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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME Historic Resources of Central Falls, Rhode Island
HISTORIC (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Incorporation limits of Central Falls, Rhode Island
NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Central Falls
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT #1 Honorable Fernand J. St Germain

STATE Rhode Island
VICINITY OF CODE 44
COUNTY Providence
CODE 007

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
Multiple resource	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER Nursing home

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Multiple ownership

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Central Falls City Hall

STREET & NUMBER 580 Broad Street

CITY, TOWN STATE
 Central Falls Rhode Island

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Statewide Historical Preservation Report, P-CF-1, Central Falls, R.I.

DATE January, 1978
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

CITY, TOWN STATE
 150 Benefit Street Providence Rhode Island

See continuation sheet 1

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Central Falls Multiple Resource Nomination

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Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites,
HAER, to be published, 1978: Central Falls Mill Historic District,
Fales and Jenks Mill, Jenks Park and Cogswell Tower, Valley Falls Mill.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

(7A.)

The Multiple Resource Area encompassed in this nomination is the entire city of Central Falls, Rhode Island. Central Falls is bounded by the Blackstone River and Valley Falls Pond on the north and east, the town of Lincoln on the west, and the city of Pawtucket on the south. Part of the Providence metropolitan area, the city is approximately 6 miles directly north from Providence; it is roughly square in shape and is only 1.3 square miles in area.

Topographically, the city has a generally flat, outwash terrain, except for the steep banks of the Blackstone River and bedrock outcroppings visible at several points. The topsoil is relatively thin and not well suited for agriculture. Several minor hills were graded during 19th-century development.

The Blackstone River is the most important natural feature and was a major force in the evolution of Central Falls; it makes up over half of the city's boundaries and, although not a large river, was intensively used throughout the 19th-century as a source of power. As the water flows down from Valley Falls Pond toward Narragansett Bay, it passes between steep banks and over a series of falls -- Valley Falls at the north end of Broad Street; the middle waterfalls (the source of the city's name) at the north end of Roosevelt Avenue; and to the south, Pawtucket Falls. The physical appearance of the falls has been modified by filling and by the construction of dams.

Although it is the smallest municipality in Rhode Island, Central Falls is intensively developed and ranks fifteenth in population (with 15,600 persons per square mile). The man-made environment is unusually extensive, with only small scattered parcels of open land.

The most visually prominent of Central Falls' historic resources are its mills and churches. On its Roosevelt Avenue side the Mill Historic District is obscured by the Bryan Marsh Mill, but from the river side it is an impressive array of large industrial structures. The Valley Falls Mill is prominently sited, its large tower dominating the skyline of its neighborhood. Central Falls' churches, most located at the center of residential neighborhoods, are similarly prominent. Set among groups of 2- and 3-story houses, their scale, mass, and towering steeples make them major visual landmarks.

The most easily recognized and widely visible of all of Central Falls' resources is Cogswell Tower in Jenks Park. Though the park entrance fronts on Broad Street, it is almost hidden from the street view, tucked in between a row of houses on Summit Street and Notre Dame Church. However, Cogswell Tower, rising above the park and the city is visible for miles. Not only visually prominent, the tower is symbolically important and is by common assent the sign and emblem of the city.

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7B.

The city of Central Falls achieved its primary historical significance during the eighty years between 1820 and 1900. The city had its origins in two small industrial villages -- Valley Falls and Central Falls -- located at the falls of the Blackstone River.

By 1820, only tiny clusters of buildings existed in each of the villages. At Valley Falls, the Wilkinsons' Mill (and perhaps a small cluster of houses) were the only evidence of development, connected to Pawtucket by the Valley Falls Turnpike. In Central Falls no more than 2 or 3 small