces of architectural, historical, or visual interest have been included. The period covered extends from the late seventeenth century to the present. A property's selection for the inventory was determined on the basis of its individual significance as a work of architecture or as an historic site or its value as an indicator of the city's physical, social, or economic development. Thus the survey attempts to be comprehensive in scope, identifying both individually distinguished buildings and the wide array of elements which contribute to the city's historical development and complex physical matrix. Upon completion of the survey and review by the Commission, one copy of all material will be placed on file at the Commission's central office (150 Benefit Street, Providence), the East Providence Department of Planning and Urban Development (31 Grove Avenue), and the Weaver Memorial Library (41 Grove Avenue).

This report is a condensed summary of findings from the survey. It is intended to complement Joseph Conforti's *A History of East Providence* (1976), published by the East Providence Bicentennial Committee. The latter book provides a broad historical overview, while this report focuses on the city's physical form and the events which have been important contributors to its development. Following this analysis are recommendations for preservation planning and, in the Appendices, an explanation of survey procedure and of the Grant-in-Aid Program of the Historical Preservation Commission plus an inventory of important structures and sites in the city. A bibliography is provided which lists sources pertinent to further study of East Providence and general texts on American architecture and urbanism that offer more detailed discussion of periods, styles, building types, and developmental patterns than space permits here.

The objectives of this report are threefold: to provide a planning tool for a community-wide preservation program; to serve as an academic and educational resource, useful in the study of state and local history; and to stimulate civic pride, making residents aware of the historical and architectural environment in which they live, and encouraging them to take a positive interest in the future of their community.

* * * * *



East Providence, map of principal communities, roads and geographic points.

II. PHYSICAL SETTING

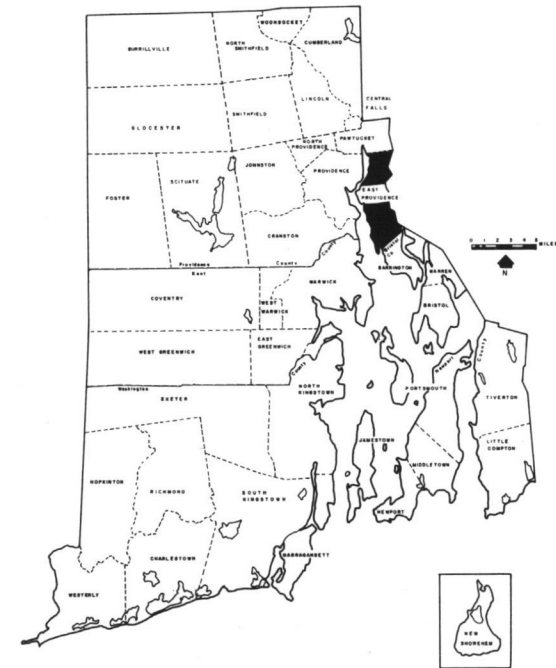
Situated between the urban core of Rhode Island and rural southeastern Massachusetts, the city of East Providence has a diverse residential, commercial, and industrial matrix, enhanced by relatively large pockets of open space. Much of the city is bordered by bodies of water: the Seekonk and Providence Rivers to the west, Narragansett Bay to the south, and the Runnins and Ten Mile Rivers (including the James V. Turner Reservoir and Central Pond) along most of the east border. Containing an area of 13.7 square miles, East Providence has the fifth largest population in the state, but has a relatively low density of 5.73 persons per acre.

Major regional arteries, Interstate 195 and the East Shore Expressway (Wampanoag Trail), traverse the city at its midpoint and extend to its southern boundary. Other heavily traveled thoroughfares pass through most sections of the community: state routes 114 and 103 (Pawtucket and Willett Avenues) and Broadway run north-south; U. S. routes 44 and 6 (Taunton and Warren Avenues) run east-west. The location of these roads, combined with East Providence's position near the center of the metropolitan region, are central factors contributing to the wide distribution of commercial, industrial, and residential land uses throughout the city. The roots of this diffuse development lie in the mid-nineteenth century, with the construction of three railroad lines and the utilization of the large waterfront area for transportation and industrial facilities.

East Providence contains several readily identifiable communities, one of which dates from the seventeenth century. However, most concentrated development has occurred since the city was created out of the larger township of Seekonk, Massachusetts, in 1862.

Watchemoket:

The central and most populous area was formerly known as Watchemoket but now is generally referred to simply as "East Providence." Its boundaries are loosely defined, beginning at the Seekonk River on the west and extending several blocks south of Warren Avenue and north of Waterman and Taunton Avenues as far east as Pawtucket Avenue. The area began to develop as a suburb of Providence in the late 1840s, and growth continued through the 1920s. The major physical change to occur since that time has been the construction of Interstate 195 which bisects the entire district.



Rhode Island

Most of the area is residential; however, it also possesses the greatest number of commercial, institutional, and municipal facilities in the city. Taunton Avenue is the focus of this development, combining the qualities of both a downtown center and a linear commercial strip.

Kent Heights:

Pawtucket Avenue, roughly from Kent Avenue to Veterans Parkway, forms the spine of the Kent Heights District, which extends west to South Broadway and east to the East Shore Expressway. Suburban development was anticipated by land speculators a century ago, but most of the area continued to serve as farm land until after the Second World War. During the last thirty years, it has experienced rapid residential development, mostly in the form

of contractor-built subdivisions. Members of the Kent family, for whom the district is named, farmed the land there since the eighteenth century, were among the principal land speculators and have developed and built a large share of new residential tracts.

Riverside:

Riverside occupies the lower portion of the city. Its northern boundary more or less coincides with the one stipulated in John Brown's 1645 purchase from the Wampanoag Indians: a line running east from what is today the Silver Spring Golf Club to Runnins River. Riverside started as a series of summer colonies in the 1860s and had begun to be transformed into a year-round suburban community by the turn of the century. The only remnant of its early resort function is Crescent Park, an amusement center located in the southwestern end of the town. Most of the area is made up of small residential enclaves divided by waterways and main roads. While the old section of Riverside hugs the shoreline with many houses converted from summer cottages, a much larger area is comprised of twentieth-century developments, most of them built after 1945. Commercial facilities are concentrated along the main roads: Bullocks Point and Willett Avenues. Adjacent on the north lies a large oil storage field and a now inactive refinery built by the Standard Oil Company in the 1920s.

Rumford:

Rumford comprises most of the area north of the Ten Mile River. It is the site of East Providence's first major settlement, established in 1643, which continued as the center of the present-day city until the mid-nineteenth century. At various times the community has been called Rehoboth, Seekonk Centre, and East Providence Centre. Some of its eighteenth-century farmhouses survive, but most of its old fabric dates from the pre-Civil War period. The Rumford Chemical Works, started in 1857, lies adjacent to the west. The surrounding area was predominantly agricultural land until the 1930s when suburban development began to play a major role. Rumford remains predominantly residential, although extensive retail activity is concentrated along Newport Avenue, serving Pawtucket as well as East Providence.

Phillipsdale:

The narrow section of the city extending along Roger Williams Avenue, roughly from Omega Pond to Pawtucket Avenue, is known as Phillipsdale. Its primary orientation has been to the water (Omega Pond and the Seekonk River) which has generated industrial activities since the seventeenth century. Most residential development was directly related to the mills close by, with the earliest growth occurring at the southern end, known as Omega and later as Clyde Mills. These operations were eclipsed in the 1890s when several large factories, including the Washburn Wire Company, were constructed nearby. Concurrently, a small company town was erected adjacent to the plants. Named Phillipsdale, in honor of Washburn's president, Eugene Phillips, this industrial village has served as the focus of the district.

At the same time, East Providence represents more than a collection of established communities. Development patterns over the past century have, while contributing to village identity, also served to bring these places together. Watchemoket not only grew as a suburb of Providence but as the center for East Providence. The factories at Phillipsdale have depended upon the surrounding areas for their labor force. Subdivisions such as those in Kent Heights have filled most of the open land which formerly lay between the older settlements. Like many American cities, East Providence has emerged from a series of separate communities to become a single organism composed of diverse parts. Diversity and unity have long coexisted as developmental thrusts. They still can.

III. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Settlement

The annexation of East Providence to Rhode Island in 1862 provided official recognition of the strong social, economic, and developmental ties that had long existed between the two areas. The central factor in this relationship was, of course, the community's proximity to Providence. However, in the seventeenth century, the Seekonk River, and the harbor below it, formed a natural boundary which determined the territorial limits of both European settlers and of the Indians before them.

The land east of the Seekonk was occupied by the federation of Wampanoag Indians. Its population was small by later standards. In the 1670s, a mere 1,000 Wampanoags inhabited an area that extended roughly from Pawtucket east to Cohasset, south to Cape Cod, thence west to Newport. Their villages were not permanent settlements, but seasonal. They were generally situated near the water for most of the year and moved inland to receive the shelter of the woods during the winter months. Often, too, villages were relocated as agricultural and other conditions changed. Cultivated acreage comprised but a tiny fraction of the land; most of it remained virgin forest. The Indian civilization, which had all but vanished by the turn of the eighteenth century, left what is today East Providence with two legacies. The most obvious is nomenclature: the names of Wampanoag tribes and sachems are used for everything from shopping centers to country clubs. But of more consequence to the physical development of the city were the Indian trails which have formed major transportation routes up to the present. River crossings existed at approximately the locations of the Washington and (old) Red Bridges. From these points, paths lead east toward Plymouth, north toward Boston, and south toward Warren; routes which roughly correspond to Taunton, Pawtucket, Newport and Willett Avenues.

The area which comprises present-day East Providence was first inhabited by white men in 1636. Early that year, Roger Williams and a small group of followers were expelled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony and founded a new community called "Seacunke" (Seekonk) along the shore of a salt water cove that is now Omega Pond. No more than a few months passed before these people were informed by the Governor of Plymouth that their land was within the territorial limits claimed by that colony. Thus the party soon

departed, to resettle nearby, starting what would eventually become the city of Providence. Other Puritans located in the vicinity of the initial settlement two years later. A number of them joined Williams not long thereafter, but some stayed, holding valuable tracts of land along the cove.

Of far more lasting consequence was the arrival in 1643 of some two hundred Puritans, led by fifty-eight proprietors, from several towns in both the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies. Two years earlier, the latter Colony had purchased a tract "eight miles square" (in today's measurement, this comes closer to one hundred square miles, or approximately 64,000 acres) from Massasoit, chief of the Wampanoags. The land encompassed the present-day communities of Rehoboth and Seekonk, Massachusetts, most of East Providence, and portions of Pawtucket. By the middle of 1644, this sizeable tract of land was being surveyed by Lieutenant Joshua Fisher of Dedham, who was frequently engaged by the Massachusetts Bay Colony for such work. Within this territory, four principal categorical divisions were made. Over 503 acres were designed for house lots, one for each of the proprietors. Adjacent to these, over 1,300 acres were reserved as woodlands. Much larger were the commonly owned meadowlands, consisting of at least eight parcels scattered throughout the area. Finally, salt marsh areas, primarily in the southern portion of the township, were set aside.

In 1645 the township's name was changed from Seacunke to Rehoboth, which has a dual Biblical connotation of being situated by a river and of being a large, open space. Both references were appropriate to the community's physical configuration. Territorial expansiveness was clearly on the proprietors' minds. By December 1645, a sizeable tract adjacent to the south, Wannamoisett (today: Riverside, Barrington, and portions of Swansea), was purchased for the township by John Brown. It remained part of Rehoboth only until 1667; however, that portion which is now Riverside reverted to the community in 1746. The same year Rehoboth lost Wannamoisett it acquired a much larger area, the so-called northern purchase, which included present-day Attleboro, North Attleboro, and Cumberland.

The most significant developmental aspect of the community was the configuration of the house lots which bordered the Ten Mile River to the east and south and the land of the earlier settlers along the cove to the west. These parcels were six, eight, and twelve acres

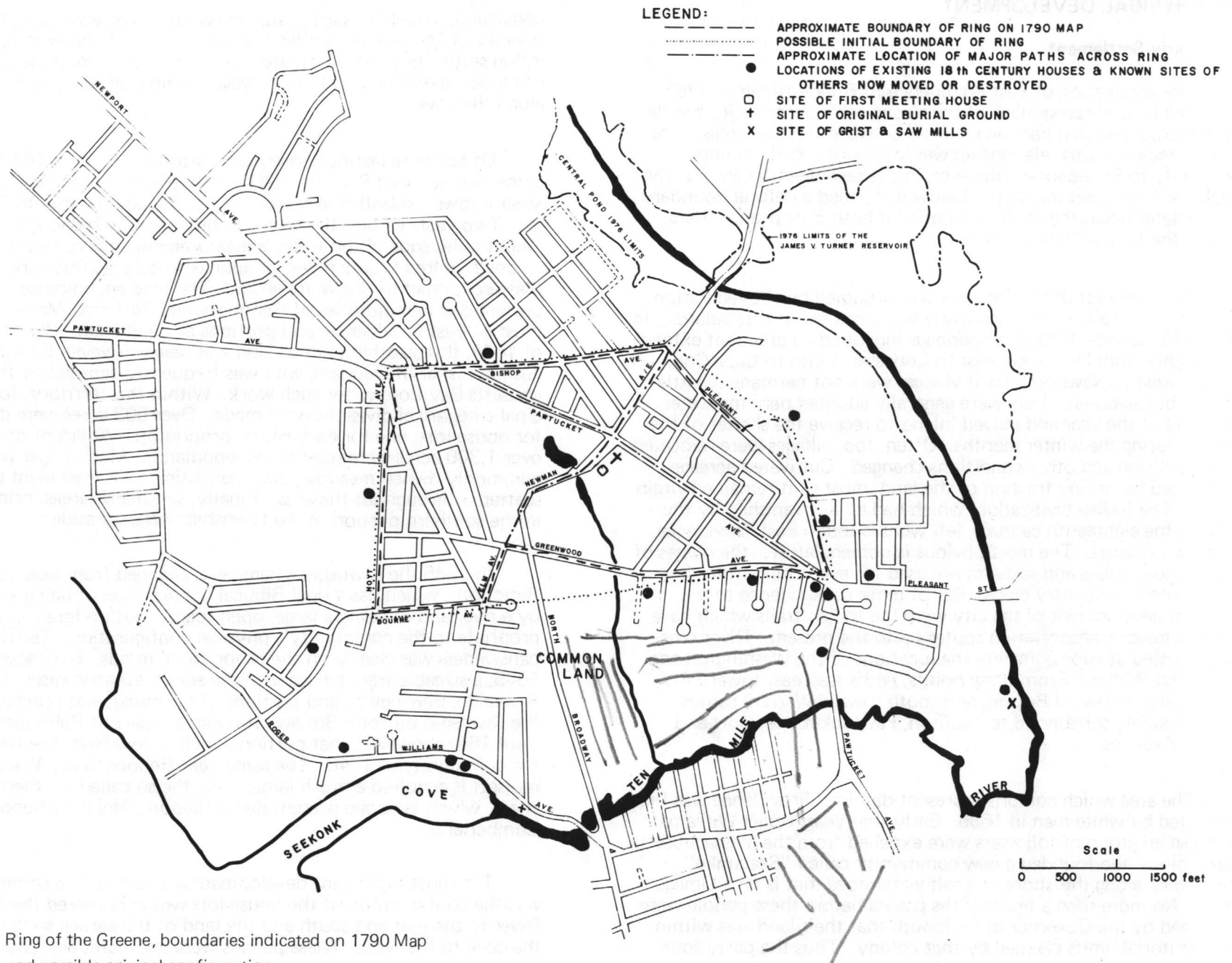


Fig. 1: Ring of the Greene, boundaries indicated on 1790 Map and possible original configuration.

each, assigned to the proprietors in proportion to their wealth. In form, they were probably long, finger-like properties, similar to the lot division in Providence (1638) and common to many later agricultural communities in New England. Most of the land on each lot would have been reserved for cultivation, with the house located at one end. These property ends faced an enormous town common, referred to as the "Ring of the Greene" or the "Ring of the Towne." Commons were the focal points of all early Massachusetts settlements, but few, if any, came near to the Ring in size. Of no less than 200 acres, the Ring must have dwarfed the dwellings that encircled it and the meeting house that would soon stand in its center.

The precise form of the Ring and the surrounding settlement is unknown. The earliest map to delineate the Ring's boundaries, found by Richard LeBaron Bowen and published in his *Early Rehoboth*, dates from 1790. At that point, it had an eccentric polygonal shape, roughly coinciding with what are today Greenwood Avenue, Elm Street, Bourne, Hoyt, Pawtucket and Bishop Avenues, and Pleasant Street (Figure 1). Bowen accepts these as the original boundary lines; however, within the context of morphological change experienced by even small settlements over extended periods of time, it is unlikely that the Ring's form remained static for as long as 150 years. The changes were probably never great, but no doubt account for the irregularities of its form in later years. No territorial or geographic factors, for instance, can explain the lopsided extension of the 1790 common at its southwest corner. A more plausible configuration for the initial Ring is suggested in Figure 1. Further research on the boundaries of this town common and why it deviated so markedly in size from other known examples would make a valuable contribution to the history of early town planning in the United States.

Agriculture provided the economic base for Rehoboth. The needs of farming were major determinants in the quadripartite division of land, the slender form of the house lots, and, perhaps, in the large dimensions of the Ring, which was used as a grazing area for cattle. Cultivating the land would remain the dominant activity in the area for the next two hundred years and continued to occupy an important place in East Providence's economy well into the twentieth century. Grist mills, directly related to agricultural areas, began to appear probably within a decade of the original settlement. The first was erected at the mouth of the Ten Mile River by Richard Wright, one of the most prominent members of the early community.

Not long thereafter, a second mill was started further up the river at what is now Hunt's Mills. By 1680, the shipping company of Carpenter and Daggett was established on the cove, presumably for the export of produce grown nearby as well as to furnish the new community with goods not made locally.

No traces of buildings from the original settlement remain. With two possible exceptions (both long gone) all of them were destroyed in King Philip's War (1675-1676). The first permanent dwellings were doubtlessly small and crudely built by later standards. They must have consisted of one room, perhaps two or three at the most, framed with heavy timbers, and enclosed by rough vertical planking. These spaces were low and dark, natural light coming from only a few tiny windows of cloth or oiled paper.

The meeting house which was both the religious and civic center for the settlement, was no more impressive than the dwellings. Constructed in 1646, it was only some sixteen by twenty feet in plan. Additions were made ca. 1656, 1658-59, and 1671, but were not extensive, for a new structure was begun three years later in 1674. The second church lasted barely longer than the first, a third, much larger building replacing it by 1718.

The frequent changes and short lives of the two meeting houses reflect the nature of building in general during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Very seldom were the houses erected considered wholly finished products. In the primitive conditions of early settlement, construction was a slow and difficult process. Once a dwelling was built, it frequently provided a "core" to which improvements (such as larger windows, plaster walls, and paneling) and additions were made as the owner's needs changed and resources increased.



Fig. 2: Philip Walker house (ca. 1678-1679), 432 Massasoit Avenue.



Fig. 3: House (ca. 1680s), 915 Warren Avenue.

At least two houses erected in the late seventeenth century and several others dating from the early eighteenth remain in East Providence. All of them have experienced extensive alterations and from the exterior give little indication of their original appearance. The oldest documented residence was begun by Philip Walker ca. 1678 and was still unfinished at the time of his death the following year (Fig. 2). Walker was among the wealthiest, best educated, and most influential men in the early settlement, and it is not surprising that his house was large and commodious by standards of the time. As built, it had a three-bay (e. g. window and door openings) facade with a rather atypical plan. Omitting the usual vestibule, the entrance opened directly into the keeping room (the multi-functional center of seventeenth- and many eighteenth-century houses, not unlike the present-day kitchen-family room), which extended almost the full length of the front, with parlor and bedroom to the rear. About the middle of the eighteenth century, a two-bay addition was built on the south side of the house, and windows in the older section were replaced. Extensive alterations were made to the interior, including the addition of handsome raised paneling. These changes, more than any work done before or since, are the primary contributors to the building's present character.

Much smaller and probably typical of many dwellings in the area at the time is the one-story house at 915 Warren Avenue, erected ca. 1680-1690 (Figure 3). It contained only a single room with a large end fireplace and loft above. This building also experienced enlargement and alterations in the mid-eighteenth century that completely transformed the exterior. An interesting example of how a one-room house could be expanded stands at 6 Garfield Street (Figure 4). Apparently, in the early nineteenth century, two of these small structures were joined together and a new center section added with the whole given a new exterior. Traces of the one-room plan can also be detected in the house at 102 Fenner Street. Here some evidence remains of the stone wall which originally extended over the entire north end of the building. The construction of stone-end houses was a common practice in the region during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Many Rehoboth dwellings were doubtlessly built in this manner. However, most examples of the type have either been destroyed or, like this one, altered beyond easy recognition.

More affluent members of the community constructed houses using a one-room plan on two full stories, the lower containing the keeping room, the upper the bedchamber. A small entryway and

tight staircase were squeezed adjacent to the end chimney. Nathaniel Daggett employed this standard arrangement for the residence he built not long before his death in 1708 (Figure 5). Located at 74 Roger Williams Avenue, the house remained in the family for almost two hundred years, its main section little changed. During the 1890s, it was threatened with demolition in order to realign the road to accommodate streetcars. An effort was inaugurated to spare the building since it stands near the site of Roger Williams' first settlement. On what would today seem a rather tenuous historical association, the house was saved, but at the price of extensive alterations made by the Washburn Wire Company for conversion to company housing. Even greater, albeit less discordant, changes have been made to the house at 1527 Pawtucket Avenue, which was built about the same time as Daggett's and was of a very similar configuration. This is the earliest known extant structure in the immediate vicinity of the Ring.



Fig. 5: Daggett house (before 1708), 74 Roger Williams Avenue.



Fig. 4: House (18th century), 6 Garfield Street.



Fig. 6: Daggett house (ca. 1900), 74 Roger Williams Avenue.

The Eighteenth Century

Considerable decentralization occurred in Rehoboth during the first half of the eighteenth century, intensifying a process which had begun not long after 1643, since no provisions were made for new settlers in the apportionment of lots around the Ring. By the early 1700s, homesteads were thinly scattered throughout the area, with the forests gradually giving way to cultivated farmland. Corresponding to this dispersive growth pattern, several outlying areas began to seek autonomy. Attleboro was the first to break away, in 1694, followed by Cumberland in 1747. New communities emerged in what remained of Rehoboth, among them Pawtucket village, which was closely tied to a town of the same name directly across the Blackstone River. Another important, if less concentrated, settlement grew up along the Palmer River in what is present-day Rehoboth. A Congregational church was erected in the vicinity by 1721, and a number of grist mills and other commercial enterprises developed nearby.

Nevertheless, the Ring continued to provide the essential focus for the township's civic and religious activities. The Ring's visual prominence was also enhanced with the erection of a third meeting house (1716-1718) which was much larger than its predecessors. Measuring 40 by 50 feet, it had an oblong plan, a central entrance facing the pulpit, two tiers of windows on all sides, and a steeple, probably on the east end (Figure 6). Save for the steeple, this was a typical meeting house design of the period, reflecting the separatist desire to break away from traditional Anglican church forms and emphasis on the preaching aspects of the service.

No matter how important the Ring may have been as Rehoboth's center, it did not develop with the intensity characteristic of many New England towns. The Ring's very size denied the meeting house the visual role afforded to many of its counterparts on much smaller village greens. Most dwellings appear to have been set apart from one another, and it is not unlikely that some of the more successful men purchased their neighbor's lots in order to expand their fields. Just how much the density of these houses varied from those of the initial settlement is unknown. No record of the number of dwellings around the Ring in the seventeenth or eighteenth century has been found. It is possible, however, that in the wake of King Philip's War, many of those who originally lived around the Ring moved to more open land throughout the township, as Philip Walker did.

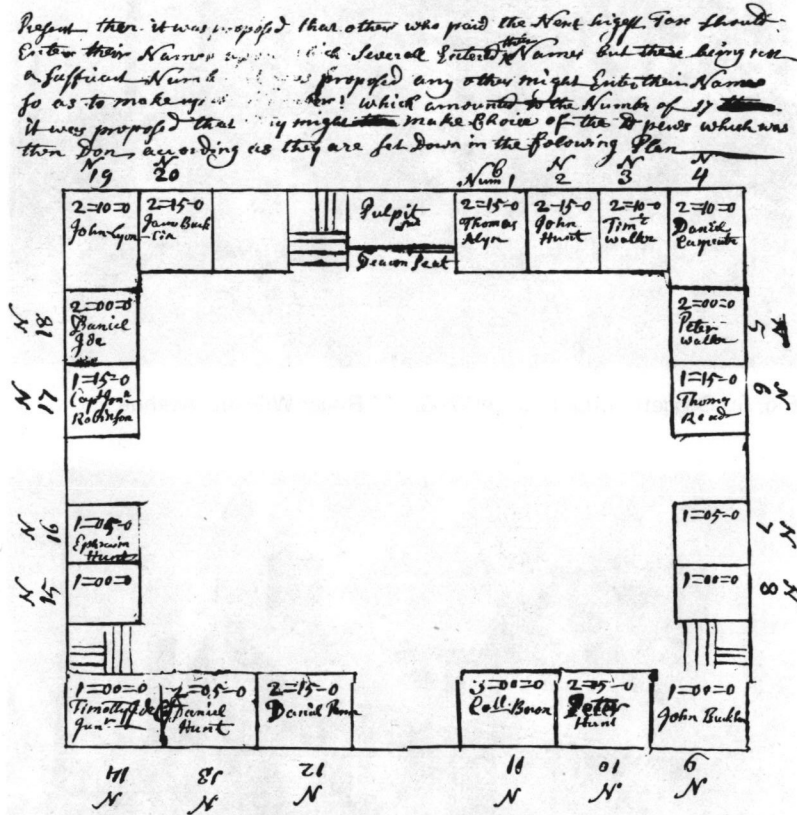


Fig. 7: Newman Church, third building (1716-1718), seating plan.

At least five eighteenth-century houses that once fronted the enormous Ring survive. One of the finest is the Hyde-Bridgham house (120 Pleasant Street) built in 1767 by Ephraim Hyde shortly after becoming pastor of the Congregational Church (Figure 7). Its symmetrical five-bay facade and five-room plan arranged around a large central chimney make it a good example of large country houses of this period. The original parlor and bedroom flank the entrance, with the keeping room and two ancillary rooms running across the rear. Reflecting the considerable means at the disposal of its owner, the parlor contains elaborate raised paneling contrasting with the simple plaster wall surfaces found in many contemporary Rehoboth dwellings. Joseph Bridgham purchased the house in the 1780s and made additional interior embellishments. His son, Samuel, later gained distinction as a state representative, as Attorney General of Rhode Island, and as Providence's first mayor. This civic-minded spirit was perpetuated by Samuel Bridgham, Jr. who added a wing to the farmhouse in 1857 that served as the community library for almost a half century. The farm has remained in possession of the family up to the present and offers a now rare glimpse of open space, giving some clue to the character of much of the eighteenth-century landscape.



Fig. 8: Hyde-Bridgham house (1767), 120 Pleasant Street.

Not long after Hyde's house was completed, a similar but less elaborately finished residence was erected by the Hunt family close to their mills (ca. 1770s-1780s). Its plan deviates from the five-room arrangement of the former in that the keeping room lies to one side of the central chimney rather than to its rear. This organization is found in several East Providence houses built during the late eighteenth century and has also been discovered in dwellings located in western portions of Providence and Kent Counties. It represents an heretofore unnoted variation in regional building patterns which appears to have been centered in Rhode Island and thus may reflect some of the influence that colony had on Rehoboth.

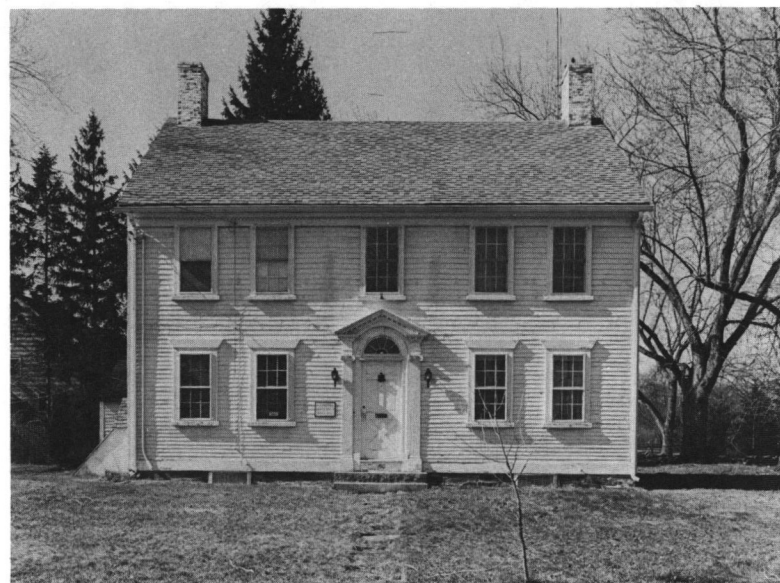


Fig. 9: Phaniel Bishop house (ca. 1770), 150 Greenwood Avenue.

An equally imposing residence that incorporates the side keeping room is located at 150 Greenwood Avenue, built by Phaniel Bishop ca. 1780 (Figure 9). Bishop was a learned and well-traveled man with a distinguished military career who served in both the General Court of Massachusetts and the United States House of Representatives. The plan of his residence is unusually sophisticated for a country dwelling of the period, foreshadowing what would become a standard arrangement only in the early nineteenth century.



Fig. 10: House (ca. 1730s), 319 Willett Avenue.



Fig. 11: Kent house (ca. 1750s), 184 Wampanoag Trail.

Instead of a center chimney, the house has two at either end, allowing for a large hall and staircase to run through the middle, generating a sense of spaciousness and formality not present in the earlier five-room type. The Bishop house is of further interest because it initially contained two separate apartments, one on each floor. This arrangement was not uncommon in the region from the mid-eighteenth century on and was the beginning of what would become a ubiquitous dwelling form after the Civil War.

The diffuse settlement beyond the Ring for the most part consisted of isolated farmhouses set alongside the roads: Willett, Newport, and Pawtucket Avenues, Broadway, and Wampanoag Trail. This pattern remained prevalent over much of the East Providence landscape well into the nineteenth century and still characterizes a large portion of present-day Rehoboth. Among the earliest to establish a homestead far removed from the village center was James Brown, who had settled near Bullock Cove by 1655 on land purchased by his father about a decade earlier. The house at 319 Willett Avenue (ca. 1730s) reputedly stands on the site of Brown's dwelling (Figure 10). It is said to have incorporated materials from the earlier structure, a practice not uncommon in the period. All visible evidence of the interior arrangement (and of any reused materials) was removed in the early twentieth century when the inside was remade after the fashion of a bungalow. This simple one-story building is representative of what were probably dozens of houses scattered throughout the area. Another example of the type is the Viall house (ca. 1720s-1730s) at 787 Willett Avenue. Two-story farmhouses, comparable to those then being erected around the Ring, could also be found in these outlying sections by the second half of the century (Figure 11).

Eighteenth-century commercial structures in rural districts were generally similar to houses in their appearance. Through careful study of their plans, the presence of original non-domestic functions can be detected in several East Providence buildings. The Abel house (ca. 1750s) at 66 Greenwood Avenue has a very large room on each floor of its east side, indicating the building was probably used as a tavern in addition to being the owner's residence (Figure 12). In order to provide ample room for horses and wagons, the original entrance was almost certainly in the rear of the building (now obscured by a nineteenth-century ell), opening onto a parking yard, not unlike the arrangement of many high-

way stops erected during the last forty years. The Sherman house (ca. 1750s) at 111 Roger Williams Avenue was probably built as a store and erected in two nearly identical sections within a decade or so of each other. There is no evidence of separate living quarters here; anyone inhabiting the building must have slept in the store itself or in the loft. If the building's date can be confirmed, it would be among the earliest surviving commercial structures in the state. Externally, the residence at 1419 South Broadway (ca. 1760s) is quite similar (Figure 13). Here the plan suggests both living and commercial spaces. The latter probably functioned as an office or a store which was entered directly from the street, while access to the domestic portion appears to have been from the gable end. Situated on a sloping site, facing Watchemoket Cove, the house also has a large basement which may have contained a blacksmith shop.

Into the Nineteenth Century

The early Republican period was neither one of pronounced physical change nor of rapid growth for the community. Agriculture remained the dominant economic base; and, since most of the land was already cultivated, relatively little building activity occurred. Furthermore, the decline in demand for farm produce following the Revolution made the local economy somewhat unstable for about two decades. In all likelihood, a number of farmhouses that were erected resulted from the subdivision of land among heirs or were replacements of earlier, less commodious dwellings. As was typical in rural areas, traditional building patterns persisted long after they were superseded by new ideas in the cities. Thus, many of the houses erected in East Providence during this period used designs developed several decades previously with only slight modifications. Such was the case with the Ide house at 923 North Broadway (ca. 1810s) (Figure 13) and the Cole house at 1609 Pawtucket Avenue (probably 1812). Both adhere to the standard five-bay Georgian formula developed over a half a century earlier, which had now become slightly larger in its proportions, with more elegant and refined classical details, and incorporating a large axial stairhall as found in the Bishop house. A somewhat unusual feature about these two houses is that their exterior walls are entirely of brick, a material usually reserved for urban buildings at the time. Brick was considerably more expensive than wood, but it was readily available from yards in Barrington and along the Palmer River.



Fig. 12: Abel house (ca. 1750s), 66 Greenwood Avenue.



Fig. 13: Ide house (ca. 1810s), 523 North Broadway.



Fig. 14: Allin house (prob. after 1805), 36 Willett Avenue.

A major exception to the prevailing conservatism in design is the large house at 36 Willett Avenue, which in all likelihood was built by Pearce Allin, shortly after he acquired the property in 1805 (Figure 14). As a wealthy sea captain, Allin may well have had the farm more for its advantages as a tranquil country retreat than as a primary source of income. The house is much grander than most contemporary farm dwellings in the region, although its exterior is deceptively simple. Clapboard sheathing over the brick walls on the front and rear elevations, as well as splayed lintels, help retain traditional farmhouse imagery. On the other hand, large proportions, combined with the thinness of moldings and of the wall surface treatment in general, reflect contemporary taste for attenuated elegance. Inside, the rooms are considerably larger, with higher ceilings and more delicate detailing than those of the eighteenth century in the area. The entire ground floor is comprised of a stairhall, running the full length of the house, and expansive double rooms on either side. The kitchen and other service functions were contained in outbuildings (now demolished) to the rear.

Seekonk Centre: The Nineteenth-Century Village

Much of the physical change which occurred during the first half of the nineteenth century was concentrated around the Ring. In 1810, a new Congregational church was built, larger but perhaps less elaborate than its predecessor (Figure 15). Its basic rectangular form, with an end tower and entrance as well as its extremely simple articulation, make the building typical of many rural New England meeting houses of the time. Like the residences built during this period, it manifests the perpetuation of a strong eighteenth-century design tradition. As it exists today, the church differs considerably from its original appearance. Several decades after completion, the bell tower and tall spire were replaced by the present Greek Revival belfry, and in 1890 the entire building was raised and given a new entrance.

Even as the new church was being erected, the prominence of its site in the center of the Ring was substantially diminished. In 1812, the area which comprises present-day East Providence and Seekonk as well as the eastern part of Pawtucket separated from Rehoboth, and Seekonk was adopted as the name of the "new" township. Concurrently, the Ring was sold by the town fathers. Although much of this acreage remained open farmland for at least several decades, building activity was now concentrated at its south-

eastern end, around the intersection of Greenwood and Pawtucket Avenues and Pleasant Street. This emerging village came to be known as Seekonk Centre and, after 1862, as East Providence Centre. At this convergence, the Baptists had erected a church in 1795, much like the one to be built by the Congregational parish fifteen years later. Prominently sited, it instantly became the dominant visual element in the community, with the small yard at its front serving as the new village green. Added importance was given to the location by the construction of a Town Hall (ca. 1814) on the adjacent property. Probably the first structure in the township specifically built for the purpose, it continued to house a variety of civic and social functions until it was demolished in 1957.



Fig. 15: Newman Church (1810), Newman Avenue.

The number of houses erected in Seekonk Centre during the following decade was not large, but sufficient to give the community the village characteristics by which it is identified today (Figures 16 & 17). Many of the owners of these dwellings were merchants or professionals, serving the surrounding area. The master builder, Nathan West, was practicing in the community by the 1840s and was responsible for some, perhaps many, of its new buildings. The house at 383 Pleasant Street, which West built in the 1860s, reflects the conservatism of rural design (Figure 18). It uses the same basic model as the Ide and Cole houses built half a century earlier. Like them, the principal modifications are in its proportions (such as higher ceilings) and details (most conspicuously in the Greek Re-

vival doorway, which itself was at least ten years out of fashion). Another of West's products, built in 1866 as a tenant house for the Bridgham farm, shows the same traditional approach with Greek Revival details applied to a one-and-a-half-story building (Figure 19). The one major exception to this approach is the house at 344 Pleasant Street, built in the 1860s for Dr. Thomas Aspinwall (Figure 20). While the massing remains an eighteenth-century holdover, the substantial increase in vertical dimensions and the consolidation of facade articulation into fewer and much larger elements, accentuated by elaborate pieces of ornament, bespeak contemporary Victorian taste.

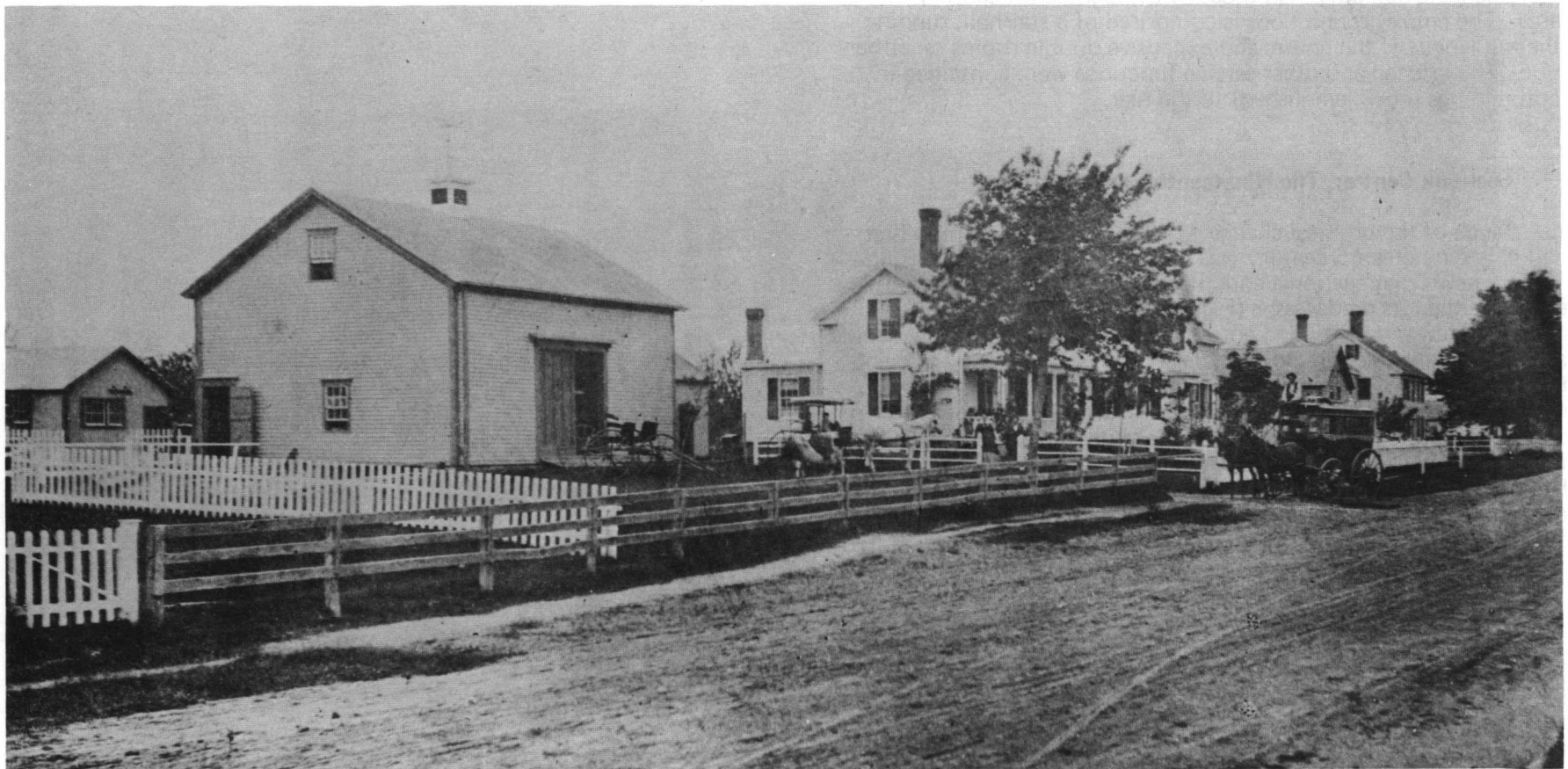


Fig. 16: West houses, Nathan West, bldr.; 355, 367 Pleasant Street, photo ca. 1870s.

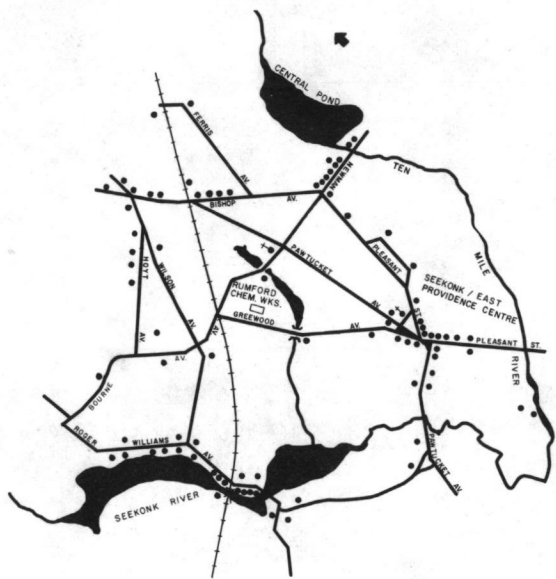


Fig. 17: Seekonk (East Providence) Centre, 1859.



Fig. 18: West house (1860s), Nathan West, bldr., 383 Pleasant Street.



Fig. 19: Bridgham tenant house (1866), Nathan West, bldr., 150 Pleasant Street.



Fig. 20: Aspinwall house (1860s), 344 Pleasant Street.

The Roots of Change

During this period, several important developments in transportation occurred that would have a major impact on the area in the second half of the century. 1793 saw the opening of two rival toll bridges, the Washington (India Point) Bridge and the Central (later Red) Bridge across the Seekonk River (title page). Ferries had existed before, one of them dating back to the seventeenth century; but these new links made Providence much more easily accessible and served to strengthen the ties between the two communities. With the improvement of overland routes, East Providence's geographic position became increasingly important, traversed as it was by stage roads connecting Providence with Bristol, Warren, Fall River, and Boston. Not long after the Washington Bridge was opened its owners constructed a new turnpike to Taunton. In 1830 the Boston and Providence railroad was organized. Its tracks were laid within a few years and extended from Bold Point through the northern part of the area, across the former Ring. Twenty years later, the Providence and Bristol Company was founded, its line running south along the shoreline of Providence harbor. A third line, the Providence and Worcester, opened in 1868, connecting Watchmocket to Pawtucket and central Massachusetts. In turn, these events helped generate a variety of development which would have a lasting effect on the area's physical character. Some of the more picturesque farmland began to be used for sites of large suburban villas. Dense town building started in the vicinity of the Washington Bridge, creating a new community that would soon eclipse Seekonk Centre in size and importance. Large-scale industry was introduced primarily in the northern sector. A series of shore resorts erected along the harbor and bay made the southern portion one of the region's principal recreation areas. Finally, the long-growing relationship between Seekonk and Providence was legally consummated in 1862 when the western portion of the former community was annexed to Rhode Island, and its name changed to East Providence.

Almost Suburbs

The open, gently rolling countryside of East Providence as well as its proximity to the city made it an ideal area for suburban villas. Most of this development occurred on the bluffs overlooking the Providence River where panoramic views and sea breezes made the site especially desirable. Furthermore, the location of the Providence and Bristol railroad along the shoreline provided easy access. Nevertheless, having a house in the country, however, was at first limited



Fig. 21: Howard house (ca. 1869), 3169 Pawtucket Avenue.



Fig. 22: Dennis house (ca. 1870s), 3120 Pawtucket Avenue.

to the well-to-do who could afford the regular commuting fares. A number of these houses remain. Two of the best preserved are the imposing Italianate residence of Albert C. Howard (ca. 1869) at 3169 Pawtucket Avenue and the James Dennis house (ca. 1870s) at 3120 Pawtucket Avenue (Figures 21 & 22). In 1883, a small subdivision for such villas was proposed for nearby Kettle Point. Laid out by the distinguished Chicago landscape architect, Horace W. S. Cleveland (who five years earlier had prepared a master plan for Roger Williams Park in Providence), it would have taken full advantage of the site's choice location with curving roads following the shoreline. However, the scheme remained on paper; its failure was prophetic. A number of prominent Providence men built villas or purchased old homesteads in the town, but East Providence never developed into an exclusive suburban enclave comparable to, say, Brookline, Massachusetts. One obvious explanation for this situation is the fact that large parcels of open land still existed in Providence's fashionable East Side.

Watchemoket: Emergence of a New Town

Concurrently, however, East Providence was becoming a major suburban area for the middle and working classes. In 1845, Joshua Mauran, a wealthy Providence merchant, platted a substantial portion of his property near the Washington Bridge into a subdivision which encompassed some 22 blocks, extending from the Seekonk River to Lyon Avenue, and from Warren Avenue south to Juniper Street (Figure 23A). Tristram Burges, a prominent Rhode Island lawyer and politician who had retired to a farm nearby, quickly followed Mauran's initiative, having several large sections of his land along both Warren and Taunton Avenues platted during the next decade. Thus began the community that would soon come to be known as the Watchemoket District. Located right at the end of the Washington Bridge, Watchemoket was an end-product of the enormous influx of people into the Providence area during the second half of the nineteenth century. Most of those who settled in the new community either worked in Providence or were involved in activities directly related to its economy. The installation of omnibus lines by the 1870s and especially of electric streetcar lines in the 1890s greatly expanded the commuting range of the middle and working classes, just as the railroads had done for the wealthy. Thus a substantial portion of East Providence became easily accessible to large numbers of people for the first time. Between 1865 and 1895 its population rose from 2,172 to 10,170; the inhabitants

of the Watchemoket area alone swelled from about 800 persons to over 6,000. Not only did it have the largest concentration of people, but during this period it became the town's commercial, governmental, and institutional center.

What statistics show to be a fast, steady growth, was, in detail, a complex and often unpredictable process. Judging from the size of the initial subdivision plats, expectations of Watchemoket's development potential ran high. But the demand for property fluctuated and frequently fell far short of anticipated levels. A respectable cluster of houses quickly grew up at the western end of the district close to the bridge, but subsequent building activity was sporadic and piecemeal. Several decades would pass before most of the lots Mauran and Burges had platted filled up. Even before this was accomplished, a second land rush occurred during the late 1860s and early 1870s resulting in numerous subdivisions being surveyed throughout the area, some as far east as the Seekonk line, others penetrating the farmlands south to Kettle Point (Figure 23B-D). A similar land boom occurred in the 1890s. During both periods, many of these developments were never realized, and numerous streets could be found only on paper. At the same time, the core of this area, fanning out along Taunton and Warren Avenues to Broadway, became a relatively compact settlement.

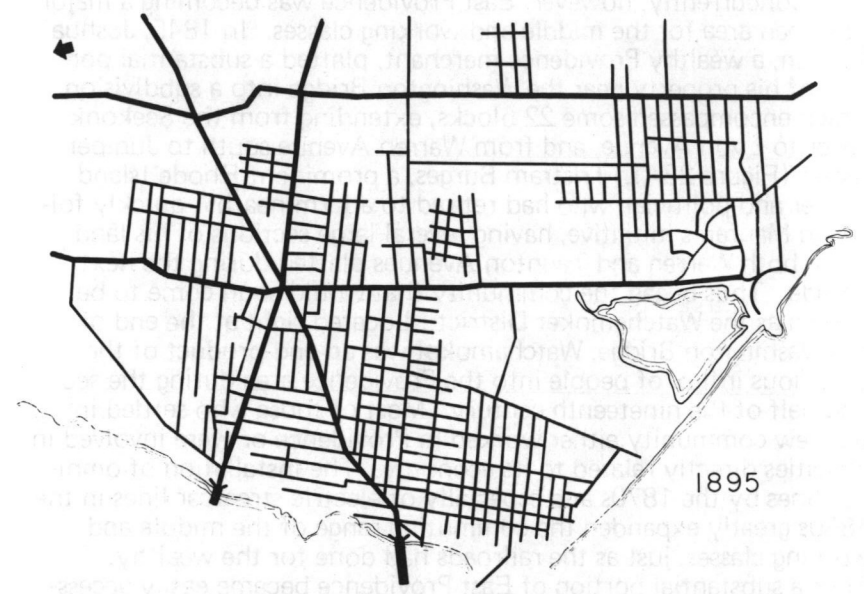
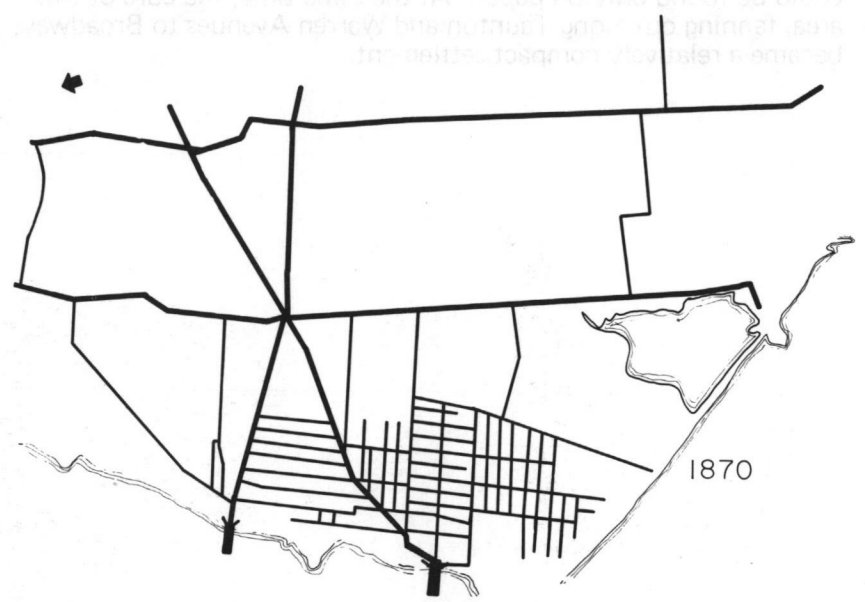
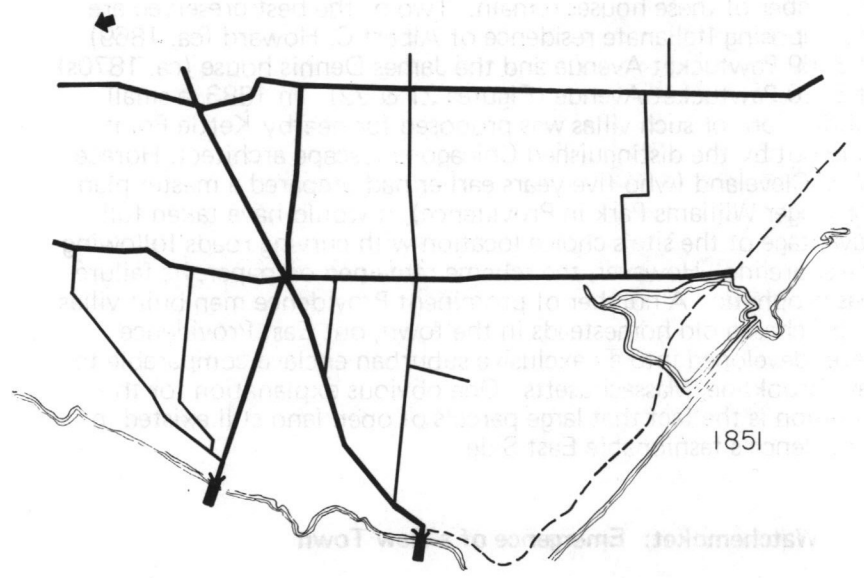
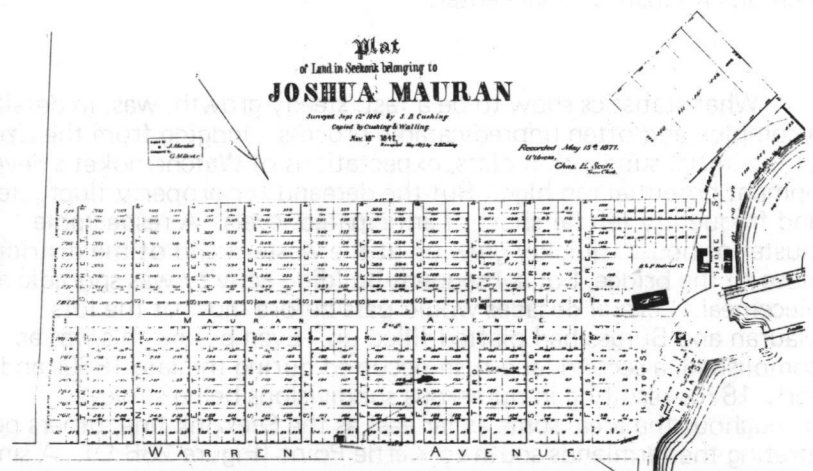


Fig. 23: A) Mauran plat (1845), B-D) Mapped streets in Watchemoket area, 1851, 1870, 1895.

Here, too, the development was hardly uniform. Aside from Burges, Mauran, and a few others, most of the people who subdivided the land in East Providence were small property owners. No overall plan existed. Lots were generally sold to individuals one at a time. These people, in turn, either erected a house for themselves or constructed the building as a speculative investment. Sometimes builders, ten of whom were living in Watchemoket by 1890, entered the speculator's game. Among the most important was Thomas Henry Ray who erected hundreds of buildings in the region between the 1870s and the early twentieth century. He is credited with introducing to the local scene the practice of constructing groups of speculative houses on adjacent lots at one time. However, he used this method primarily in Providence and Pawtucket. Most of Ray's Watchemoket houses, like those of his colleagues, were either single products, or, less frequently, executed in small groups. The amount of time consumed in filling the house lots on a given block was often about a decade, and sometimes the process could take much longer, as was the case with Walnut and Summit Streets where some forty years of building activity is represented.

The dwellings that were gradually erected on these blocks assumed several different forms. Some were owned by well-to-do professionals and merchants who worked in Providence or by prosperous local men, such as Ray, and were similar in size and style to many then going up on Providence's East Side. The Charles Weaver house (ca. 1868) was among the earliest of these examples. Another example is the residence built by George Webster, a distinguished Providence lawyer, at 214 Waterman Avenue (ca. 1878) (Figure 24). Originally, the Ray house (ca. 1882) at 210 Taunton Avenue was equally striking and probably the largest house in the district; but much of its visual quality has recently been negated by the application of aluminum siding. Clusters of these substantial dwellings appeared in several sections of the district, most notably around the intersections of Taunton and Waterman Avenues with John Street. However, these remained small nodes, with less pretentious dwellings of the lower middle and skilled working classes growing up around them (Figure 25).



Fig. 24: Webster house (ca. 1878), 214 Waterman Avenue.



Fig. 25: Miles house (ca. 1870s) destroyed, and 3-decker, Waterman Avenue at James Street.

The great majority of houses in the area represent a mixture of traditional building practices and relatively up-to-date stylistic elements. Pattern books, somewhat similar to the ones that can still be obtained at many newstands, were the primary source for the designs. Unlike most books of this type published prior to the Civil War, they did not contain the work of leading architects. Instead, the designs were prepared by little-known men who either published the books themselves or who worked anonymously for "plan factories," such as the Hodgson Company in Chicago and the Cooperative Building Plan Association in New York. Such men borrowed freely from their more distinguished colleagues and at the same time translated this material into more-or-less standard patterns that could be easily executed by skilled carpenters. These books strenuously promoted the fact that their plans represented the latest styles, yet the designers were at least one step away from the trends they sought to emulate, and the very process of standardization allowed little room for innovation. The duality between fashion and tradition was further perpetuated by the men who used these books, almost all of whom in East Providence were builders, not architects. By nature, builders are generally conservative; and many of them probably did as their successors in the early twentieth century are known to have done. Initially, they relied on pattern books to supply the basic models for their designs, but, with experience, each man came to employ variations he had developed and continued these models as long as the market for them existed. Still, the greatly increased flow of information through publications (including newspapers) and through mass transportation made the builder much more aware of changing trends, at least those in his immediate region. Even if he did not alter the basic form of his dwellings, he could attach modish details, since mass-produced ornament was readily available from building supply firms, such as Manchester and Hudson in Providence. A time-lag remained between the point when an idea would be used by leading Providence architects and when it would be picked up by builders; but the period was significantly reduced, and change occurred much more frequently than it had in the first half of the century. Understanding this process is important because it is how most of the physical fabric in East Providence up through the mid-twentieth century has been built.

Tracing one of the standard house types with which local builders worked shows how stylistic features frequently changed, while little deviation occurred in basic form. Among the most prevalent types in the region was the one-and-one-half-story house, with its gable end to the street, which began to appear in East Providence

around the 1870s. This form was developed during the Greek Revival period some thirty years previous, adapting the moderate size house to the typically narrow urban and suburban subdivision lots. By the time it was introduced to the Watchemoket area, this end-gable type often carried fancy, mass-produced Italianate ornament (brackets, projecting lintels, bay windows, etc.) exemplified by the house at 694 North Broadway (after 1870) (Figure 26). During the next decade, shingles, creating rich surface patterns over the walls, and more abstract, geometric ornament began to appear on the same basic form (Figure 27). About ten years later, increasingly restrained patterns were used with the various elements on the facade clearly articulated (Figure 28). In each case, the details given these buildings represent styles developed about fifteen years earlier. But, whereas major differences in the use of form and space occurred with a new style's inception, the principal changes in these builders' houses lie with the facade treatment. As long as the end-gable model was retained, only minor variations could take place in the plan. Usually, the stairhall was on one side with the kitchen to its rear, and the living and dining rooms on the other side, a basic arrangement that dates back to the mid-eighteenth century. The variation in detail, but similarity in mass and scale, which characterize these houses give many of Watchemoket's streets a desirable order and cohesiveness without any sense of monotony (Figure 29).



Fig. 26: House (ca. 1870s), 694 North Broadway.



Fig. 27: House (between 1884-1895), 12 6th Street.



Fig. 28: House (between 1895-1900), 24 Mary Avenue.



Fig. 29: Houses on Walnut Street (ca. 1880s).

While the majority of Watchemoket's houses were for single families, many buildings containing two dwelling units were interspersed throughout the area. These generally emulated the single-family house on the exterior — using the same standard types, incorporating similar decorative treatment, and being set in an open yard. Some were duplexes, usually an enlarged one-and-a-half-story cottage divided down the center with relatively inconspicuous side entrances (Figure 30). A more functional arrangement for the narrow lot was the two-story, end-gable type, such as the Weaver house, with one apartment on each floor (Figure 31). A few tenement houses (the standard nineteenth-century dwelling form of the urban working class) were constructed in the district, especially near the waterfront around Watchemoket Square. But the pressures for development were never sufficiently strong for this type to proliferate.



Fig. 30: Double house (ca. 1900), 718-720 Broadway.



Fig. 31: Double house (ca. 1880s), 107 Vine Street.



Fig. 32: Watchemoket Square (Ingraham Bldg. on right), photo ca. 1919.

Commerce and New Institutions

A large town center never developed in Watchemoket, despite the community's rapid growth. Downtown Providence was sufficiently close to serve as the principal commercial district. Most of the stores that were built in Watchemoket provided everyday goods, such as groceries, pharmaceuticals, and hardware. These services were first concentrated in Watchemoket Square, facing the Washington Bridge at the intersection of Taunton and Warren Avenues. Reputedly, the first store was started by John T. Ingraham in 1846, a year after Mauran's plat. A number of small wooden buildings were clustered around the Square by the time Ingraham began construction of a three-story commercial block in 1870 (Figure 32). About five years later, Thomas Ray erected a more pretentious structure with a corner tower close by. Initially, these two buildings not only contained stores but housed several municipal operations and social groups as well. The Square continued as a commercial focus for the district into the 1920s; however, its importance waned steadily with almost no significant building activity occurring there after the 1880s. Upon the completion of the new Washington Bridge in 1930, the Square was completely bypassed, and most of what remained was demolished in the 1960s to make way for approach ramps to Interstate 195. However, several handsome commercial and institutional buildings located just east of the Square on Warren Avenue have fortunately survived. These include the Victorian Gothic St. Mary's Episcopal Church (1872) by a New York State architect, G. E. Harney, and the former hall of the International Order of Odd Fellows, a distinguished Shingle Style building designed by the Providence firm of Gould and Angell (1889) (Figure 33).

By the 1880s, Watchemoket's population center had begun to shift to the east, away from the area around the Square. With many local businesses trading in so-called convenience items they tended to locate at points close to their customers. The result was the gradual horizontal spread of development along portions of Taunton and Warren Avenues. The pattern was reinforced by the spot location of institutional and civic functions, primarily on Taunton Avenue. Between 1860 and 1882, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, and Universalist churches were built along the street. One of the key contributors to this linear growth came from the selection of a site about halfway between Watchemoket Square and Broadway for the new Town Hall (1888-1889) (cover). Replacing the old structure in East Providence Centre, it was a manifestation of the shift in the community's primary role from that of a small agricultural



Fig. 33: I.O.O.F. Hall (1889), Gould & Angell, archs., 63-67 Warren Avenue.

village to that of a rapidly growing town. East Providence was still a collection of scattered settlements. Nevertheless, the growth of Watchemoket signalled the beginning of a counter force that would gradually reduce their separateness. Centralizing many of the municipal activities, the new Town Hall reflected this change. For the first time, it brought the town offices, police and fire departments, the library, and the public meeting hall together. In effect, it served as a civic center and was long regarded as a symbol of the emerging unified community. Although it had experienced a number of alterations, particularly on the interior, the building remained intact until it was destroyed by fire in 1976 – its loss, a major one for the city.

The architect of the Town Hall was William R. Walker, a native of East Providence and a descendant of Philip Walker. Headquartered in Providence, his firm was established in the 1860s, and during the late nineteenth century became one of the largest and most distinguished in the region. The office, run successively by Walker, his son, and his grandson, designed a large number of civic and institutional buildings throughout the state. Among the most notable of these in East Providence are the United Congregational Church (now the Y.M.C.A.) (1886-1887, 1931) at 725 North Broadway and the First Baptist Church (1879) at 1400 Pawtucket Avenue (Figure 34). The latter structure gave new visual prominence to East Providence Centre with an imposing facade that was unusually ornate for buildings of the denomination. It followed the latest taste of the period with highly interpretive, late eighteenth-century (“colonial”) details and vigorous surface timber articulation. Well preserved, it is one of Walker’s best remaining works and among the better examples of its period in the region.



Fig. 34: First Baptist Church (1879), Walker & Gould, archs., 1400 Pawtucket Avenue.

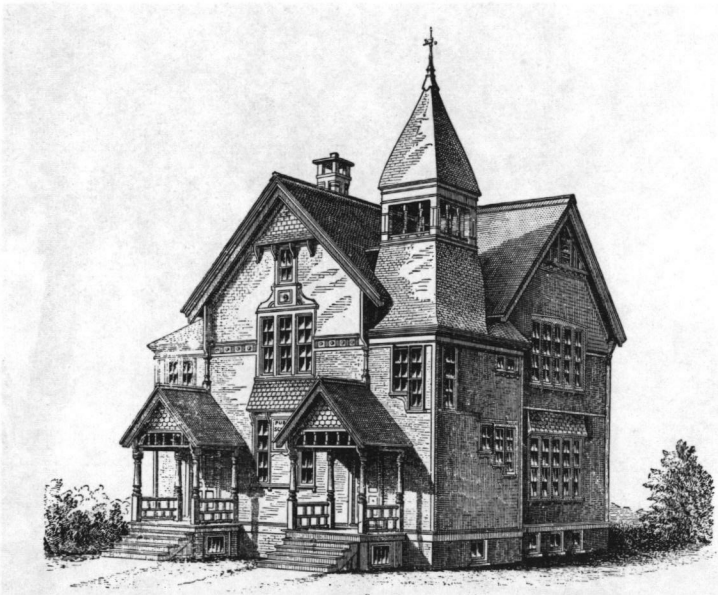


Fig. 35: James Street School (1879), Frank Sawtelle, arch., 75 James Street.



Fig. 36: District School #6 (ca. 1870), 351 Willett Avenue.

Schools

During the 1880s and early 1890s, five primary and elementary schools were constructed in Watchemoket and surrounding areas. None were centrally located; rather they were distributed throughout the neighborhoods, thus adding to the town's visual diffuseness. Like churches, these buildings were designed as prominent landmarks which gave focus to their immediate environs, reflecting the rapidly increasing importance society was placing on public education. Several noted Providence architects, including Walker, Frank Sawtelle, George Cady, and Edward Angell, were retained to design them. All have disappeared except Walker's at 115 Williams Avenue (1888-1889) and Sawtelle's at 75 James Street (1882-1883) (Figure 35). The James Street School was probably the most ornate to be built in Watchemoket, with intricately patterned free style decoration (then called Queen Anne), and stood intact until 1970 when it was unsympathetically renovated.

Rural districts had much more modest schools, most of which were simple one- and two-story buildings erected shortly after East Providence was annexed to Rhode Island. As the population continued to grow, some of these buildings, such as the Union Primary School (1873-1874) at 1310 Pawtucket Avenue, were enlarged. Others, it was hoped, would no longer be needed as new, more centralized structures were built. However, the ongoing building program did not keep pace with enrollment, and several rural schoolhouses continued to be used well into the twentieth century. Concurrently, some of the rural schoolhouses scattered in outlying areas of East Providence were being replaced by much larger, centralized buildings, and, as a result, farm children were bussed from their rural enclaves to areas of denser population. The early type consisted of one or two rooms housed in a modest, often crude, structure. Only one example has survived in recognizable form, the District School #6 (ca. 1870) at 751 Willett Avenue (Figure 36). Well preserved as a Girl Scout center, it ironically has outlasted the building intended to replace it, William Walker's Turner Avenue School (1880-1881), a handsome stick style building which stood until the early 1950s when it was regrettably demolished (Figure 37).



Fig. 37: Turner Avenue School (1880-1881)

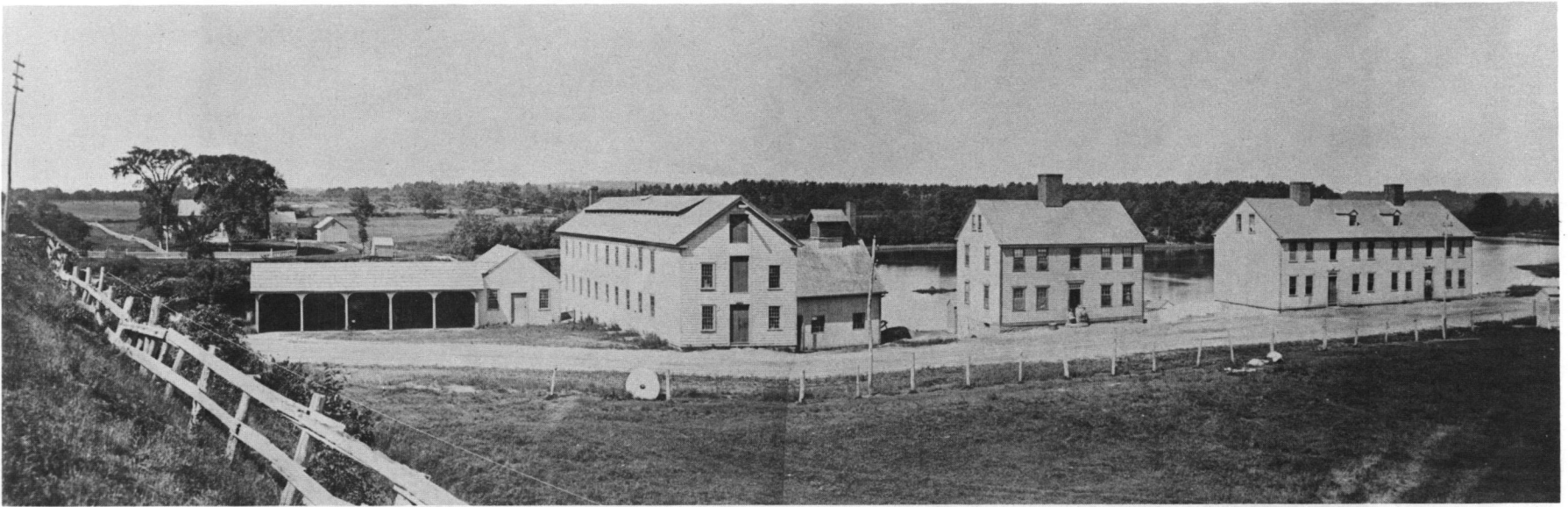


Fig. 38: Omega (Clyde) Mills (early 19th century), Roger Williams Avenue.

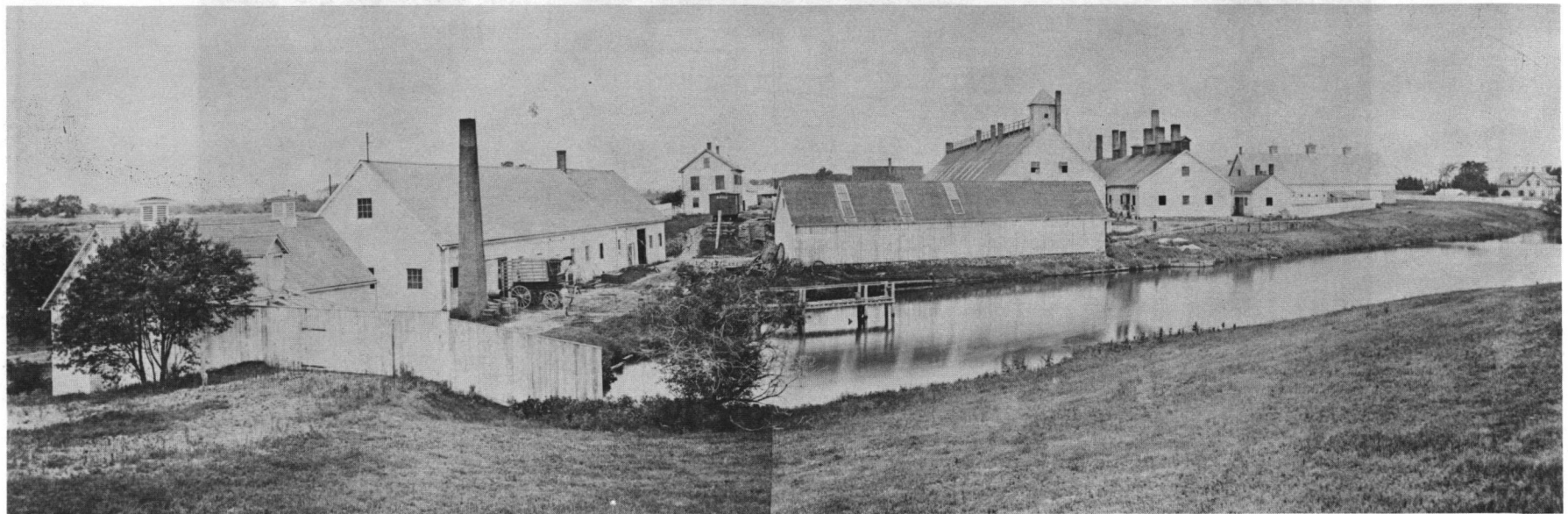


Fig. 39: Rumford Chemical Works (ca. 1858 et seq.), Greenwood Avenue.

Industrial Development

At the same time as residential development was beginning to take hold in Watchemoket, the open lands to the north began to be used for manufacturing purposes. Small-scale operations on the Ten Mile River had long been in existence, with grist and saw mills dating back to the seventeenth century. In the early 1800s, cotton mills were erected at the head of Seekonk Cove (Omega, later Clyde Mills, ca. 1801) and at Hunts Mills (ca. 1823). These were soon joined by another cotton mill at the south end of Central Pond. The Omega Mill, which stood until 1974, was a simple stone building, in configuration not appreciably different from the workers' housing built around it (Figure 38). The Ten Mile River, however, did not generate sufficient power to support major textile plants like those constructed in other parts of the state by the 1830s. Nor was water power available along the Seekonk River below the falls at Pawtucket. On the other hand, the abundance of open and relatively inexpensive land as well as its proximity to both Providence and Pawtucket did make the northern portion of East Providence a potential site for industries which did not need large supplies of adjacent running water for their manufacturing processes. In 1857, this opportunity was seized by George F. Wilson, owner of the Rumford Chemical Works. Moving his plant from Providence, he located on land which had been part of the Ring. This was the first major development on the former common, but, visually, the change was not as great as might be expected. In contrast to the large masonry buildings erected to house textile plants in that period, the various operations of Wilson's enterprise were contained in separate barn-like wood-frame structures (Figure 39). The appearance of these early buildings was inevitably the result of practical, not esthetic determinants; nevertheless, the result provided a complementary element to the rural landscape in which the works were set.

Pastoral isolation was probably not what Wilson wanted. Once the main plant was established, he began purchasing the older industrial sites: Central Mills in 1873, Hunt's Mills in 1877, and Omega Mills ca. 1878. Subsidiary operations were started at the latter site, and a small steel works was begun on Grinnell Point along the Seekonk. By the late 1870s, the Rumford Chemical Works owned most of the property fronting the Ten Mile River and along the Seekonk River north of Omega Pond. The concern also held some 800 acres of farmland, where a variety of agricultural products were raised primarily for sale to company employees. Wilson's long-range plans for his holdings are not known; however, some clue of his intentions is given by the fierce, but unsuccessful, cam-

paign he led to have the needed replacement for the Red Bridge realigned so as to feed directly into his domain. He may well have been hoping to sell much of his land for large-scale industrial, commercial, or residential development. Wilson's plant, itself, flourished; and by the late nineteenth century, large masonry buildings began to replace the earlier structures (Figure 40). Still, the Rumford Chemical Works remained a factory in the country. The company erected few workers' houses; many of the employees were highly skilled and sufficiently well-off to build their own dwellings near the plant or in Watchemoket. In 1897, a large piece of the company's property was sold to the Agawam Hunt Club as a golf course. Shortly thereafter, Wilson's own house was converted into the Wanamissett Country Club. Additional parcels were gradually platted for subdivision. Only within the last thirty years have other manufacturers located near the plant; but, by this time, the land around them was well developed as a suburban community.

Although inland property remained semi-rural, Wilson did induce several small-scale industries to locate along the Seekonk River north of Omega Pond, beginning in the 1870s. The most significant development here occurred in 1893 when a wealthy Providence manufacturer of insulated wire, Eugene Phillips, relocated his plant



Fig. 40: Rumford Chemical Works, monocalcium phosphate plant (ca. 1890, ca. 1895).

to Grinnell Point (Figure 41). Eight years later, the Washburn Wire Company merged with Phillips' American Electrical Works, and subsequently a steel mill was erected next to the existing plant. Shortly before, the Sayles Corporation purchased the land to the north for the Glenlyon Bleachery. The scale of this industrial compound far exceeded any of its predecessors in East Providence. The Washburn Wire Company alone was the largest single employer and among the largest taxpayers in the town. Many of its workers commuted from Providence and Pawtucket as well as Watchemoket, a trip facilitated by the extension of a trolley line along Roger Williams Avenue in the late 1890s. About the same time, both Washburn Wire and Glenlyon began an energetic campaign to erect company housing close by. Some of the first units were probably moved to their present locations in order to accommodate immediate needs. Many others were built on the premises, and, by 1910, a new community, named Phillipsdale, had emerged (Figure 42). In its configuration, this settlement is a late version of numerous low-density mill villages built in New England during the nineteenth century. Rows of houses, surrounded by yards, form a regularized version of many small towns. Early villages of this type were generally built because their factories were isolated from existing communities. By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, however, such housing often stemmed from a paternalistic desire to provide decent quarters for employees. A number of the houses in Phillipsdale were patterned after those in model English working-class towns such as Bournville and Port Sunlight (Figure 43). There were dis-

advantages: when a worker lost his job, he also lost his house. On the other hand, living conditions in company dwellings could be appreciably better than comparable quarters elsewhere. Long since transferred to individual ownership, the houses in Phillipsdale still form a desirable segment of East Providence's residential fabric.

Related development occurred at Hunts Mills during this period. A pumping station was erected there in 1893, primarily to serve the Rumford Chemical Works and the new Phillipsdale factories (Figure 44). Subsequently, the Sayles Corporation assumed control of the facility, adding a picnic ground and small amusement park to the complex. The Ten Mile River's scenic qualities were also preserved. The area became a favorite place for weekend excursionists from Providence, and a cluster of canoe houses and refreshment stands were erected on the river near Omega Pond (Figure 45). Rather than inhibiting these recreational activities, the nearby factories helped foster them, not only with the development on Hunt's Mills, but by retaining much of the land along both the river and pond. Industrial expansion was sufficiently limited and sufficiently close to other areas so as not to incur the intense residential and commercial building patterns experienced in cities such as Pawtucket and Woonsocket. Although the amusement park and canoe clubs have long since disappeared, industrial and low-density residential land uses continue to co-exist in the area, which could again become one of the city's finest scenic and recreational assets.

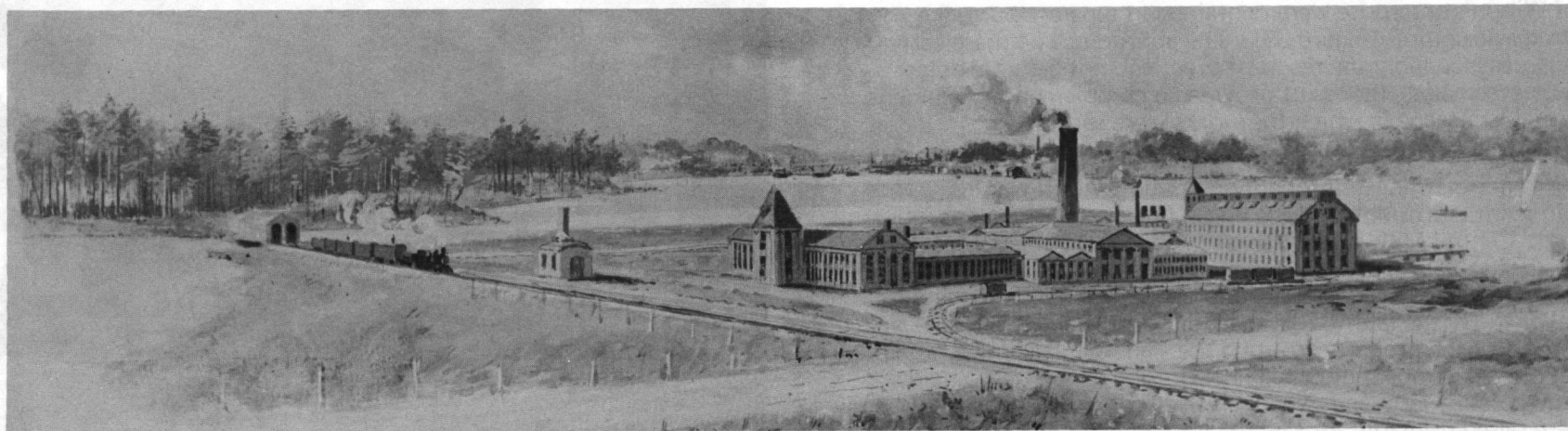


Fig. 41: American Electrical Works (Washburn Wire Co.) (1893), 293 Bourne Avenue.

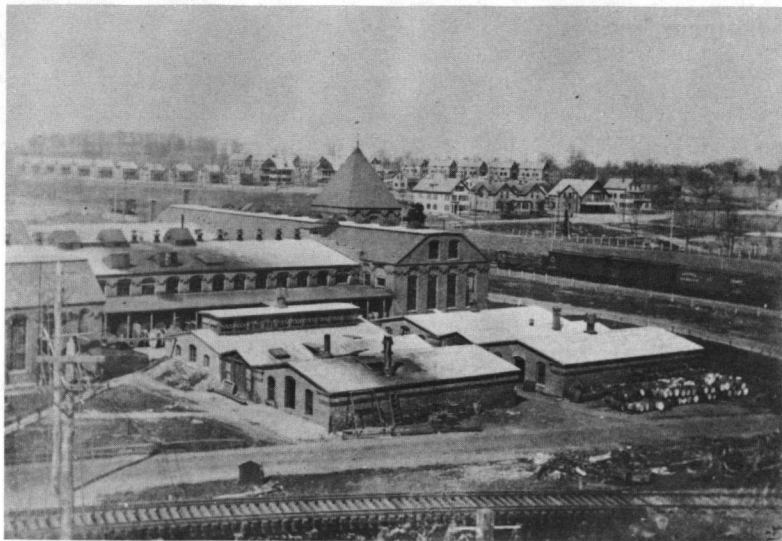


Fig. 42: Phillipsdale from Washburn Wire Company, photo ca. 1900.



Fig. 43: Double houses for the Sayles Corp. (ca. 1910), probably Hilton and Jackson, archs., 242-252 Roger Williams Avenue.



Fig. 44: Pumping Station (1893), Hunts Mills Road,



Fig. 45: "Canoe carnival," Omega Pond, ca. 1900s.

Summer Resorts

Almost a century before the Ten Mile River drew crowds of visitors to its banks, the East Providence shoreline along the Providence River and upper Narragansett Bay had become a popular place for picnics and clambakes. During the 1840s, such activities assumed a new dimension with the construction of the elegant Vue de l'Eau Hotel (Figure 46). Situated on a bluff high above the water (the site is now Bergin Avenue), the establishment catered to wealthy New Englanders who sought its mineral springs and isolated location for sustained periods of relaxation. But the enterprise was relatively short lived. The structure burned in the early 1870s and was never rebuilt. The site was no longer so remote and towns along the coast, such as Newport and Narragansett Pier, had become well established as the region's most desirable resorts. Portions of the East Providence shoreline did however remain exclusive enclaves as gentlemen's eating clubs where the clambake was formalized into a gastronomic ritual. The most famous of these organizations, and the last one to survive, is the Squantum Association, chartered in 1872. Its early buildings were small, ornate cottages. By the turn of the century these had been replaced by more elaborate quarters, culminating in a handsome neo-Colonial clubhouse (1899) perched on a rocky promontory high above the water (Figure 47). Since that time its grounds have experienced little change and still impart a sense of the character much of the shoreline once possessed.

As East Providence fell out of favor as a resort for the wealthy, its popularity among the middle class was rapidly growing. Among the earliest facilities to draw large numbers of people from the region were the shore dinner halls along the bay. Situated in the shadow of the Vue de l'Eau, the Ocean Cottage was the first such establishment, opening its doors in 1863. Silver Spring, next door, was inaugurated six years later (Figure 48). These catered primarily to day excursionists who could reach the area easily by train or bay steamer. However, a few rooms were available for overnight guests, and cottages which could be rented for longer periods of time were also on the premises (Figure 49). Further south, two small summer colonies, Camp White and Cedar Grove, were started in the late 1860s. Both compounds were comprised of tents and other temporary shelters. Communal dining halls offered an informal existence, much of which was spent in the open. In 1870, a sizable hotel, the What Cheer House, opened adjacent to Camp White, and soon it too spawned a cottage colony on Bullock Point, an area that would come to be known as Narragansett Terrace. In contrast to the Vue de l'Eau Hotel, the buildings for all these establishments

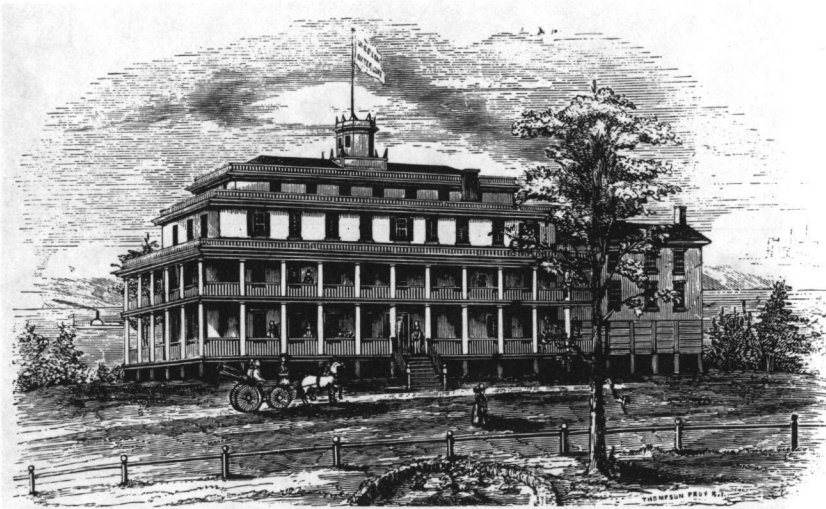


Fig. 46: Vue de l'Eau Hotel (before 1850), destroyed.



Fig. 48: Silver Spring (1869), destroyed.



Fig. 47: Squantum Association (1899-1900), Martin & Hall, archs., 947 Veterans Memorial Parkway.

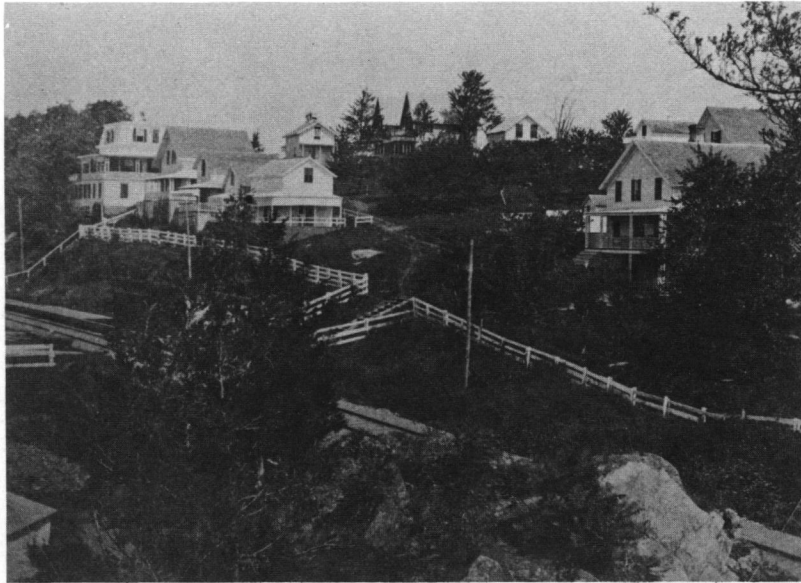


Fig. 49: Cottages at Silver Spring (ca. 1870s), mostly destroyed.

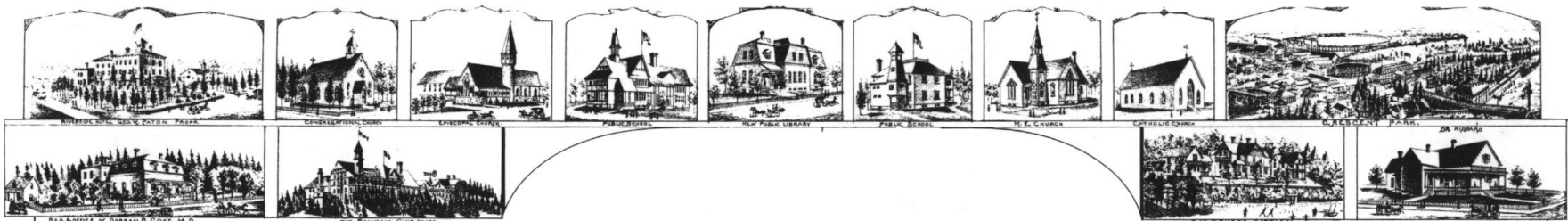
were simple, unpretentious structures providing basic but not luxurious accommodations. Their principal spaces were the large, barn-like dining halls where fresh seafood was served in large quantities at low prices.

Realizing the potential for more intense resort development, a group of businessmen from Providence and Pawtucket, headed by Lysander Flagg, began to purchase sizable tracts of land above Camp White in 1870. Within three years, an area extending from Sabin's Point to Willett Avenue had been platted into subdivisions for house lots. The design was hardly an imaginative one; it compressed a sizable number of narrow rectangular parcels into blocks arranged in a grid pattern, which ignored the picturesque terrain. Only one of the subdivisions, Cedar Grove, deviated from this arrangement (Figure 50). There, roads followed irregular, curving forms in a miniaturized version of model American suburban developments such as Riverside, Illinois, designed two years previously by the eminent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. The similarity may have been more than coincidental, for Flagg's enterprise was named the Riverside Land Company and local tradition credited his inspiration to a midwestern community he had recently visited. Another

source may have been the plan of Oak Bluffs, a religious summer colony on Martha's Vineyard, platted in 1866. Practical determinants also probably played a role in Cedar Grove's plan, for the streets were arranged so as not to necessitate the demolition of any of the buildings already existing on the property.



Fig. 50: Cedar Grove Plat (1871).



RIVERSIDE
 PLEASANT BLUFF, CAMP WHITE & CRESCENT PARK, R.I.
 1894.

1. POST OFFICE & PUBLIC LIBRARY
 2. CAMP WHITE HOTEL & COTTAGE FRONT
 3. CONGREGATIONAL HOTEL & RESTAURANT
 4. PLEASANT BLUFF HOTEL & RESTAURANT
 5. HOTEL DEER HOLE & COLONY PARK
 6. EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 7. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 8. M. E. CHURCH
 9. CATHOLIC CHURCH
 10. THE HOTEL
 11. THE HOTEL
 12. THE HOTEL
 13. THE HOTEL
 14. THE HOTEL
 15. THE HOTEL

Fig. 51: Riverside, panoramic map, 1894.



Fig. 52: Summer cottages (1870s), 57-61 Washington Street.

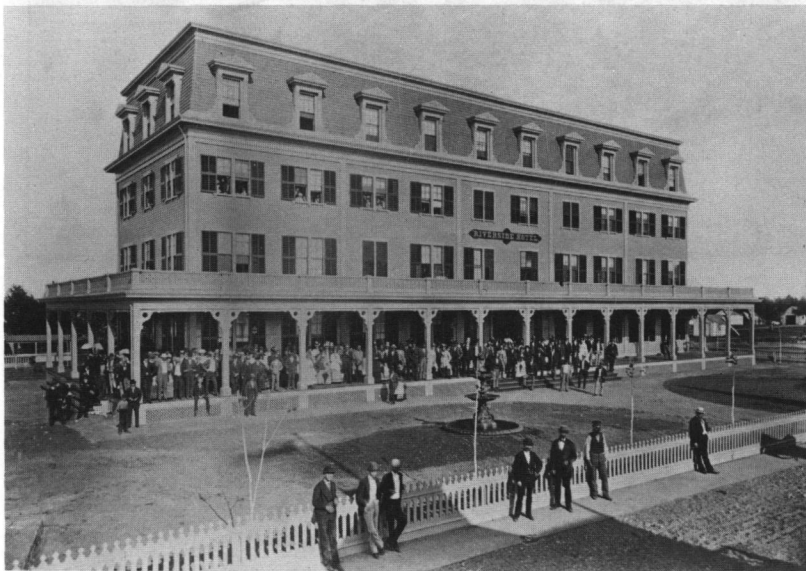


Fig. 53: Riverside Hotel (1875), moved 1882.

Over the next three decades, Riverside, as the whole community came to be called, developed into a flourishing resort town (Figure 51). The regularity of much of its plan was tempered by the variety of wooden cottages Flagg and individual residents built. For the most part, these were small buildings with no more than three or four rooms and a front porch. Some were quite plain, but others carried decorative scrollwork, patterned shingles, and other ornamental features typical of the period (Figure 52). The streets they fronted were little more than wide paths which contributed to the intimate, pedestrian scale of the community. By the late 1890s, Riverside is said to have had the largest concentration of summer residences on Narragansett Bay. These were augmented by hotels, eleven of which were in operation in 1890. Among the earliest and most elaborate was Flagg's Riverside Hotel (1875) (Figure 53). Apparently, it was too large, too expensive, or both, for the establishment closed after only five years, and the building was subsequently moved by barge to Nantucket. Its competitors were less assuming in appearance, some of them being little more than boarding houses, others catering as much to the shore dinner crowds as to overnight guests.

Even as Riverside was reaching its peak as a summer community, a year-round suburban population had begun to settle there; by the late 1920s its days as a resort had ended. The remaining hotels acquired disreputable functions; many of them burned or were destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. A large number of new houses, generally similar to those in Watchemoket, were built while the old summer cottages gradually were converted to accommodate full-time use. Fortunately most of the early buildings remain, and, if they were sensitively rehabilitated, much of the community's former ambience could be restored.

One of Riverside's recreational attractions has enjoyed greater longevity. In 1886 George B. Boyden opened an amusement arcade named Crescent Park on the property adjacent to the What Cheer House. During the next decade, it became one of the largest, most popular places of its type in New England, drawing crowds from Massachusetts and Connecticut as well as Rhode Island. By the late 1890s, as many as 50,000 to 75,000 people a day visited the park on weekends. The physical plant grew rapidly, assimilating the hotel and adding more elaborate rides, including a roller coaster and two carousels (Figure 54). The manufacturer of the merry-go-rounds was Charles I. D. Loeff, among America's earliest and foremost men in the trade. His second carousel at Crescent Park was constructed

ca. 1895, and, after Loeff moved to Riverside in 1905, it became his showpiece (Figure 55). New carved animals and other embellishments were periodically added for display to prospective clients. Loeff remained in the area for only five years; however, his son (Charles, Jr.) continued to operate the carousel and in 1920 purchased the entire park which stayed in family hands until 1966. Crescent Park has diminished in size and importance; its early buildings have either been destroyed or remodelled. Still, the carousel remains in an unusually good state of preservation and is recognized as one of the finest surviving examples in the country. As the continued existence of the park is in question, every effort should be made to ensure that the carousel and its shed are not dismantled and sold piecemeal, a fate now common for these rides.



Fig. 55: Crescent Park, carousel (ca. 1895 et seq.), Charles Loeff, des.

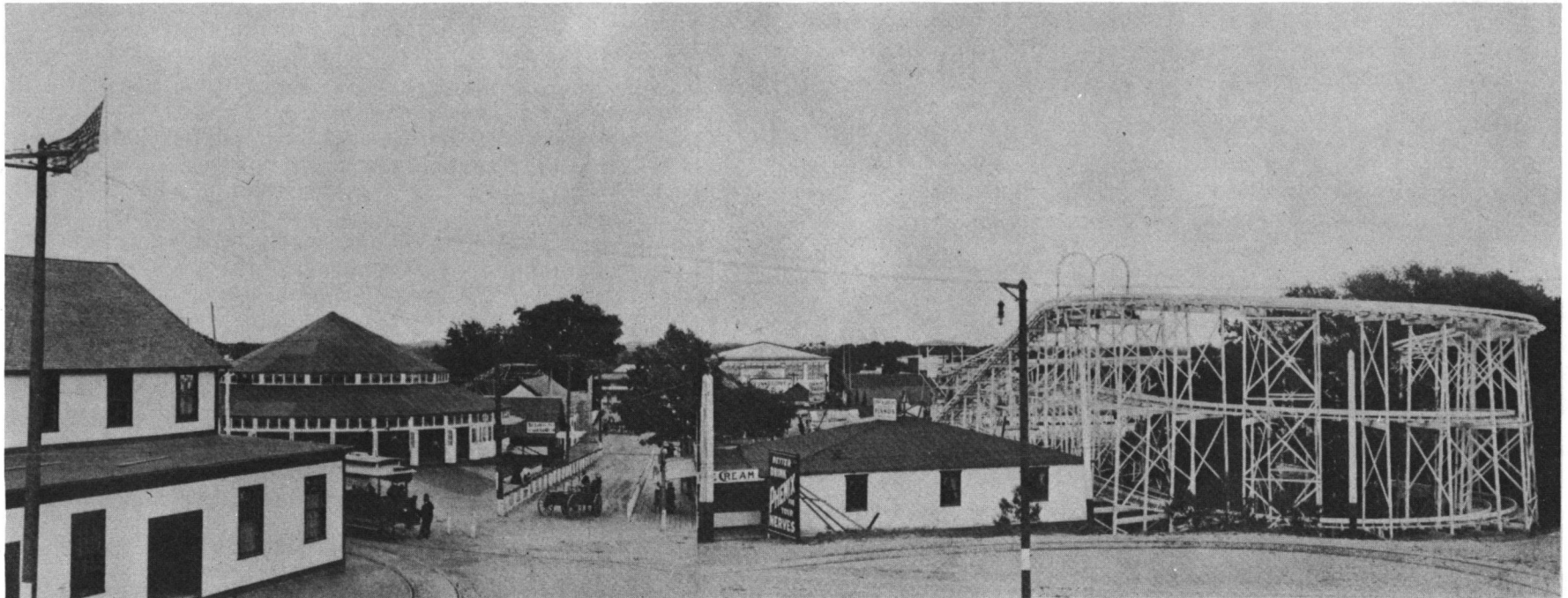


Fig. 54: Crescent Park, general view, photo ca. 1898.

Prompted by the success of Crescent Park, two other amusement centers were started in the early twentieth century. George Boyden came out of recent retirement to build Boyden Heights on the former grounds of Ocean Cottage (ca. 1904). A much more ambitious park named Vanity Fair was soon undertaken nearby. As conceived, it would probably have been the most grandiose establishment of this nature north of Coney Island (Figure 56). Its plan was not the usual loose organization of attractions along a mid-way, but was a formal, axial arrangement of buildings fronting a lagoon and terminating in a spectacular shoot-the-chutes. A major inspiration for this design came from recent world's fairs, most notably the 1902 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. Opened in 1907, the park was more modest than its original plans. Even so, the developers over-extended themselves, and the grounds were closed within a few years. Perhaps as a result of the competition, Boyden Heights also folded. Shortly thereafter, the character of the area began to change. Boyden Heights was platted for subdivision in 1910, and, in 1915, Vanity Fair's property was purchased by the Standard Oil Company for a refinery. As with its predecessor, the new facility was much smaller than had originally been intended. Nevertheless, the oil storage tanks erected over the following decades came to occupy much of East Providence's shoreline, ending the open, picturesque qualities it had enjoyed for so long.

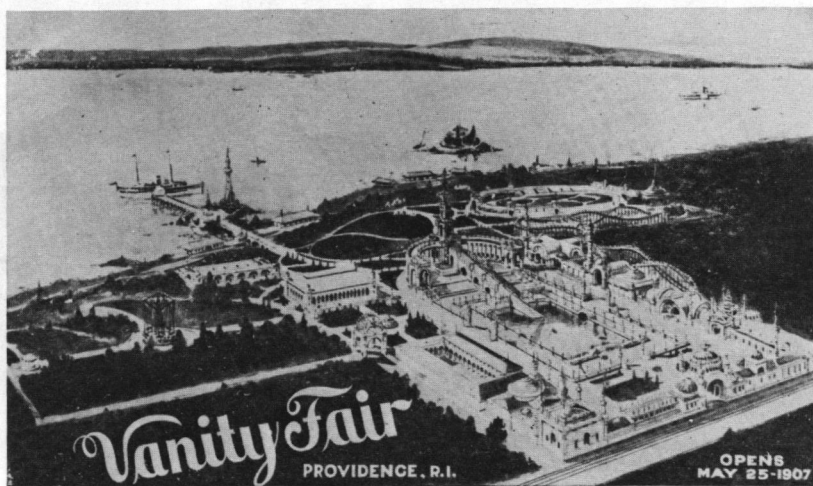


Fig. 56: Vanity Fair (1907), preliminary scheme, Copeland and Dole, archs., destroyed.

The Twentieth Century: Growth and Stabilization of Watchemoket

During the first three decades of the new century, Watchemoket continued to grow in much the same manner it had done over the previous years. Many new, generally small subdivisions were platted, covering an area which extended as far as the Ten Mile River, Pawtucket Avenue, and Kent Heights. But development of these tracts was, for the most part, gradual and uneven, with sizable parcels of land remaining open. Many of the sections that did experience buildings became small subcommunities unto themselves. The center of town remained along the western block of Taunton, Warren, and, by this time, Waterman Avenues. The biggest growth period for this area was prior to the First World War; however, another decade would pass before building activity significantly decreased. The process was more a filling out of surveyed properties than one of replacing earlier structures. Furthermore, most of the new houses were comparable in size and relative cost to those built in previous decades. Thus the small scale and variety which had come to characterize the community were perpetuated.

Like their predecessors, these dwellings were ultimately derived from pattern books, primarily built on an individual basis rather than in large groups, and were designed by contractors. The most significant difference to arise was in house type. During the 1910s, several new forms became popular, replacing the nineteenth-century models discussed earlier. One of these was the bungalow, a low-slung cottage which became prevalent in California and the midwest after 1900 and gained acceptance in the east during the following decade. In part the manifestation of a growing middle-class distaste for Edwardian opulence, the bungalow eschewed applied ornament in favor of simple, rustic materials such as shingles and small boulders (Figure 57). An important difference occurs in many of the plans of these dwellings as well. Instead of having the ground floor divided into a series of small sections, the entry and living room, and in some cases the dining room, were combined in a single space, inducing a less formal and allegedly more convenient mode of living. Many larger two-story residences had similar characteristics, as did the two-family house which often repeated the bungalow plan one atop the other (Figure 58).

Responding to this new growth, an increasing number of commercial facilities were erected along the arterial streets. Some of these were substantial one- and two-story masonry buildings that re-



Fig. 57: Barr house (1912), 385 Massasoit Avenue.



Fig. 58: Double houses (ca. 1923-1928), 57-71 4th Street.

placed smaller wooden structures or converted houses. New institutional focuses appeared as well. East Providence's first high school was built at 255 Taunton Avenue in 1908-1910 with a large section added to accommodate junior high students in 1929. Nearby, the Haven Methodist Church erected an imposing complex (1929-1931) (Figure 59), as did the Masons at about the same time. Although these buildings helped increase the metropolitan character of the streetscape, they were essentially indicators of the town's stabilization as a suburban community, rather than barometers of a shifting role within the region.

A principal reason why the nature of Watchemoket's growth patterns did not appreciably change between the 1860s and 1930s was that it lay outside the primary axis of commercial and industrial growth of the greater Providence area. This concentration extended along a roughly northeast-southwest line from Pawtucket to Cranston, and it was here that the major transportation lines ran connecting the region with Boston and New York. A very different picture might have evolved beginning in the eighteenth century were it not for the sharp bend, formed by Bold and India Points, at the mouth of the Seekonk River. This configuration, and the strong

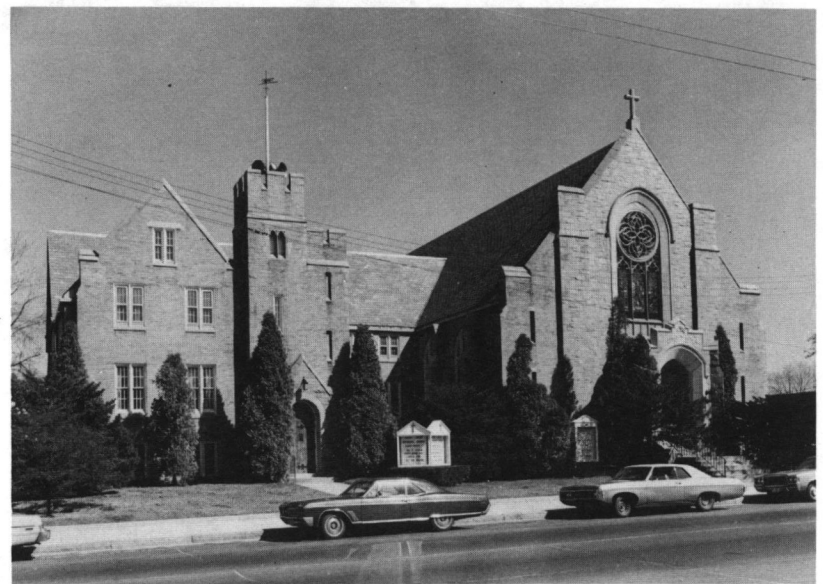


Fig. 59: Haven Methodist Church (1928-1931), Woodbury & Stuart, archs., 200 Taunton Avenue.

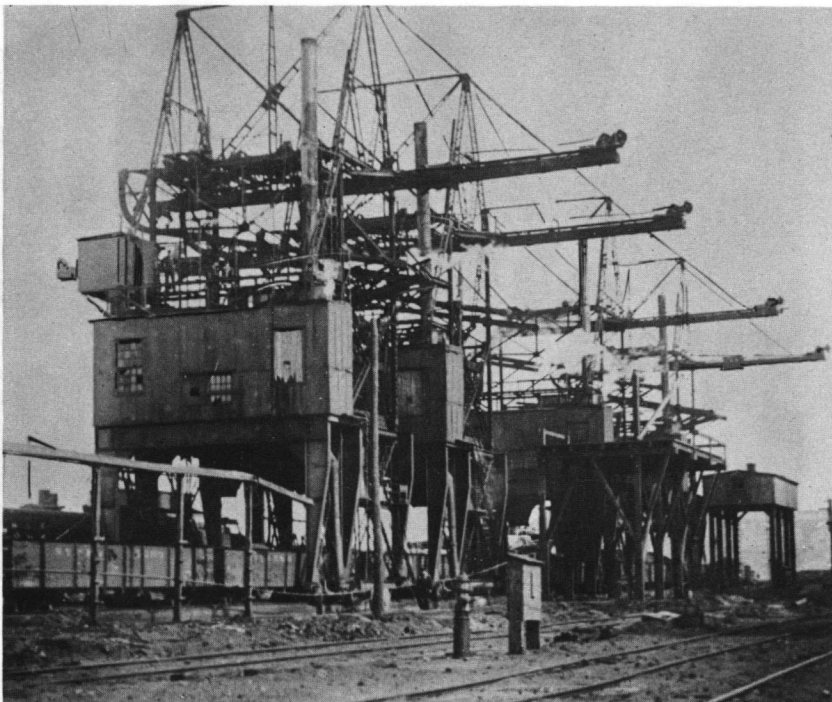


Fig. 60: Wilkes Barre Pier (ca. 1903), coal derricks, destroyed.

currents generated by it, were major inhibitors to navigation, preventing intense use of an otherwise ideal waterway. In 1915, a very ambitious proposal was made to alter the situation, by cutting a channel through Fort Hill, using the removed soil to fill Providence Harbor in a straight line from Kettle to Fox Points, and creating piers along the entire run. Had such a plan been implemented, the character of East Providence would have been drastically changed, and today it might lie in the middle of one of the east coast's largest ports. As it was, some port development did occur, much of it related to the oil storage facilities growing up along the shoreline. East Providence also became a center for Rhode Island's flourishing oyster industry, which had become the third largest in the state by 1910. The Sealshipt Oyster System's plant on Water Street processed over one million gallons of their product annually. Other, mostly small-scale manufacturing operations were also located in the vicinity. But the most impressive facility was the Wilkes-Barre Pier on Bold Point.

Constructed ca. 1874, it was later purchased by the Providence and Worcester Railroad, undergoing substantial enlargement in 1891 and again ca. 1903, which made it one of the largest piers used exclusively for the discharge of coal in the country (Figure 60). Some 530 ships unloaded upwards of a million tons of coal there in 1913. The Pier along with the oil storage tank fields and refinery to the south formed a major source of tax revenue for East Providence. None of these operations was labor-intensive, however, and they had relatively little direct impact on the residential enclaves nearby.

The Spreading Townscape

Beginning in the 1920s, a shift in development patterns emerged with a scattering of new building activity outside the major population centers of Watchemoket and Riverside. To a large extent, this was made possible by road construction programs initiated during the previous two decades. In 1903, a plan for a regional network of open spaces and parkways was initiated to link the scattered communities which comprised the greater Providence area. Patterned after a similar scheme then being implemented in Boston, the purpose of the Metropolitan Park Plan was both to preserve precious land for recreational use and to open previously remote areas for development. The scheme included a sweeping proposal for the utilization of East Providence's extensive shoreline. Land along the Ten Mile and Seekonk Rivers would be connected with Blackstone Boulevard at Watchemoket, thence continue as a parkway to Kettle Point. Although much of the plan remained on paper, one major segment was realized in East Providence: the Barrington (now Veterans' Memorial) Parkway. A product of the eminent landscape firm headed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (whose father had designed Riverside, Illinois), the road was begun in 1910 and completed several years later (Figure 61). Much of the shoreline it was designed to enhance has been greatly changed with the construction of oil storage tanks, but the parkway has preserved the scenic bluffs as open space and has formed an effective shield between the tanks and the adjacent residential areas. Had it not been erected, this section of the city might well resemble the industrial shoreline of Providence directly across the harbor.

Even more consequential in terms of subsequent development patterns was the statewide program, also instituted in 1903, to upgrade major roadways. At the onset, the project entailed grading and macadamizing existing dirt road beds, slight improvements by today's standards, but ones which enabled vehicular traffic to circulate with relative ease the year round for the first time. Then, responding to the rapid increase in automobiles and trucks, the program was expanded after the First World War to include substantial widening, straightening of road beds, and laying of concrete surfaces (Figure 62). In turn, many of these new roads were enlarged to four-lane motorways during the 1930s. The roads thus affected in East Providence were Pawtucket, Newport, and Willett Avenues, the Wampanoag Trail, and portions of Broadway, Waterman, Warren, and Taunton Avenues, a network that covered most parts of the town. This program probably had as far-reaching an impact on the landscape as had any other single factor since the Newman Settlement.



Fig. 61: Veterans Memorial Parkway (1910 et seq.), Olmsted Brothers, landscape archs.



Fig. 62: Sections of Pawtucket Avenue near Warren Avenue, 1906 and 1926.

Whereas the residential development in Watchemoket, the summer colony in Riverside, and various industrial plants were confined to relatively small areas, the road system was all inclusive. An immediate effect was the destruction of the pedestrian scale and picturesque, rural quality which had characterized the roads themselves, eliminating the rows of trees and stone walls that had lined them. But of more lasting impact was the stimulus this matrix provided for greatly intensified linear growth, which has since been the principal form of development in East Providence.

The increments through which suburban development occurred in the 1920s and 1930s were small, if considerable, in their cumulative effect, echoing the process that had characterized Watchemoket's expansion. Commercial building was spotty and unfocused; most of the new facilities were highway oriented businesses, such as small stores, diners, and gasoline stations. Major intersections provided opportune points for the congregation of these outlets. But since the automobile made intermittent stops easy, many such facilities were simply located on available property alongside the road. Likewise, residential development was no longer tied to trolley



Fig. 63: Elm Tree Plat (1925 et seq.), Carlson & Anderson, devs. & bldrs., Charlotte Street.

stops. Bungalows and larger house types began to appear in a seemingly random fashion adjacent to or close by the highways. Some previously out-of-the-way subdivisions platted decades earlier now gradually began to fill up with dwellings. The fact that more building permits were issued for garages than for houses themselves during the prosperous period of 1924-1929 gives an indication of the widespread use the automobile rapidly acquired in the community.

Although most of the new houses were built individually, small-scale speculative subdivisions began to occur during the latter half of the 1920s and for the first time made a significant imprint on the landscape. Among the earliest successful undertakings of this nature is the Elm Tree Plat, consisting of three, one-block streets (Harvey, Elinora, and Charlotte) reaching off Willett Avenue. A product of the developer-builder team of Severin Carlson and Charles Anderson, construction began on the houses in 1925 and took about three years to complete (Figure 63). The tract consists of several more-or-less standard bungalow types set close together in rows. Like the Watchemoket streetscape, its density is higher than most later suburban tracts. But even when the spacing of houses remained compact, new imagery made these subdivisions quite different in character from their predecessors. A good example is Rose Land Park (Dartmouth and Florence Streets) developed by Carlson and another builder, Carl Johnson, in 1928. In contrast to the unassuming bungalow, the dwellings here emulate the picturesque qualities of English cottages, now compressed to tiny dimensions. Such an historicizing approach to design was, by the 1930s, gaining wide-spread acceptance in East Providence, with eighteenth-century New England houses as the most popular models. Appropriately, the area where they first proliferated was in the vicinity of the former Ring of the Greene.

Rumford: The Colonial Suburb

The Great Depression brought a drastic decline in building activities throughout East Providence as in most other parts of the country. The biggest slump hit in 1932 when the number of building permits plunged from 183 for the previous year to 36. Another four years would pass before the total rose above 60. With many people forced into mortgage foreclosures, a substantial surplus of houses existed, available for a fraction of their worth to the few able to afford them. Many of the small-time builders who had formerly thrived in the town were unable to continue business.

When the demand for houses began to increase, after 1935, the new center of activity was in the northern section of the town. East Providence Centre had long since ceased to be appropriate nomenclature for the community, and "Rumford," which had been used to designate the area around the chemical works, gradually became identified with the entire area. Prior to the 1930s much of it had remained open, despite the surveying of numerous subdivisions. The gently rolling land, the presence of two country clubs, and the filling out of Providence's East Side by the 1920s made Rumford an appealing place for the middle class of both Providence and Pawtucket. Some of the new houses were larger and more costly than most erected in East Providence up to that time. Still, most of these dwellings remained the products of builders rather than architects. Among the major figures were Howard Pierce (who had started as a builder of bungalows in about 1920), his nephew Burton Batty, and George Pickett. Repeating earlier development patterns, many of the houses were done on an individual basis. The small scale, so pervasive in the town, was often maintained by short culs-de-sac sprouting off older roads.

Soon larger developments were planned, one of the earliest and most pretentious of which was Drowne Parkway. Platted in 1936, the majority of houses in the tract were erected over the next three years. Various builders (including Pickett and Earl Taylor) as well as architects (including Michael Traficante) were involved, each selected by the purchaser of a given lot. At the same time, restrictions in lot size, set-back, and probably design afforded the street a sense of cohesiveness seldom found in East Providence prior to that time (Figure 64). Even more regularized was Pierce's tract on Don Avenue between Greenwood and Pawtucket Avenues. The land was replatted by Pierce in 1939 on one of several parcels the Rumford Chemical Works had surveyed but had been unsuccessful in marketing. He not only sold the lots but designed and built the houses for the individual owners. As with so many earlier dwellings in East Providence, these are of a popular type — the two-story "colonial" — consisting of several more-or-less standard plans to which a variety of minor variations could be made (Figure 65). Its consistency in siting and style would become prevalent characteristics for most of the developments built throughout the town after the Second World War.



Fig. 64: Drowne Parkway (platted 1936), various archs, and bldrs.



Fig. 65: Don Avenue (platted 1939), Howard Pierce, bldr.

The majority of Rumford's new houses looked to the imagery of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century American dwellings, translating them into contemporary types. The most common varieties were the "colonial" (two stories with gable or hip roof), "garrison" (two stories, the second of which projects slightly on the facade, with gable roof), and "cape" (one-and-one-half stories with gable roof). In plan, these buildings were generally arranged to accommodate present-day living patterns and sometimes had "modern" backyard elevations with large areas of glass opening onto a patio or garden. The street front, however, was generally a conservative statement, its details often coming fairly close to those of the historical prototype. Building supply firms that had once made gingerbread ornament now provided a wide variety of "colonial" doorways, moldings, and dormers.

The severe conditions of the national economy during the 1930s provided a stimulus for some architects to seek new approaches to design and building technology. A wide range of experimental work was undertaken, much of it the ideological stepchild of European modern movements of the two previous decades. Both the machine imagery of the northern European-based International Style and prefabrication techniques using mass-produced industrial components were considered effectual responses to the situation. Rumford has one example of such efforts, the Monsarrat houses (1936) at 366 Newman Avenue, built of frameless, interchangeable steel panel construction developed by the General Housing Corporation, one of the country's more innovative prefabricators of the period (Figure 66). Only in California, however, did such unconventional approaches win the acceptance of more than a small fraction of the population before 1950. Thereafter, "modern" architecture became increasingly used, especially for commercial and institutional buildings; but only during the last ten years has it gained wide-spread appeal in the mass housing market.

For most people the uncertainties wrought by the Depression fostered a yearning for cultural security and caused many to search through the American past in quest of those values modern society had somehow lost. This sentiment substantially reinforced the taste for eighteenth-century American design, resulting in, among other things, an increased desire for "authentic" reproductions. The Weaver Memorial Library (1938) (Figure 67), for instance, is a rather direct adaptation of the Williamsburg Court House restored a few years earlier. Its size and imagery not only reflect the continu-



Fig. 66: Monsarrat houses (1936), General Housing Corp., des., 366 Newman Avenue.

ation of East Providence as a collection of relatively small communities but embody the desire to perpetuate the intimate, "honest," and uncomplicated life which the small town was thought to perpetuate. An even more intricate exercise in historicism is the house at 35 Bishop Avenue (Figure 68). Built as a double residence by John Bishop in the early nineteenth century, it was completely remade by its new owner, Lester Leonard, ca. 1938, using pieces taken from eighteenth-century houses and replicating others to form a sensitive restatement that rests almost completely within the stylistic dictates of the prototypal period. The effect has been convincing enough to make many people believe that the building as it now stands is one of East Providence's finest pre-Revolutionary houses.



Fig. 67: Weaver Memorial Library (1938), Howe and Church, archs., 41 Grove Avenue.



Fig. 68: Bishop-Leonard house (19th century, ca. 1938), Lester Leonard, des., 35 Bishop Avenue.

The Post-War Boom

No military bases or related new industries were started in East Providence during the Second World War and since virtually all construction was related to the war effort this time was one of little physical change for the town. However, during the following twenty-five year period, East Providence experienced its greatest era of growth. The population increased by some 18,000, to reach almost 50,000 by 1970. Economic prosperity, the abundance of young married couples, and easy mortgage terms offered by the Federal Housing Administration and Veterans Administration, as well as the low level of building activity over the previous fifteen years, contributed toward the enormous surge in house construction. With large pockets of open land remaining in East Providence, it is not surprising that a substantial portion of building within the metropolitan region occurred here. More than 5,100 houses were erected between 1945 and 1969, most of them in contractors' developments. Consuming almost all the remaining farmland and bridging many of the gaps between the various separate settlements, these subdivisions completed the transition from agricultural villages to suburban town that had been occurring gradually for a century.

In contrast to most earlier developments, many of the new ones occupied substantial parcels of land; and, rather than forming rectangular blocks, most were laid out along new, gently curving streets. As with Don Avenue, the developer was also the builder; however, construction was now for the most part done on speculation instead of for individual clients. Some of these developers, such as Batty and Pickett, had been in the business since the 1930s. Others were newly formed organizations. The largest of them was the Ferland Construction Company which built up most of the area around Riverside. Another, the E & D Construction Company, concentrated in the outlying areas of Rumford. E & D's Brentwood Plat (1951, 1954; includes Brentwood and Weeden Avenues) is representative of many tracts developed during the peak years of this activity. Lined with one-story ranch houses on lots appreciably larger than the average size twenty years previous, it illustrates the high point in rural imagery attained by the mass-produced middle-class American residence (Figure 69). Not all developments were the product of a single plan. Those by George Pickett, and later by Ralph and Muriel Kent in Kent Heights, for instance, were executed in small increments. Nevertheless, similarities in form, scale, and appearance create a sense of continuity between one group of houses and the next. For the most part, the "colonial" types used in the

late 1930s continued to be the most popular, rather than the contemporary ranch house found in Brentwood Plat. Even when major changes have occurred in the design of these buildings, such as with the "split level" and more recently the "raised-colonial" types, traditional imagery has generally prevailed on the street front.

Over the past decade, the rapid increase in land and construction costs and high mortgage rates have priced the single-family house above what many members of the middle class can easily afford. The number of these buildings erected in East Providence between 1970 and 1974 plunged to less than half the number for the previous five-year period. Apartment houses began to provide a major alternative. This is a new type for the community; the first to be designed as such was erected only in 1960. Most of the early apartment houses contain a small number of units and are placed along the side of the road as if they were oversized houses. Their scale, box-like appearance, and relatively large adjacent parking areas are, for the most part, incompatible with their surroundings. A more fortunate trend has occurred in recent years with the construction of apartment complexes, such as Village Green (1971, 1974), which include sizeable areas of open space and are set back from the main roads, allowing for privacy and introducing a minimum of interruption to the established streetside scale (Figure 70).



Fig. 69: Brentwood Plat (platted 1951, 1954), E & D Const. Co., bldrs.



Fig. 70: Village Green North (1971), Daniel Tully, arch., Pawtucket Avenue.

Since 1945, municipal services have greatly expanded in an effort to keep up with the fast pace of East Providence's growth. A major inhibitor to large-scale development had been the lack of an adequate sewer system. After years of debate a construction program was initiated in 1951 when miles of trunk line began to be laid and treatment plants in Riverside and at Bucklin Point were built (Figure 71). In 1964, a bond issue was approved to replace the city's antiquated water system with one tied in to Providence's. The school system experienced no less of a change in its physical plant. A large new high school at 2000 Pawtucket Avenue was opened in 1952. Contrasting with the prevailing trend in house design, the building carries no traditional imagery but rather reflects the desire to present the institution as a forward-looking one (Figure 72). Beginning in the mid-1950s, neighborhood schools of a similar order were erected, some in older sections replacing late nineteenth-century buildings, others amid newly created subdivisions.

To satisfy more effectively the increasingly complex needs of the community, a city manager form of government was instituted in 1958, and with it East Providence was officially designated a city.

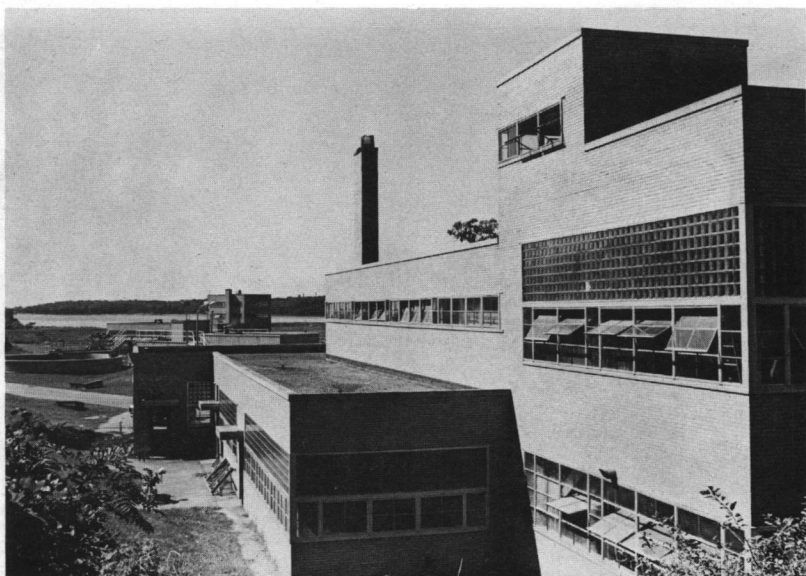


Fig. 71: Bucklin Point Sewage Treatment Plant (1951), Charles Maguire & Assoc., archs., Island Avenue.

The Planning Department was started in the following year to establish guidelines in land use and provide goals for future growth. For the first time a single agency could coordinate the various state and municipal programs, as well as private development, which affected the city's physical appearance. For the most part, the department's policy has not been oriented toward remaking older sections through programs such as Urban Renewal, but rather to channel public and non-public forces in directions considered environmentally beneficial to the city.

Another major change in the landscape has been the result of state and Federal highway programs. During the 1960s, Interstate 195 was constructed through the middle of the city, and a connector was built to the Wampanoag Trail. The former bisected Watchemoket, eliminating the remnants of its original center, Watchemoket Square, and necessitating substantial relocation of families living in its path. By itself, the road has not had significant negative impact on adjacent neighborhoods. However, Watchemoket and other older sections of the city did experience a noticeable amount of decay during the 1950s and 1960s, reflecting a trend which occurred throughout the country. The increasing age of buildings, congestion wrought by overtaxed roads, inappropriate land use, and the omnipresent lure of more expansive suburban tracts contributed to the decline. A recent code enforcement program in the Watchemoket area has helped alleviate this problem. But at the same time, "improvements" to buildings, such as the replacement of double-hung sash with modern window types, the enclosure of porches, and the application of aluminum siding have often marred their appearance.

Highways have not only greatly facilitated the flow of traffic but have been a major stimulator of commercial and industrial development. A large portion of this growth continued to assume the form of the commercial strip, with individual businesses strung out along main roads. Sections of Broadway, Newport, Pawtucket, and Taunton Avenues are so characterized. Most recent commercial design has been uninspired; however, several of the branch banks have set an encouraging precedent. After 1960, this fragmented development was supplemented by the construction of shopping centers on the outskirts of Riverside, Watchemoket, and Rumford which attracted people from adjacent communities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. During the 1960s, the city experienced the second fastest growth in retail sales in the state. No longer was Providence the only center for such activity.



Fig. 72: East Providence High School (1950-1952), Charles Maguire & Assoc., archs., 2000 Pawtucket Avenue.



Fig. 73: B. A. Ballou & Co. (1967-1968), Bowerman Bros., archs.,
800 Waterman Avenue.

East Providence's ever-improving accessibility also made it a desirable location for many wholesale companies and light industries, particularly jewelry, machinery, and metal product manufacturers. Some, such as the well-known B. A. Ballou and Company, have moved their plants from Providence (Figure 73), while others have established regional offices. Many of these buildings exhibit a relatively high standard of design and are set amid landscaped grounds so that they complement the nearby residential areas. The Westminster Industrial Park off Waterman Avenue is a noteworthy example of how good planning and design can make a contribution to the community's appearance. The studio building of WPRI located there is one of the best examples of contemporary architecture in the state (Figure 74).

East Providence has also attracted a variety of regional institutions. As early as 1923, the newly formed Providence Country Day School was built on the then open fields along Pawtucket Avenue.



Fig. 74: WPRI Studios (1973-1974) William Kessler & Assoc., archs.,
25 Catamore Boulevard.



Fig. 75: Gordon School (1963, 1970), William Warner, arch., Maxfield Avenue.

ue in order to secure the advantages of a rural environment. In 1931, the Bradley Hospital, a pioneering center for the treatment of mentally disturbed children, opened in an equally pastoral site at the end of Veterans Parkway. Within the last fifteen years, the Gordon and Meeting Street Schools have moved from overcrowded quarters in Providence to more spacious grounds in the city. Located on Maxfield Avenue, the Gordon School is a particularly handsome building comprised of several pavilions grouped around outdoor courts and connected by arcades — all scaled to the size of children (Figure 75). The arrival of these commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities has not only made East Providence less dependent on its neighboring city for such services but has greatly increased the locally employed work force. By 1970, almost as many residents worked in East Providence as commuted to Providence itself.

At present, the city retains many traces of its rich and complex past. Growth has never been so fast or so intense that it has obliterated preceding developments. Instead, East Providence is composed of complex, interwoven layers spanning three centuries of building activity and encompassing a wide range of functions. Despite its diversity, its population of over 50,000, its broad spectrum of problems so characteristic of American cities, East Providence retains a small-scale residential character and some of its village orientation. As the resources for geographic expansion and for total redevelopment become increasingly limited, this matrix, as well as the numerous handsome buildings scattered throughout, should become more appreciated. The existing fabric can serve as a substantial and positive base for the community's continuing development.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

East Providence has a number of individual structures and sites worthy of preservation, in addition to a very substantial portion of its physical fabric which should be maintained in a manner that is sympathetic to its original character. Enormous potential exists for improvement of the city's appearance, and much could be accomplished by relatively small-scale upgrading projects for older houses, public and commercial buildings, and streets. An understanding of and respect for the ordinary structures of East Providence as well as the outstanding ones will be a key factor affecting the city's future status as a desirable residential community. Growing numbers of towns and cities throughout the country are realizing that, while they may not possess an unusually distinguished collection of architecture, they do have buildings, neighborhoods, and open spaces which are essential contributors to an environmental and historical identity that is advantageous to retain. Without concerted action, these qualities can be easily lost.

To date, few steps have been taken in this direction in East Providence. One of the major reasons is psychological. Few people believe the city has the physical attributes that merit such attention. Little is generally known about the substantial number of seveneenth-, eighteenth-, and early nineteenth-century houses scattered throughout the community. Nor is East Providence's Victorian and early twentieth-century legacy, which comprises so much of the man-made landscape, widely appreciated. Individually significant buildings such as the First Baptist Church and the now lost City Hall are too often dismissed with the passé term of "monstrosity." The scores of handsome dwellings in older portions of the city are frequently considered liabilities because of their age and their sometimes neglected condition rather than as assets by virtue of their appearance (real or potential), solid construction, and commodity. Over the past decade, some renovation has occurred in the Watchemoket area through the city's code enforcement program and in Riverside through citizen action and recently with a rehabilitation loan program. A number of praiseworthy examples resulting from these efforts can be cited; however, many buildings have been marred by pseudo-modernization which, ironically, may be more costly and less permanent than remodeling within the contextual framework of the existing fabric. Respect for a building's basic form, its window and door frames, decoration, and materials should be a fundamental guideline for most rehabilitation projects. Frequently, the appearance of a neglected house, and hence its value,

can be greatly improved with relatively minor changes and a fresh coat of paint.

The approach applies to public and commercial buildings as much as to residential ones. The city of East Providence has several buildings which, in all likelihood, could again become local landmarks and sources of community pride if properly reconditioned. The most obvious examples are the former Central High School (255 Taunton Avenue), the former Riverside Junior High School (3625 Pawtucket Avenue), and the complex at Hunts Mills. While the former two buildings are currently regarded as "white elephants," they contain large amounts of valuable space which could be well utilized for either public or private facilities. Good rehabilitation is not inexpensive but it can often be far less costly than attaining comparable square footage in a new building and can provide space that has comparable protection from fire. The buildings at Hunt's Mills together with the grounds offer great potential for a first-rate community recreation center which could provide long-term assets far above initial expenditures.

Among the most important advantages East Providence has is the configuration of its streets and the scattering of communities inside its boundaries, giving the whole a small scale to which people can easily relate. The numerous short, often dead-end streets, self-contained neighborhoods, and the village identity resulting from historical growth patterns contribute to a sense of place as well as foster local pride and community stability. The preservation of these characteristics and the encouragement of future development to enhance them will go a long way to ensure the continued appeal of the city as a place to live.

Another principal asset is open space. The city has acres of unutilized land along its rivers and on Narragansett Bay in addition to interior sections which could become highly attractive recreation areas. Investment in such improvements would not only raise the value of surrounding property but might draw a regional public which, with properly controlled commercial facilities, could make a substantial contribution to the city's tax base.

The following recommendations are made on the premise that broad-based community action along with energetic municipal coordination and 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.

1. Establish an East Providence Historic District Commission with authority to provide historic area zoning in accordance with the enabling state legislation passed in 1959 (Chapter 45-24.1, as amended). Amendments should be submitted in conjunction with this provision giving this Commission authority to designate individual buildings and sites of architectural and/or historical significance. Several communities already have such an amendment: Newport (45-24.1-8, 1964), Warwick (45-24.1-9, 1965), Providence (45-24.1-10, 1969), and Cranston (45-24.1-11, 1969). Many of East Providence's buildings and sites eligible for landmark status are in scattered, rather than clustered, locations; thus the above proposed amendment would be of particular relevance to the city.

Once formed, the Commission would establish an ongoing program whereby appropriate districts, buildings, and sites are proposed for designation by the City Council. The Commission would act as a design review board for all proposed major exterior alterations, repairs, moving, or demolition of so designated entries. The Commission should be comprised of persons with experience in the fields of architecture, architectural history, history, and planning, but it should also include interested and responsible laypersons.

Implementation of this proposal should prove one of the most effective means for the city to ensure the protection of its architectural, historical, social, and environmental values, as well as engaging active citizen participation in the process. Similar actions by communities of all sizes throughout the country have demonstrated the importance of the approach.

2. Expand the National Register program in East Providence by nominating the "Rumford Historic District" as well as additional structures and sites listed in Part V below.
3. Identify valued buildings, whether designated landmarks or not, with a simple marker bearing the original owner's name (when known), date(s) of construction, and the name of the architect

or master builder (when known). This project could be undertaken by the East Providence Historical Society or other local groups. It would make a significant contribution towards stimulating public interest and pride as well as promoting outside recognition of the community's heritage. Similar programs have been conducted by the Providence Preservation Society and Barrington Preservation Society over the past decade.

4. Publish a small fold-out map locating buildings and sites of historical and/or architectural importance, to be sponsored by one or more civic groups in the city. It should be widely disseminated both locally and throughout the region.
5. The Department of Planning and Urban Development should fund professional and objective feasibility studies for both the former Central High School and the former Riverside Junior High School to explore their future use by either the public or the private sector.
6. Prepare long-range plans for the development of city-owned land at Hunts Mills into a public recreation center, including the restoration of the Hunt house and the conversion of the pumping station into a restaurant or other commercial facility which could be leased as a concession.
7. Develop the area around the intersection of Taunton and Grove Avenues as an appropriate municipal center, with the new City Hall reflecting community achievement and pride as well as providing functional office space. It is also important to have new facilities that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The park-like character of the property extending from the Post Office to the Weaver Memorial Library is a major asset which should be retained and enhanced. Retention of the former Weaver house is an important element in such planning and could serve as a model for adaptive use. Additional accommodation for automobiles should be discreet and not inimical to the quality of the whole. Creating a sea of asphalt in the heart of the city's center would be counterproductive to efforts that have been made to revitalize the area.
8. The city should draft a proposal to have Crescent Park incorporated into the state's 1976 *Plan for Recreation, Conservation and Open Space*, so that the property might eventually be acquired as part of the Bay Island Park System. The amuse-

ment center is zoned as open space (O-1) and is one of the few remaining such areas along the Bay within easy reach of Providence. The land could be linked to Haines Memorial Park by the construction of a foot bridge, thus connecting two important waterfront areas. Otherwise circumstances make it quite unlikely that Crescent Park will continue in its present capacity for more than a few years, making it highly probable that East Providence will lose one of its finest recreational facilities.

9. Undertake detailed studies for the development of major city-owned open spaces, as outlined in the Department of Planning and Urban Development's 1975 *Master Plan for Recreation*. These include land along the Ten Mile River, James V. Turner Reservoir, Central Pond, Bold Point, and the so-called Southeast Drainage Area. Since 1962, the city has made significant progress in preserving natural areas with the purchase of over sixty-seven acres of land and the implementation of open space (O-1) zoning. Acquisition of other scenic waterfront properties should be encouraged. Land fronting Bullock and Watchemoket coves would be especially well suited for these purposes. The creation of bikeways along such land would allow for easy public access while leaving natural qualities undisturbed.
10. Explore the potential of better utilizing vacant and derelict land along the East Providence waterfront between Bold Point and the Washington Bridge. Properly developed with shops, restaurants, a marina, and other compatible facilities this area could become a regional attraction and could provide an excellent stop-over for tourists enroute to Cape Cod. Its location adjacent to Interstate 195, combined with the dearth of such bayside developments in the immediate Providence area, enhances the desirability of this property.
11. General guidelines for private rehabilitation should be provided by the Department of Planning and Urban Development and published in a booklet format. Such a guide would explain easy and inexpensive ways to retain the character of the original fabric while accommodating present-day needs. Basic ground rules outlined would recommend: replacing elements only when necessary; having new work (including additions) conform to the building's size, scale, and materials wherever possible; retaining clapboarding, porches, and ornament. Furthermore, information should be promulgated on the hazard aluminum and

vinyl siding presents to a house by acting somewhat like a bake-oven should a fire start inside. The publication should be widely distributed to persons planning renovation in conjunction with city-sponsored programs, to the owners of older buildings, and to civic groups. Numerous communities in all sections of the country have published such material and have found it an effective means of retaining the integrity of their neighborhoods.

12. Upgrade Riverside Square as a commercial center by a community-led program for rehabilitating extant buildings and constructing new ones on nearby vacant lots. Alterations should follow the general approach outlined in the above recommendations. Modish features such as pseudo-mansard roofs, fake half-timbering, and "colonial" storefronts tend to be short-term patchwork soon out of style and can be more costly than straightforward but attractive design that respects a structure's existing features.
13. Obtain passage of an improved sign ordinance which would eliminate obtrusive, over-scaled, or inappropriate commercial signs and graphics. Such elements have not only a negative impact on the visual attractiveness of commercial areas but can adversely affect the desirability of neighborhoods around them.
14. Inaugurate a street tree-planting program by civic groups such as local women's clubs and the Jaycees. This effort would prove an extremely effective way in which to improve the quality of many residential areas throughout the city. Dozens of similar programs were instituted in New England towns during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and are a major reason for the widely admired character of these communities today.
15. Ensure the preservation of materials which provide a better understanding of the city's history by:
 - a. establishing procedures whereby city records including building permits and plans no longer needed by their respective agencies are deposited in the State Archives — in the past, large quantities or irreplaceable documents have been lost through house-cleaning projects and, recently, through the destruction of City Hall;

- b. encouraging individuals to donate old letters, scrapbooks, photographs, architectural drawings, maps, and other pertinent papers to an appropriate archive — at present, the Rhode Island Historical Society has the finest facilities in the region for the care of such material and is within a mile of the Washington Bridge, making it readily accessible to residents of East Providence; and
- c. establishing a local museum, perhaps run by the East Providence Historical Society, where artifacts could be displayed — such a facility would make an important contribution to community awareness as well as saving many interesting items now destroyed or retained by private collectors.

heavily traveled roads passing through all areas of East Providence, the city faces a very real danger of losing much of its desirability as a residential area unless its citizens take an active role in preventing randomly sited commercial growth. Needed services should be planned so as not to detract from the environmental quality of the communities that support them.

- 16. The Department of Planning and Urban Development should hire a preservation planning consultant on a project basis to assist residents of older neighborhoods in rehabilitation efforts. This method is one of the most effective means to implement the preservation process at the grass-roots level and would be a major contributor towards ensuring long-term neighborhood stability, community pride, and increased property values.
- 17. Encourage individuals who are concerned with the preservation of their house to include a restriction in their property deed which stipulates the retention of buildings and/or other features of the land they wish to see maintained. This is an important, but often overlooked, channel through which people can help maintain the quality of their community.
- 18. Increased publicity should be given to the established city policy against spot commercial zoning, as stated in the *Master Plan for Land Use* (1962, as amended). Such unplanned development along major traffic arteries has destroyed a number of East Providence's finest eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century buildings and has had an adverse effect on many residential properties remaining along these roads. Furthermore, the stores which comprise these commercial strips often are short-lived. Many are replaced by less desirable concessions with the result that the neighborhood, including nearby residential side streets, can gradually deteriorate. Broadway, Pawtucket Avenue, and Willett Avenue are especially susceptible to the pressures of uncontrolled commercial growth. With

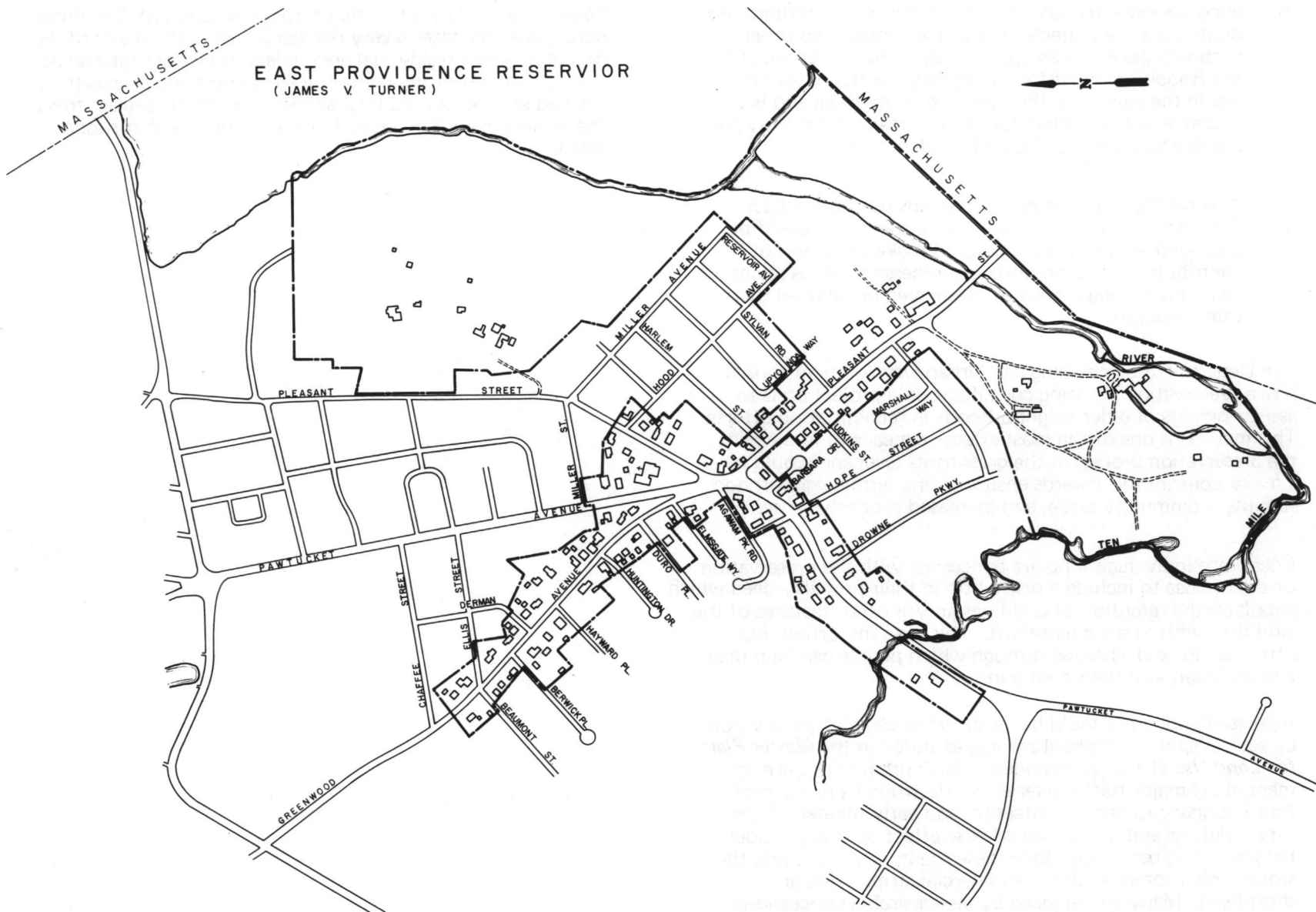


Fig. 76: Proposed Rumford Historical District, National Register.

V: 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 historical areas in the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks, federal properties nominated by federal agencies, and properties of state and local significance nominated by each state and approved by the National Park Service. It is an authoritative guide for federal, state, and local governments 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 on the National Register is a prerequisite for eligibility for federal matching grant-in-aid funds which are administered within the state by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

The Philip Walker house (ca. 1678-1679) was entered on the National Register in July 1972, and the carousel at Crescent Park (ca. 1895) added in May 1976. The survey has identified a number of additional buildings, sites, and the proposed "Rumford Historic District" as potential National Register entries. These are listed below. As part of its ongoing program, the Preservation Commission will eventually review all of these for nomination. Upon approval, the Commission will prepare the nomination forms. However, persons desiring to have a property entered on the Register by a certain date should contact the Commission to request that action be initiated. The more historical data the owner of a property and/or other interested parties can supply, the more expeditiously the nomination forms can be prepared. The listings here are based on the 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.

Proposed Rumford Historic District

The proposed "Rumford Historic District" (Figure 76) contains the largest concentration of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century buildings in the city. Its boundaries are drawn so as to include most of the surviving structures which once faced the Ring of the Greene when the settlement was the center of Rehoboth. The District also encompasses most of the nineteenth-century village, known as Seekonk (later East Providence) Centre, and Hunt's Mills, which was an important manufacturing location for the community during both these periods. Among the notable buildings within this proposed district are:

- Phanuel Bishop house, 150 Greenwood Avenue, ca. 1770s.
- Abel house, 8 Greenwood Avenue, ca. 1760s.
- House, 45 Greenwood Avenue, ca. 1780s, ca. 1820s.
- Abel house, 66 Greenwood Avenue, ca. 1750s.
- John Hunt house, Hunts Mills Road, ca. 1770s.
- Lemuel Brown house, 41 Hunts Mills Road, early 19th century.
- House, 1527 Pawtucket Avenue, ca. 1700s.
- Allen Cole house, 1609 Pawtucket Avenue, ca. 1812.
- House, 324 Pleasant Street, probably late 18th century.
- Hyde-Bridgham house, 120 Pleasant Street, 1767.
- House, 232 Pleasant Street, probably late 18th century.
- Nathan West house (I), 355 Pleasant Street, probably late 18th/early 19th century, alterations by West 1849.
- Oliver Chaffee house, 284 Pleasant Street, probably late 18th/early 19th century, ca. 1850s.
- Bridgham tenant house, 150 Pleasant Street, 1866, Nathan West, builder.
- Thomas Aspinwall house, 344 Pleasant Street, 1860s.
- Nathaniel Bishop house, 106 Greenwood Avenue, ca. 1860s, probably Nathaniel Bishop, builder.

Judkins house, 1474 Pawtucket Avenue, 1850s.

First Baptist Church, 1400 Pawtucket Avenue, 1879, Walker and Gould, architects.

First Baptist Church parsonage, 160 Pleasant Street, 1831.

F. I. Chaffee house, 252 Pleasant Street, ca. 1870s.

Nathan West house (II), 367 Pleasant Street, 1860, Nathan West, builder.

West house, 383 Pleasant Street, 1860s, Nathan West, builder.

Individual buildings recommended for consideration for the Register include:

Pearce Allin house, 36 Willett Avenue, probably after 1805.

Nathaniel Daggett house, 74 Roger Williams Avenue, before 1708.

Little Neck Cemetery, Read Street, 1655.

Rumford Chemical Works, Greenwood and Newman Avenues, first buildings erected ca. 1858.

Squantum Association, 947 Veterans Memorial Parkway, chartered 1872, main clubhouse, 1899-1900, Martin and Hall, architects.

Boston and Providence Railroad bridge, Roger Williams Avenue, 1884.

Newman Congregational Church and cemetery, Newman and Pawtucket Avenues; church 1810, cemetery 17th century.

Roger Williams Spring, Roger Williams Avenue, 17th-century site.

Pomham Lighthouse, Pomham Rock, 1871.

APPENDIX A: GRANT-IN-AID PROGRAM

Since 1971 the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has been able to award through the National Park Service fifty-percent matching grants for the restoration or acquisition of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. To date approximately 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 ranged in size from \$1,000 to \$50,000 with the grantee providing an equal amount. Grantees also benefit from the free advice of restoration professionals serving as consultants with the Commission.

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 and modern landscaping are not allowable costs. To ensure an accurate restoration and high quality work, an architect must be engaged to prepare plans and specifications and to supervise the project work. The Preservation Commission has the responsibility of selecting all paint and mortar colors. The high standards of the National Park Service and the added 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 Preservation Commission, and allow the public to view the property at least twelve days a year. When grant work is limited to the exterior, these restrictions apply only to the exterior.

Matching funds can come from either private, local, or state sources. Also, funds available under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 are eligible for matching purposes. Grant applicants are urged to submit requests for the maximum amount for which they have matching capability. This will enable Rhode Island to secure a large apportionment of grant funds from the federal government.

APPENDIX B: SURVEY FORM

HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE SURVEY		COUNTY Providence	
FILE NO. _____ PLAT <u>35</u> LOT <u>219</u> LUS _____		CITY/TOWN East Providence	
ADDRESS <u>263-265 Bourne Avenue</u>		ROAD Bourne Avenue	
OWNER <u>Emelia R. Perry</u>		MAP NO. <u>74</u>	
PRESENT USE: 1 fam _____ 2 fam <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> multi _____ pub _____ comm _____ indus _____ reli _____ agr _____ mixed _____ other _____		NEGATIVE NO. <u>P-EP-15: 14A, 15A</u> KNOWN AS _____ ARCHITECT _____	
NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE: res <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> comm _____ indus <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pub _____ agr _____ woods _____ other _____		DATE & SOURCES <u>ca. 1860s-1870s (style)</u> ORIGINAL USE <u>probably 1 family house</u> ORIGINAL OWNER _____	
PERIOD/STYLE: <u>P C F (GR) EV LV ET MT LT</u>		HISTORY & SOURCES:	
DESCRIPTION: Stories: <u>2 1/2</u> Roof: gable (flank _____ end <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cross _____) gambrel (flank _____ end _____ cross _____) hip _____ monitor _____ mansard _____ flat _____ other _____		Maps: 1882 - not on map 1895 - not on map 1917 - on map Style of building makes it unlikely that it was built on present site after 1895. Probably moved to this location in late 1890s/early 1900s. Used as worker's housing for Washburn Wire Company. Photo at East Providence Historical Soc. taken in early 1900s shows house in situ.	
Walls: clapboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brick _____ stone _____ shingle _____ modern comp _____ other _____		EVALUATION: Physical Condition structure 5 3 (2) 0 grounds 2 (1) 0 neighborhood 3 (2) 0 Architectural value 38 (30) 20 10 0 Importance to neighborhood 14 (10) 5 0	
Foundation: height _____ stone _____ brick <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other _____		PRIORITY	
Alterations: good _____ poor _____ none minor _____ rare bldg. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Typical of its area _____		Historical value 38 30 20 (10) 0 Total Score _____	
COMMENTS: Late example of 2 1/2 story Greek Revival end-gable house-type common in region, but rare in East Providence. Has handsome Ionic portico.			
SURVEYOR <u>R.W.L.</u> AV Checked _____ D.C. _____ SUPERVISOR <u>D.C.</u> HV Checked _____ D.C. _____			
DATE: <u>September 1975</u>			

Fig. 77: Sample survey sheet.

A standard survey form, the "Historic Building Data Sheet," has been prepared by the Preservation Commission for use throughout the state (Figure 77). The property is identified by plat and lot numbers, street number (where none exists, an assigned number is set in brackets), 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 date(s) of major additions and/or alterations: P = prehistoric (1636), E = 17th century (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), 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 context. The "HISTORY & SOURCES" section includes notes on individuals, organizations, and events associated with the building; dates and nature of significant additions and/or alterations; selected bibliographical and pictorial references; and identification of the building on historical maps and street directories.

The four "EVALUATION" sections are intended as tools for quick reference to 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 two ratings should be kept separate. In general, the key factors that indicate the reason for preserving structures should have to do with their visual significance, e.g. "Architectural value" and "Importance to neighborhood." Other factors, such as condition, should be seen as pluses. A low historical rating, for instance, should not be allowed to militate against the preservation of buildings deemed of architectural significance or those important to the neighborhood context.

The evaluation of a building's exterior physical condition is rated on a 0, 2, 3, 5 scale, without regard to its architectural merits. Buildings assigned "5" are in excellent physical condition (original or altered). Those rated "3" are in good condition with only slight

evidence of a need for improvements, such as repainting or minor repairs. Buildings rated "2" are in fair condition and may require substantial work, such as resheathing, or repairs to porches, fenestration, etc. Buildings rated "0" are in poor physical condition and probably require extensive work if they are to be retained. 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." "1" indicates that the grounds do not detract from the surrounding area. The "0" rating applies to grounds that have a negative impact on the 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. "0" ratings are 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. "38" 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. "20s" and "10s" constitute the majority of buildings surveyed. They 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 East Providence. They provide a visual context which defines the historic quality of the city and its very individual subsections 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. Monuments, markers, and civic sculpture are assigned ratings

on the basis of general visual and associative qualities which do not necessarily reflect artistic integrity.

A property's importance to its neighborhood is rated on a 0, 5, 10, 14 scale, with "neighborhood" used according to the above definition. "14" 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 is not especially compatible with its physical context. "0" applies to properties which have a decisively negative effect on the neighborhood.

Historical value is rated on a 0, 10, 20, 30, 38 scale. "38" 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." "20" applies to entries 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. "10" denotes limited local historical value. "0" is used to designate properties of no known historic interest at the present time.

For planning purposes, surveyed buildings, monuments, and sites are depicted on a 1/500 scale map of the city (Figure 78). Each entry is assigned a map number (noted on the survey sheet) which also serves as an index to the accompanying key. This key lists selected data — period-time frame, architectural and historical value (respectively) — for quick reference.

Upon completion of the survey, duplicate copies of all materials are submitted to the Commission. After final approval, one copy of the survey sheets and maps is placed on file at the Commission office (150 Benefit Street, Providence), another at the East Providence Department of Planning and Urban Development (31 Grove Avenue). An additional set of the survey sheets will be located at the Weaver Memorial Library (41 Grove Avenue, East Providence). Map copies will also be on file at the Division of Statewide Planning (265 Melrose Street, Providence).



Fig. 78: Sample detail of survey map.

APPENDIX C: INVENTORY

*Illustrated in Report

The inventory is a list of sites and structures of cultural importance in East Providence. Entries have architectural and/or historic significance either in themselves, by association, or, in the case of some buildings, as representative examples of a common architectural type.

These listings represent only those properties deemed most essential to maintaining the city's historic legacy. Surrounding and supporting these are a much larger number of properties which, individually and as a group, do much to enhance the overall historic, visual, and social character of East Providence. The survey map should facilitate an understanding of the relationship of these structures to their larger environmental context.

Entries are listed alphabetically by street and then in numerical order by street number. Entries having no street number (bridges, monuments; parks, etc.) have usually been assigned numbers, and these are given in brackets.

Number Street, Name, Date, Description

AGAWAM PARK ROAD

- 30 **Robert Upham house:** 1928, Robert Fraser, architect and builder; 1½-story dwelling with high-pitch end-gable roof. A handsome example of an Americanized English Arts and-Crafts house, influenced by the work of Charles Barton Keen in Philadelphia. Fraser was apparently responsible for most, if not all, the dwellings in this cul-de-sac development.

ALICE STREET

- 56 **First Universalist Church:** 1882, moderate size Victorian building with rectangular plan end-gable roof and side tower; a good local example of the Stick Style. Lower portions badly marred by 1960s remodeling — a poor example of adaptive use. Now serves as an office building.

BALKCOM STREET

- 28 **House:** after 1882, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof and three-sided porch. A good example of many cottages in Riverside and among the least altered.

BERWICK PLACE

- 24 **Edward Lovering house:** ca. 1937, Peter Geddes, architect; 1½-story dwelling with gambrel and gable roofs. A good example of academic Colonial Revival work, prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s.

BISHOP AVENUE

- 35* **Bishop-Leonard house:** probably early 19th century, extensive alterations ca. 1938, Lester Leonard, designer; 2-story, 6-bay dwelling with a gable roof. Built as a double house, probably by John Bishop. Transformed to present state by Leonard for his own residence incorporating some fragments collected from 18th-century New England buildings, but mostly using elements fashioned after 18th-century models. A good example of the archeological approach to Colonial Revival design characteristic of the 1920s and 1930s. Leonard was an antiques dealer with an interest, but no professional experience in architecture. Building owned by Rumford Chemical Works and used for employees housing 1866-1935.

BLUFF STREET

- 65 **House:** between 1882-1895, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; simple gingerbread details on front porch, patterned shingles at upper level; built as a summer cottage, a good surviving example of the type once common in Riverside.
- 68 **House:** between 1882-1895, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; built as a summer cottage.

BOURNE AVENUE

- 293* **Washburn Wire Company:** 1893 et seq. A large industrial complex with most of its buildings erected during one or more of the following periods: 1893, 1900-1902, 1926-1928, and 1930-1936. Notable structures include the 2-story brick building with large front tower which housed much of the original plant, 1893, the 3-story brick open hearth furnace, 1900, (both facing the railroad tracks), and the brick and glass curtain wall cable mill, 1928, (facing Bourne Ave.). Complex also includes unusual survivals of early 20th-century steel manufacturing equipment, especially the hand-caught rod mill, 1926. Land purchased 1893 by Eugene Phillips for the American Electrical Works (est. 1870) to manufacture insulation for copper wire. Steel plant erected on adjacent property in 1900 by the Washburn Wire Company. The two organizations merged in 1902, using the latter's name and with Phillips as president. Washburn Wire was the largest industry and the largest single employer in the city during much of the 20th century. Wire manufacturing facilities purchased by the Kennecott Wire-Cable Company ca. 1935, and in turn became part of the Okonite Company in the 1950s.

Number Street, Name, Date, Description

BROADWAY (NORTH BROADWAY, SOUTH BROADWAY)

- 57-63** **Two double houses** built for Rumford Chemical Works: ca. 1910, probably Hilton and Jackson, architects; 1½-story brick duplexes with gable roofs; patterned after contemporary model workers' housing in England. Constructed for employees of the company. Similar designs are at 119-121 Roger Williams Avenue.
- 66-95** **Six double houses** built for Rumford Chemical Works: ca. 1882, 1½-story duplexes of five varying designs; simple Stick Style details; built for employees of the company.
- 325** **House:** late 18th/early 19th century with later additions, 2-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with center chimney and gable roof. Mid-19th-century alterations include porch and ground floor windows. Owned by Joseph Fitts in 1850.
- 523*** **Idle house:** ca. 1810s, 2-story, 5-bay brick Federal dwelling with gable roof and end chimneys. A good representative of many early 19th-century farmhouses in the region, but somewhat unusual in its masonry construction.
- 675** **Sutton house:** between 1870-1882, 1½-story Victorian cottage with end-gable roof; simple Italianate details in bay and bracketed hood, a good example of a standard mid-19th-century type in a very chaste form.
- 694*** **House:** ca. 1870s, 1½-story Victorian cottage with end-gable roof; handsome Italianate details on front bay and side porch; the same basic type as 675 Broadway, but more ornately articulated.
- 745** **United Congregational Church:** 1888-1889, William Walker & Son, architects; tower and south wing added 1931, Benjamin Wright, architect. Original building a small Victorian sanctuary

with rectangular plan, end-gable roof, and side tower; a handsome local example of the Shingle Style with Colonial Revival details. New tower and other additions have simple Georgian details and are unusually compatible with the older section. Built for a predominantly working class congregation in the then newly emerging Watchemoket District. Now the East Providence-Seekonk Y.W.C.A.

- 1246** **House:** probably early 19th century, 2½-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with center chimney and gable roof. Front door has simple Greek Revival frame, probably a later addition. Originally a farmhouse. Owned by David Humphrey in 1850.
- 1290** **House:** early 19th century, 1-story, 3-bay dwelling with end chimney and gable roof; simple Greek Revival doorway. Typical of small rural houses built during the early Republican period. Owned by D. Cole in 1850.
- 1323** **House:** late 18th/early 19th century, 2-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; porch and side ell probably mid-late 19th-century. Owned by George Martin in 1850.
- 1401** **House:** probably early 19th century, 1½-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with gable roof; dormer bay, side ell and other modifications made in 20th century. Owned by John Martin in 1850.
- 1419*** **House:** ca. 1760s, additions ca. 1780s; 1-story dwelling with gable roof; original section 3 bays with plan indicating that entrance was at the north end and that a portion of building was used for commercial purposes; later section of 3 bays added to north with new entrance placed facing the street. Owned by Mrs. Jacobs in 1850.

BULLOCKS POINT AVENUE

- 199** **House:** 1870s, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with end-gable roof; a typical Riverside summer cottage with fine decorative work on front porch and bargeboards. Built by Riverside Land Company and sold to Amasa Humphrey.
- 244** **Riverside Square Station:** Providence and Bristol Railroad, 1870s; 1-story brick building with gable-on-hip roof; representative of what were once many suburban stations built during the post-Civil War period. This building provided the nucleus for Riverside's commercial and institutional center. The railroad was chartered in 1850, opened in 1855, and was one of the most important factors in the development of the community. The line is no longer active and the station has experienced rather unsympathetic alterations for use as a laundromat.
- 277** **House:** 1870s, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with end-gable roof; very handsome example of Riverside summer cottage with chastely decorated two-sided porch. Built by Riverside Land Company and sold to John Shurtleff.
- 468** **House:** probably early 1890s, 1½-story Victorian cottage with gable roof; incorporates Stick and Shingle Style details with prominent front porch, entrance portico and overscaled dormers; among the more fanciful summer cottages in Riverside.
- 502** **Leander Peck house:** ca. 1830s-1840s, 2-story, 5-bay, late Federal dwelling with gable roof; front porch added mid-19th century. Built as a farmhouse and one of the few pre-summer resort era buildings in Riverside. By 1882 it was the summer residence of Providence industrialist, A.A. White. White started one of the first summer colonies in Riverside, Camp White, which was located on the adjacent land to the south.

Number Street, Name, Date, Description

(800)* **Crescent Park:** started by George B. Boyden in 1886. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it was one of New England's largest and most popular amusement parks. Many buildings on the midway date from early 20th century but have been extensively altered. The two notable structures in the complex are:

(a) **Carousel:** ca. 1895 et seq., Charles I. D. Loeff, designer and manufacturer; a nationally significant example of the late 19th-century carousel made by one of the first and foremost Americans in the business. From 1905-1910, Loeff lived in Riverside and used the carousel as a showpiece for prospective clients, many embellishments to the ride were made by him during this period. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

b) **Shore dinner hall:** ca. 1900s, 1-story structure with gable roofs. The only surviving building of its type built before the mid-20th century on Narragansett Bay. Shore dinner halls were one of the most important recreation facilities in the region during the late 19th century. A number were located in East Providence south of Kettle Point, but all save this have long since disappeared.

CATAMORE BOULEVARD

25* **WPRI offices and studios:** 1973-1974, William Kessler & Associates, Inc. (Grosse Point, Mich.); 2-story steel frame building faced in concrete block and glass curtain wall; triangular plan, broadcasting antenna treated as a piece of monumental sculpture. Unusually good example of contemporary design in the area, located in well-planned and landscaped industrial park.

CENTRE STREET

17 **Richard Walker house:** probably 1792 (traditional date), 2-story, 5-bay Georgian

dwelling with center chimney and gable roof. A good example of a common mid-18th-century type, with a handsome pedimented doorway; entrance vestibule added early 20th century. Walker was a great-grandson of Philip Walker and served as a Captain in the Army during the Revolutionary War.

DON AVENUE

1-121* 35 houses of varying designs, 1939-1941, Howard Pierce, developer and builder. Houses mostly of 2-story "colonial" design, cohesive in mass and scale, with exterior variations occurring primarily with details, roof configuration, and surface materials. Each dwelling designed and built for an individual client. A good example of contractor's "custom" development for the middle-class market of the period. Pierce was one of the leading house builders in the city at the time.

DOVER AVENUE

257 **Isaac B. Kent house:** 1870s, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; simple Italianate details; good example of moderate-size mid-19th-century cottage type, built as a farmhouse, but similar to many residences erected during the same period in Watchemoket.

259 **Charles Balchin house:** 1954, Charles Balchin, architect; 1½-story dwelling with gable and gambrel roofs; front section closely patterned after 18th-century models, a late example of academic Colonial Revival. The owner was an employee of the Providence firm of Clark and Howe.

261 **Water tower:** 1902-1903, Riter Conley Manufacturing Co. (Pittsburgh); 70' x 50', 1,000,000 gallon water tank supported on a 95' tall steel frame superstructure, said to be the second largest of its type in the world at the time of erection. Built for the privately owned East Providence Water Company, taken

over by the City Water Department in 1928.

DROWNE PARKWAY

1-60* Development platted in 1936 containing 26 houses designed by various architects and builders, mostly between 1937-1940. Stylistically, the majority of dwellings are of more-or-less standard "colonial" designs. A good example of well-to-do middle class suburban development with set-back and probably design requirements.

EIGHTH STREET

30 **House:** between 1882-1895, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with end-gable roof; handsome Stick Style articulation on facade and front porch.

ELM AVENUE

61 **N. W. Britton house:** 1870s, 2-story, 5-bay dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; a very late example of an 18th-century house type with elongated proportions and Italianate bracketed hood; similar to 383 Pleasant Street.

FENNER STREET

102 **House:** probably early 18th century, greatly altered probably in early/mid-19th century; original building appears to have been one-room house with stone end wall; additions include 2-bay section to south. Among oldest surviving buildings in the city. Owned by Thomas Medbury in 1850.

FIFTH STREET

9 **House:** 1890s, 1½-story dwelling with gambrel roof; overscaled Colonial Revival elements used on a modest-size residence.

FOURTH STREET

18 **Charles Pierce house:** between 1882-1893, probably Charles Pierce, builder; 1½- and 2½-story dwelling with cross-

Number Street, Name, Date, Description

gable roof; picturesquely composed with simple Queen Anne Revival details; ground story brick and upper story surfaced in slate tiles.

GARFIELD STREET

- 6* **House:** probably two early 18th-century 1-room buildings joined and greatly altered in the early 19th-century forming a 1½-story dwelling with a gable roof; various 20th-century alterations. Original fabric among the oldest in the city. Owned by James Bicknell in 1850.

GRANT AVENUE

- 30 **House:** between 1871-1882, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; example of the smallest type of permanent summer cottages built in Riverside.

GREENWOOD AVENUE

- 8 **Abel house:** ca. 1760s, later additions; 2-story, 4-bay dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; side ell added mid-19th century, rear ell added ca. 1930s.
- 45 **House:** ca. 1780s, 2-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; extensive interior alterations and side entrance added probably in early 19th century; several later additions. Used as the village post office during the mid-19th century. Owned by William Ide in 1850.
- 66 **Abel house:** ca. 1750s, later alterations and additions; 2-story, 4-bay dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; plan indicates original entrance was at rear of building and large rooms on east side of both floors suggest use as a tavern; present entrance probably added in early 19th-century (portico now on side entrance), rear ell ca. 1880s.
- 95 **C. F. Chaffee house:** between 1870-1882, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; interesting decorative work on side porch and bargeboards;

representative example of moderate size pattern book suburban villa of the post-Civil War period.

- 150* **Phaniel Bishop house:** ca. 1770s (1771 traditional date), 2-story, 5-bay Georgian dwelling with gable roof, end chimneys, brick end walls, and a handsome pedimented doorway with fanlight. House originally contained two identical apartments, one on each floor. Bishop was a member of the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for about 20 years and served 8 years as a representative in the United States Congress.

- (271)* **Rumford Chemical Works:** Company founded by George F. Wilson and Eben Horsford for the production of phosphate enriched baking powder. Moved to East Providence 1857. Complex contains several notable structures, including: 1-story frame building, ca. 1858 (facing Newman Avenue) reputedly the first erected on the property; two 1-story frame buildings, ca. 1860s (facing Greenwood Avenue); 3-story brick monocalcium phosphate plant, ca. 1890-1895 (facing Greenwood Avenue); 1-story brick print shop, ca. 1918 (facing Newman Avenue); and 5-story brick packaging plant, 1928 (corner Newman and Greenwood avenues). An important local industry which manufactured such nationally known products as Rumford Baking Powder and Horsford's Bread Preparation. Company was probably the largest single land holder in East Providence in the late 19th century. Operation discontinued in 1966; buildings presently occupied by various industries.

GROSVENOR AVENUE

- 73 **House:** ca. 1893-1894, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with gambrel roof and bay turret; good local example of the moder-

ate-size Shingle Style house. Now used for professional offices.

GROVE AVENUE

- 17 **East Providence Post Office:** 1936, Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect of the Treasury (Washington, D. C.); 1-story brick building with center cupola; a standard W.P.A. design for post offices with Neo-Federal and Greek Revival details.
 - 31* **Charles C. Weaver House:** ca. 1868, 2½-story dwelling with end-gable roof; late-19th/early 20th-century alterations, including entrance porch, side bay and veranda. Good example of Greek Revival end-gable house type common in region, but rare in East Providence. Willed to the city in 1932 by Weaver's daughter, Susan Anthony. Currently used as a community health center and offices for the Department of Planning and Urban Development.
 - 41* **Weaver Memorial Library:** 1938, Howe and Church, architects; 1-story brick building with hip roof and center cupola. Academic Colonial Revival design with general form and cupola fashioned after the 18th-century Court House at Williamsburg. Property, along with Weaver house, donated to the City by Susan Anthony. Grounds handsomely landscaped as a municipal park.
- HOYT AVENUE**
- 96 **Wannamoisett Country Club:** organized 1898. Original dwelling erected in the 18th century and purchased by George F. Wilson, owner of the Rumford Chemical Works, as his own residence in the 1860s. Club leased building in 1898 and purchased it shortly thereafter; extensive additions and alterations, 1913, Martin and Hall, architects; old section demolished for undistinguished building, 1966, Bowerman Brothers, architects. One of three country clubs in East Providence,

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- which has been the center of such activity for the Providence metropolitan area since the turn of the century.
- 101 House:** ca. 1780s-1790s, 2-story, 5-bay Georgian dwelling with gable roof; handsome pedimented doorway with fanlight; center chimney removed; building moved from grounds of Wannamoisett Country Club to present location in 1928. Owned by Hoyt and Hammond in 1850.
- HUNTS MILLS ROAD**
- 41 Lemuel Brown house:** early 19th-century, 1-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; reputedly built by Allin Hunt for Brown who operated the nearby grist mill at the time. Foundations indicate earlier house was on the site. Now owned by the City of East Providence.
- (69) John Hunt house:** ca. 1770s, 2-story, 5-bay Georgian dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; among the best surviving examples of the house type in the city. Hunt family among the original settlers of Rehoboth; property purchased by John Hunt in 1713; house probably built by John Hunt, Jr. Grist mill located on property since 17th century, other mills located nearby; last remaining mill building demolished in 1893. An important early industrial site for the community. It currently houses offices of East Providence Water Department.
- (74)* Pumping station:** 1893, later additions; 1-story stone building with hip roof and large rear stack; a noteworthy example of utilitarian design for the period. Built by the East Providence Fire District as a pumping station for portions of the city lying outside the Watchmocket Fire District. Both plant and the water system were subsequently sold to the privately owned East Providence Water Company, of which the Sayles

Corporation was the principal holder. Primarily served the Glenlyon Bleachery, Washburn Wire Company and Rumford Chemical Works. Sayles developed adjacent area as a small amusement park which ran until the 1920s. Plant and system taken over by the City in 1928.

ISLAND AVENUE

- (70)* Bucklin Point Sewage Treatment Plant:** 1951-1952, Charles A. Maguire & Associates, architects. Complex includes buildings of varying heights, most of steel frame faced in brick with flat roofs. Distinguished local example of mid-20th-century public works design, in the manner of Roland Wank's work for the TVA. Built as a regional facility, it serves the Blackstone Valley as well as the northern section of East Providence.

KNOWLTON STREET

- 73,77 Houses:** between 1882-1895, two 1½-story Victorian houses with end-gable roofs and front porches. Excellent well-preserved examples of the small summer cottages prevalent in the late 19th-century development of Riverside.

LINCOLN AVENUE

- 48 Frederick Bridgman house:** ca. 1872, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with mansard roof; large Colonial Revival porch added after 1894; built as a summer cottage. Bridgman was a brother-in-law of Lysander Flagg, the principal developer of Riverside, and was the secretary of Flagg's Riverside Land Company.
- 83 Apartment house:** built as Paton's Hotel shortly after 1882; 3-story Victorian building with low hip roof; moderate-size mid-19th century resort hotel type with simple Italianate details, originally had center cupola and porches on each of its main flanks. Started by George

Paton, who changed the name to The Riverside Hotel by early 1890s; one of two remaining hostleries in Riverside which are in recognizable form. On the site of the dining pavilion for the Cedar Grove colony, started in the late 1860s.

MAPLE AVENUE

- 93 House:** between 1882-1886, 1½-story Victorian building with end-gable roof; mixture of late Greek Revival and simple Italianate details; built as a summer cottage.

MASSASOIT AVENUE

- 385 George Barr house:** 1912, 1½-story house with gable roof and large front porch. A good example of the rustic bungalow promoted by such magazines as the *Craftsman* during the late 1900s and 1910s
- 404 Dexter house:** probably late 18th century, extensive additions and alterations ca. 1900; originally a 1-story, 5-bay dwelling with gable roof and center chimney; remodelled at the turn of the century for Abby Dexter by a Boston architect as a Colonial Revival building with gambrel roof. Handsome barn on the property is the oldest building of its type in the city, dating back to the late 18th/early 19th century.
- 432* Philip Walker house:** ca. 1678-1679, extensive later additions and alterations; original building 2-story, 3-bay dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; 2-bay addition to south and remodelling of old portion done in mid-18th century. Front porch and shingle sheathing date from early 20th century. The oldest documented house in the city. Walker was the son of an original Rehoboth settler and among the wealthiest and best educated men in the community. Owned a nearby saw mill on the Ten Mile River. House still owned by his descendants. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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MAXFIELD AVENUE

(29)* **Gordon School:** 1963, 1970, William D. Warner, architect; 1- and 2-story concrete block structure; classrooms and other functions housed in pavilions covered with hipped roofs, arranged around open courts. An unusually distinguished example of contemporary design in the state. School founded 1910 in Providence; moved due to the need for expansion and considered desirability of open suburban location.

NEWMAN AVENUE

(161)* **Newman Congregational Church:** 1810, later alterations and additions; moderate size sanctuary with rectangular plan, end-gable roof, and end tower. Typical of rural New England meeting houses built during the early Republican period. Originally had open belfry and tall spire; present belfry erected mid-19th century. Building raised 6 feet in 1890 for addition of basement story, front porch, William Walker & Son, architects. Parish Hall, 1953-1954, Howe and Prout, architects. Congregation gathered in 1643, first meeting house erected 1646, second building 1674, third building 1716-1718; all these structures located in immediate vicinity of present one. During the 17th and 18th centuries the church formed the religious and civic focus for what was then the township of Rehoboth. It was originally surrounded by an unusually large town common, known as the Ring of the Greene, which was sold in 1812.

(162) **Newman Cemetery:** mid-17th century, common burial ground for 1643 Rehoboth settlement. Located in vicinity of, but not adjacent to, the first meeting house (1646). Grounds enlarged 1680, 1737, and 1790. Oldest recorded burial and gravestone: William Carpenter (1658). Burial ground for many residents

of the township during the 17th and 18th centuries, including Samuel Newman (1663) and Philip Walker (1679). Contains a number of 18th-century gravestones. An important local historic site. Now owned by the City of East Providence.

324-326 **House:** probably late 18th century, several later additions and alterations. Original unit was 2½-story, 3-bay Federal building with gable roof, and apparently 4 end chimneys. Large rooms on both floors at rear suggest it was built as a tavern. Side ell added not long after the original. Extensive early 20th-century interior alterations. Owned by "Widow Hill" in 1850.

366* **Nicholas and Jane Monsarrat houses:** 1936, General Housing Corporation, designer and manufacturer; two attached dwellings of 1 and 2 stories, with frameless, interchangeable steel panel construction developed by the company, which was one of the more experimental house prefabricators during the 1930s. The roofs were originally flat.

NEWPORT AVENUE

424 **House:** probably early 19th century, 1-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with gable roof; representative of small houses of the period.

NINTH STREET

25 **George Taylor house:** ca. 1910, Sears Roebuck Company, designers; 1½-story dwelling with gable roof; handsome example of the rustic bungalow type with large front porch, boulder foundation, wide overhanging eaves, and shingle sheathing; a deluxe model made by one of the nation's largest manufacturers of standardized house components and plans during the late 19th and early 20th-centuries.

274

NORTH BROW STREET

Philip Monroe house: 1870s, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with mansard roof; simple Italianate details, on a symmetrical, barn-like mass with a somewhat more elaborate entrance porch. Among the largest houses in the old Watchemoket District and unusually large for its immediate neighborhood. Recently the residence of John Carpenter, an important East Providence real estate broker responsible for many of the major land transfers in the city during the 20th century.

81

NORTH CARPENTER STREET

St. Francis Xavier Church: 1915, moderate-size building with rectangular plan and end-gable roof; incorporates Romanesque and Gothic details, walls surfaced in stucco, painted white with red trim — a color scheme characteristic of many Hispanic churches, found especially in semi-tropical regions. Parish established in 1914 to serve rapidly growing Portuguese community in the city.

NOYES AVENUE

1

Glenlyon Bleachery: 1899, J. W. Bishop Company, builders; 1- and 2-story brick building with flat roofs and prominent 5-story tower; handsome industrial design with pier bay division capped by segmented arches and corbelled cornice. Built as a bleaching and finishing plant by Frederick C. Sayles of Pawtucket and controlled by the Sayles Corporation, one of the major textile operations in the region in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Currently used as a distribution center for Almac's Inc.

7

L. A. Lockwood Company: 1871, later alterations; 2-story building with low gable roof and 2-story front tower; of highly unusual Albertype construction consisting of hollow frame filled with

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cement and broken glass on a stone foundation with cement floors. Among the first industries and the oldest surviving building in Grinnell Point. Company was a manufacturer of cotton laps. Now used as a maintenance building by Almac's Inc.

OAK AVENUE

- 111** **House:** between 1887-1894, 1½-story dwelling with modified end-gable roof; basic Victorian summer cottage type, but with porches on two levels giving it a complex form. Located on the site of the first Riverside Hotel (1875) which was moved to Nantucket in 1882.

PAWTUCKET AVENUE

- 92** **House:** probably early 19th century, 1-story, 4-bay dwelling with gable roof; representative of a standard small house type during the early Republican period. Owned by L. Perry in 1850.
- 105** **FRAM Engineering, Inc. :** 1963-1964, Jenks and Ballou, architects; 2-story steel frame building with glass curtain walls and flat roof; good example of a post-war, modern office structure designed in the manner of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.
- 1310** **Union Primary School:** 1873-1874, Christopher Dexter, architect and builder; additions 1888-1889, William Walker and Son, architects; later additions 1900, 1904; original a small 1-story building with end-gable roof; tower and side wing added by Walker. The oldest school building in East Providence still serving its original function.
- 1392** **Bridgham Memorial Library:** 1905, Hilton and Jackson, architects; 1-story, brick building with cross-gable roof; symmetrical classical facade composed in the Beaux-Arts manner but with Colonial Revival details. Built by Samuel W. Bridgham as a replacement for the

semi-public library contained in his house (120 Pleasant Street). Seekonk (later East Providence) Town Hall (ca. 1814) was located on property adjacent to north until 1957.

- 1400*** **First Baptist Church:** 1879, Walker and Gould, architects, Nathaniel Bishop (son of Phanael Bishop), builder; parish hall, 1957, Monahan, Merkle and Johnson, architects; moderate size sanctuary with rectangular plan, end-gable roof, and end belfry. An outstanding example of the Queen Anne Revival for the region with unusually fine early Colonial Revival details. The second oldest parish in the city; first meeting held 1773, church dedicated 1775 and demolished for present structure.

- 1474** **Nathaniel Judkins house:** 1850s, later alterations; 1½-story, 5-bay dwelling with cross-gable roof; original probably with simple Greek Revival details similar to 1361 Pawtucket Avenue; cross-gable, bracketed eaves, and entrance added ca. 1870s; dormers probably 20th century.

- 1527** **House:** ca. 1700s, numerous additions and alterations; original building 2-story, 3-bay dwelling with end chimney and gable roof, probably similar to Daggett house at 74 Roger Williams Ave.; additions in 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. Among the oldest houses in the city, and the oldest known structure in the vicinity of the former Ring of the Greene. Owned by Church Gray in 1850.

- 1609** **House:** probably 1812 (traditional date), later alterations; 2-story, 5-bay brick Federal dwelling with end chimneys; handsome example of the large early Republican farmhouse; alterations, including vestibule, and barn late 19th/early 20th-century; stucco surfacing and side porch added before 1922. Owned by Allen Cole in 1850.

- 2000*** **East Providence Senior High School:** 1951-1952, Charles A. Maguire & Assoc., architects; 2-story steel frame building with stone and glass curtain wall facing and flat roof. Large multi-functional school complex horizontally organized. Good example of post-war modernistic design, the first public building in the city to abandon traditional imagery.

- 2117** **Providence Country Day School:** established 1923. Small campus, bisected by Pawtucket Ave., which includes: Izra Ide house (ca. 1780s), 2-story, 5-bay Georgian dwelling with additions and "restoration" work (ca. 1910s), Clark and Howe, architects; Joseph Luther house (ca. 1863), 2½-story Victorian dwelling; and 5 buildings erected by the school. Among the earliest country day schools in New England.

- 2502** **House:** ca. 1910-1915, 2½-story dwelling with gable roof; a good local representative of the rustic Craftsman house with boulder porch piers and shingle surfacing.

- 2585** **Ide house:** late 18th/early 19th century, later alterations; 2-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with gable roof; originally probably had center chimney; alterations, ca. 1830s-1840s, include front porch and ground floor sash. Homestead of one of East Providence's leading farm families during the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries.

- 2936** **House:** 1860s, 2-story Victorian dwelling with low hip roof and tower; good local example of the asymmetrical Italianate villa with simple detailing for a house of its size. Probably built by Lorenzo D. Anthony. One of about a dozen suburban villas erected along this section of Pawtucket Ave. during the second half of the 19th-century (see below). Now owned by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

- 2938** **O. S. Curtis house:** ca. 1870s, 2-story Victorian dwelling with mansard roof; simple Italianate details including front porch.

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- 3120*** **James Dennis house:** ca. 1870s, probably later additions; 2½-story Victorian dwelling with end-gable roof; handsome Stick Style side tower, porch and other details probably added ca. 1880s.
- 3181** **House:** ca. 1870s, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; simple Italianate details, large 3-sided porch; house originally located at 3191 Pawtucket Avenue, moved ca. 1912.
- 3186*** **Albert Howard house:** ca. 1869, 3-story Victorian dwelling with low hip roof and center cupola; imposing symmetrical Italianate villa with simple details and prominent 3-sided porch. Howard served in the state House of Representatives 1873-1875.
- 3328** **F. W. Cady house:** between 1882-1895, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof and corner bay turret; good local example of the moderate size Queen Anne Revival suburban villa.
- 3427** **House:** between 1882-1895, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with hip roof; a Queen Anne Revival villa with more complex and intricate massing than 3328 Pawtucket Ave. Now Al's Care Center.
- 3591** **Bicknell-Armington ("Lightning Splitter") house:** ca. 1840s (?), 2½-story dwelling with unusually tall end-gable roof; a hybrid of the Greek Revival end-gable type apparently devised to "split" any lightning which struck the house. Another example is located at 53 Transit St., Providence, built in 1781 with the "splitter" roof added ca. 1850. Pawtucket Ave. dwelling reputedly built as wedding present for Pearce Allin's daughter, Louisa, who married Joseph Bicknell in 1827; however, proportions, details, and highly unusual form indicate house as it now stands is either extensive remodelling of earlier structure or a new building erected in the mid-19th century. Owned in 1850 by Dr. Hervey Arming-ton who married another Allin daughter.

- 3625** **Riverside Grammar (later Junior High) School:** 1912, William Walker & Son, architects; additions ca. 1922 and 1927 (the latter to accommodate Jr. High School), both probably designed by the Walker firm; 2-story brick building with flat roof and sloping tile parapet. A stock design developed by the architects to which additions could be easily made so as to accommodate growing educational needs. Bourne Avenue School is of the same model. Currently used by the city to house various community-oriented functions.

PLEASANT STREET

- 42** **House:** probably early 19th century, later additions; 1-story, 5-bay dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; simple Greek Revival details perhaps later additions. Owned by C. Radloff in 1850.
- 120*** **Hyde-Bridgham house:** 1767, later additions; 2-story, 5-bay Georgian dwelling with gable roof and center chimney; a very fine example of the large mid-18th century farmhouse. Ground story of rear ell added 1854, Samuel Short, builder; library wing 1865, Nathan West, builder; second story added late 19th/early 20th century. Erected by Ephraim Hyde, pastor of the Newman Congregational Church, reputedly on the site of a 17th-century house. Purchased by Dr. Joseph Bridgham of Boston in the 1780s. Later used as country house by his son, Samuel Bridgham, who served in state House of Representatives, was state Attorney General, and the first mayor of Providence (1832-1840). The place is still owned by Bridgham descendants; its grounds are the last remaining in the city which afford some idea of the 18th-century landscape.
- 150** **Bridgham tenant house:** 1866, Nathan West, builder; additions 1882, Joseph Bridgham, designer. 1½-story Greek Re-

- vival house with gable roof built for the tenant farmer; Bridgham's Stick Style additions were made for himself. Bridgham was a doctor, but had received some architectural experience in the office of Richard Morris Hunt (New York).
- 160** **First Baptist Church parsonage:** 1831, 2½-story, 3-bay dwelling with end-gable roof; handsome Federal doorway, unusually elaborate for moderate-size rural house, basic form that of a Greek Revival end-gable type. House sold to Bridgham family 1889, used as a private residence since.
- 232** **House:** probably late 18th century, later additions and alterations; 1-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with central chimney and gable roof. Handsome Federal doorway, simple Greek Revival rear ell added ca. 1860s. Side porch and extensive interior alterations made 1920s. The finest surviving example of 18th-century 1-story house in the city.
- 252** **F. I. Chaffee house:** ca. 1870s, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with end-gable roof; handsome Italianate details including entrance hood, bay windows, and side porch.
- 284** **House:** probably late 18th/early 19th-century, mid-19th-century additions and alterations; 2½-story, 5-bay dwelling with gable roof and center chimney; Victorian additions include entrance bay and ell with modified ogee arch woodwork on its porch. Owned by Oliver Chaffee in 1850. Chaffee served in the state House of Representatives and Senate.
- 324** **House:** probably late 18th-century, later alterations; 2-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with center chimney; Greek Revival doorway added probably mid-19th century. Owned by William Ellis in 1850.
- 344*** **Thomas Aspinwall house:** 1860s, 2-story Victorian dwelling with gable roof. Handsome Italianate details including unusual pagoda entrance hood with trellis work under brackets. The most elaborate

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- building constructed in the village of East Providence Centre. Aspinwall was a doctor and served as a state Senator.
- 355 Nathan West house (I):** probably late 18th/early 19th century, later additions and alterations; 2½-story, 5-bay Federal dwelling with gable roof and center chimney. Greek Revival doorway, side ell, and interior alterations made 1849 by Nathan West for himself. West, a master builder, was probably responsible for many mid-19th-century structures in the vicinity.
- 367 Nathan West house (II):** 1860, Nathan West, builder; 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; basic Greek Revival type updated with simple Italianate details.
- 380 A. J. Brown house:** 1860s, later alterations; 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; original building probably simple Italianate end-gable type, remodelled late 19th century. Handsome barn with center cupola on property.
- 383* West house:** ca. 1860s, Nathan West, builder; 2-story, 5-bay house with gable roof; very late example of standard 18th-/early 19th-century type with slightly elongated proportions and Greek Revival doorway. Owned by West, and probably built either as a speculative investment or for a member of the family.

PLUM ROAD

- 77 Boundary marker:** 1724, stone marker inscribed "R 1724" designating boundary between Rehoboth and the newly created township of Barrington. Only known inscribed 18th-century marker remaining in city.

POMHAM ROCK

Pomham lighthouse: 1871, 1½-story Victorian building with mansard roof and light tower; a standard design used by the Lighthouse Board of the Treasury

Department at the time. Light established in 1871 as part of an ongoing program to improve navigation aids in Narragansett Bay. Taken over by the Coast Guard in 1939. Facility fully automated in 1974. Currently maintained by the Rhode Island Historical Society. Among the best preserved 19th-century lighthouses in the state.

READ STREET

- (81) Little Neck Cemetery:** 1655, established as a common burial ground for the residents of the southern section of Rehoboth. Oldest recorded grave that of John Brown, Jr. (1662), son of the purchaser of Wannamoisett. Also contains graves of Elizabeth Howland (1687) and Thomas Willett (1674), first mayor of New York. Contains numerous 19th-century gravestones. Grounds enlarged and given present layout 1884. An important historic site for the region and superbly located at the head of Bullock Cove. Owned by the City of East Providence.

ROGER WILLIAMS AVENUE

- 15 Agawam Hunt Club:** established 1893. Main building originally a 2½-story Greek Revival house with end-gable roof, ca. 1840s; owned by J. M. Underwood in 1850, purchased by Rumford Chemical Works in the 1870s, and acquired by club in 1895. Additions in 1914, 1920s, and 1967. Manager's residence (25 Roger Williams Ave.), 1936, Jackson, Robertson and Adams, architects. Club organized for drag hunting; golf introduced 1895. The oldest country club in the state.
- Railroad bridge:** 1884, two double arch masonry bridges with two deck Warren trusses joined by a center stone piling; handsome fieldstone construction supported by brick arches. Built by the

- 46 Tenement house:** ca. 1850s, 2½-story building with gable roof; erected as workers' housing for nearby Omega Mills; among old surviving structures of its type in the city. Omega Mills erected ca. 1810; 17th-century grist mill site in immediate vicinity.
- 68 House:** late 18th-century, additions and alterations early 19th-century; originally a 1-story, 3-bay dwelling with gable roof and end chimney; 2-bay section added to north and exterior alterations probably made by master builder Joseph Spaulding who owned the residence between 1819-1834.
- Nathaniel Daggett house:** before 1708, later additions and alterations; originally a 2 story, 3-bay dwelling with end chimney and gable roof; saltbox addition on rear; extensive changes made ca. 1900 when converted into housing for the American Electrical Works. Among the oldest surviving buildings in the city. Daggett was the son of John Daggett, Jr., reputedly the builder of the Daggett house in Slater Park, Pawtucket. Nathaniel Daggett was a co-owner in a shipping business located on Omega Pond near-by his house. Locally known as "the house that never moved."
- (89) Roger Williams Spring:** 17th-century site, stone monument 1936, plaque 1975; commemorates traditional site of Roger William's first settlement in 1636; monument erected by East Providence Tercentenary Committee.
- 111 House:** ca. 1750s, 18th-century additions; 1-story building with gable roof; original structure 3-bays with end chimney, nearly identical section added to north not long after original; plan indicates that building first used as a store; extensive interior alterations in 19th and 20th

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centuries. Owned by Mrs. Edwards in 1850.

115-273* Phillipsdale. A company town of some 70 buildings located along Roger Williams Ave., Ruth Ave., Nelson St., and Bourne Ave., (247-265, incl.) built by the Washburn Wire Company and the Sayles Corporation to accommodate workers in their nearby plants (293 Bourne Ave. and 1 Noyes Street). Buildings erected between late 1890s and early 1910s. Mostly one- and two-family houses of varying types; those on Nelson St., 234-236 and 253-259 Roger Williams Ave., 94-110 Ruth Ave., and 263-265 Bourne Ave. are considerably earlier types and probably moved to present sites. Grace Episcopal Church (130 Roger Williams Ave.) erected by Washburn president, Eugene Phillips, 1903. 247 Bourne Ave. built for plant supervisor of Washburn and company doctor; 253 Bourne Ave. built as the company store.

SECOND STREET

66-68 House: ca. 1860s-1870s, 1½-story Victorian house with gable roof; basic Greek Revival house type updated with Italianate details, including large bracketed hood; side ell remodelled 1975. Among the early dwellings built in the Watchemoket area.

SEEKONK RIVER

Red Bridge: 1893, revolving center span composed of two modified Pratt trusses connecting to stationary platforms supported by Warren trusses on stone piers. A river crossing site since the 17th century; first bridge erected in 1793 by Moses Brown as a toll crossing in competition with brother John's Washington Bridge. Known as Central Bridge up through nineteenth century. Structure destroyed 1807, rebuilt, again destroyed 1815 and again rebuilt. Closed 1869

following ship collision. Iron bridge built 1872, replaced by present structure so as to accommodate electric trolley cars. Bridge inoperative since 1968 and scheduled for demolition.

* **Washington Bridge:** 1927-1930, Clarence W. Hudson, engineer (New York), Carl Otto, consulting architect; reinforced concrete structure with 12 fixed arch spans and draw bridge in center; exterior sides of arches faced with stone; basic form replicated and extensive alterations at either end made in 1960s for Interstate Route 195. Approximate site of 17th-century river crossing. First bridge erected 1793 by John Brown, destroyed 1807, rebuilt, again destroyed 1815 and again rebuilt. 1815 structure called India Point Bridge and aligned to Mauran Avenue; rebuilt 1829, James Bucklin, builder. Iron truss bridge erected 1884-1885 and aligned to Warren Avenue; this replaced by present structure.

SIXTH STREET

9 William Ripley house: ca. 1883, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; handsome Queen Anne Revival details, including varying courses of patterned shingles, window hoods, and gable infills.

12 House: after 1884, 1½-story, Victorian dwelling with end-gable roof; handsome play of decorative patterns on facade, including butt-end shingles and gable screen. A good representative of common regional type.

SUMMIT STREET

81 House: ca. 1894, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; good example of Queen Anne Revival mode with picturesque massing and patterned shingle work.

SUNNYSIDE AVENUE

21 House: ca. 1900, extensive alterations;

original building an octagonal bandstand for Boyden Heights amusement park; converted into residence by 1916. The two first shore resorts in East Providence were located in the vicinity: Ocean Cottage (1863) and Silver Spring (1869). Boyden Heights included buildings from both these establishments and a number of new ones as well. The amusement park closed ca. 1910 and most of the buildings were demolished within the next decade.

SUTTON STREET

207-209 Double house: between 1882-1889, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with complex cross-gable roof; handsome Stick Style building, with twin bays and 2-tier front porch; unusually elaborate for a structure of its type in East Providence.

TAUNTON AVENUE

112 Sacred Heart Church: 1950, John A. Mosher, architect; large brick sanctuary with cruciform plan, end-gable roof and side tower; incorporates details derived from Lombard Romanesque churches, unusually historicizing design for the period. Parish established 1880, primarily to accommodate newly arriving Irish-born population. The oldest and principal Roman Catholic Church in the city.

190 Masonic Temple: ca. 1926, 2-story brick building with shallow hip roof; a formal classical design with giant portico on east elevation, but otherwise simple articulation with Italian Renaissance and Georgian details.

200* Haven United Methodist Church: 1929-1931, Woodbury and Stuart, architects (Boston). Large stone Gothic church of rectangular plan and gable roof with parish offices, meeting rooms on sides and rear. Designed in an academic manner fashioned after the work of Ralph Adams Cram; the largest and most elaborate

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ecclesiastical structure in the city. First meeting of parish held 1870, formally organized 1875, first church built 1882, replaced by new building in 1900 which burned in 1929.

210 Thomas Ray house: ca. 1882, Thomas Ray, builder; 2½-story Victorian dwelling with complex cross-gable roof; good local example of Queen Anne Revival mode with prominent corner tower, multi-story bay windows, 2-sided porch, and patterned shingle work. Later alterations also by Ray. Among the largest dwellings built in the Watchemoket District during the 19th century. Owner was a well-known builder in the region, responsible for many houses here in Providence and Pawtucket. Recently disfigured with aluminum siding. Now Scott-Williams Funeral Home.

255 Central High School: 1908-1910, Banning and Thomas, architects; Junior High School addition, 1929-1930, William R. Walker & Son, architects; third floor added to original building 1931-1932; connector between two buildings, 1933; large 3-story brick complex with flat roofs. The first structure erected to serve as a high school in the city; these facilities replaced by present building (2000 Pawtucket Ave.) in 1951; junior high school and administration facilities soon to be replaced by new building in Kent Heights.

TERRACE AVENUE

117 House: ca. 1870s-1880s, 1½-story Victorian house with end-gable roof; large flanking tower and polygonal bay added late 19th century. Located in Narragansett Terrace community, started ca. 1860s as adjunct of the What Cheer house (site now Crescent Park). During the late 19th and early 20th centuries was the most fashionable section of Riverside. A number of other former summer cottages exist along the street.

259-263 House: ca. 1870s-1880s, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; simple summer cottage with handsome gingerbread work along front porch and cornice, small side tower a later addition.

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARKWAY

(200) Fort Hill: site of earthworks formed in 1775 as part of a defense network for Narragansett Bay during the Revolutionary War. Contained four cannons. Fort was never used in the conflict and apparently not maintained afterwards. Remains of embankment reputedly still discernible in early 20th century. Actual site of fort excavated during construction of the Barrington (Veterans Memorial) Parkway, ca. 1910. Other portions of the hill removed in quarrying. Stone marker placed in immediate vicinity by East Providence Bicentennial Committee, 1975.

947* Squantum Association: organized 1870, chartered 1872. A notable group of late 19th-century buildings, including:

- a) **Billiard hall:** ca. 1870s, 1-story Victorian building with gable roof; handsome gingerbread ornament.
- b) **Dining hall:** 1889, 1-story brick building with hip roof; large 2-sided porch projecting over the water.
- c) **Main club house:** 1899-1900, Martin and Hall, architects; 2-story brick building with giant portico and hip roof; handsome example of free style Colonial Revival at the turn of the century.

One of several eating clubs established along Narragansett Bay during the 19th century; the only such organization still in existence. Located on an unusually fine site which imparts a sense of how much of the shoreline appeared before the 1920s.

1011 Bradley Hospital: 1930-1931, Clark and Howe, architects; 2½- and 3-story brick building with gable roof and end cupola;

large institutional complex with academic Georgian and Federal details including curved gable ends patterned after Smith house in Lincoln (1810). Also on property: Samuel B. Swan House, 1964-1965, Millman and Sturges, architects. Hospital was the first in the country exclusively devoted to the treatment of children with psychiatric disorders. Located amid extensive, well-landscaped grounds.

WAMPANOAG TRAIL

184* Kent house: ca. 1780s-1790s, later additions; 2-story, 5-bay dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; typical of large late 18th-century farmhouses in region; side ell and front porch added mid-19th century. Homestead of a leading farming family in the city.

WARREN AVENUE

39 Industrial Trust Company Bank: 1920, 1-story brick building with flat roof; chaste academic design with Federal details. The only surviving structure of any significance in the Watchemoket Square area. Currently rented by the Rhode Island Lottery.

63-67* Odd Fellows Hall: 1889. Gould and Angell, architects; 2½-story Shingle Style building with hip roof and originally a center cupola. Designed with rented commercial space on ground floor and meeting hall above. Lower section sympathetically rehabilitated for stores.

81 St. Mary's Episcopal Church: 1870, G. E. Harney, architect (Cold Spring, New York), alterations 1889; small sanctuary with cruciform plan, gable roof and exposed-timber bell tower at entrance end. Originally faced in board and batten, shingle sheathing probably dates from 1889. Handsome example of mid-19th-century "carpenter gothic" mode patterned after the work of Richard Upjohn. Parish started

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- as mission from St. Stephen's Church in Providence, 1871.
- 171 House:** ca. 1870s, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable and hip roof; elaborate late Italianate detailing on entrance porch, but otherwise simple articulation. Owned by Luke T. Rice in 1882.
- 640 House:** ca. 1840s, later additions; 2½-story Greek Revival dwelling with end-gable roof and pedimented Doric entrance portico. A type common to the region, but rare in East Providence. Owned by Mrs. E. L. Wood in 1850.
- 915* House:** ca. 1680s, extensive mid-18th-century additions; 1-story, 5-bay dwelling with gable roof. Originally a 1-room building with stone end-chimney; additions include 2-bay section to east and shallow saltbox at rear. Among the oldest surviving buildings in the city. Owned by J. Barney in 1850.

WASHINGTON AVENUE

- 55-61* Group of 4 houses:** 1870s, 1-story Victorian dwellings with gable roofs; good example of small summer cottages in Riverside.
- 78 Washington Square House:** between 1882-1886, 3-story building with gable roof and 2-story front porch; example of very plain summer hostelrys several of which were built in Riverside during late 19th century. The only one of its type to remain almost entirely intact.

WATERMAN AVENUE

- 213 William McTwiggen house:** ca. 1860s, 2½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; handsome gingerbread woodwork, including porch and bargeboards.
- 214* George Webster house:** ca. 1878, 1½-story Victorian dwelling with cross-gable roof; handsome Stick Style details. Webster was a prominent Providence attorney and active in East Providence

- civic affairs during a formative period in the city's development.
- 800* B. A. Ballou and Company, Inc. :** 1967, Bowerman Brothers, architects, interiors, Research and Design Institute; 1-story, steel frame building faced in brick and glass curtain wall with flat roof; building divided into manufacturing and office sections; handsome landscaping. Houses one of the state's foremost jewelry manufacturers, formerly located in Providence.
- 880 House:** 18th-century, 19th-century additions; 2-story dwelling with center chimney and gable roof; bay window and other additions probably made ca. 1870s-1880s. Owned by J. Barney in 1850.

WILLETT AVENUE

- 36* Pearce Allin house:** probably after 1805, 2-story, 5-bay brick Federal dwelling with gable roof; center hall plan with end chimneys, clapboarding over brick walls on front and rear elevations; doorway a ca. 1930 remodelling. A distinguished example of a large country house of the early Republican period. Allin was a wealthy sea captain. House purchased in 1910 by Warren Fales, leader of the American Brass Band and Orchestra. Locally known as the Whitcomb Farm.
- 319* House:** ca. 1730s, later alterations; 1-story, 5-bay dwelling with gambrel roof and center chimney. Interior completely remodelled early 20th century in the manner of a Craftsman bungalow; front porch from same period. Rear ell added 1946-1947, reputedly rests on the site of the homestead of James Brown, Assistant Governor of the Plymouth Colony and the first settler in this area of the city. Owned by Jesse Medbury in 1850.
- (347)* District #6 School:** ca. 1870, 1-story, end-gable building with simple Italianate details. Good representative of mid-19th-

- century rural schoolhouse and last of its type in recognizable condition in the city. Now East Providence Girl Scout headquarters.
- 787 Viall house:** ca. 1720s-1730s, originally a 1-story, 3-bay dwelling with gambrel roof; 2-bay addition to south, late 18th/early 19th century; rear ell added in two sections mid-19th century; late 19th-century alterations. Among oldest surviving structures in southern section of the city. Property owned by Viall family from 1679 to 1874.
- 887 Nathaniel Viall house:** ca. 1850s, 1½-story dwelling with gable roof; a good representative of small Greek Revival house-type.

WILSON AVENUE

- 141 House:** ca. 1870s, 1½-story Victorian cottage with end-gable roof; handsome, simple Italianate details.

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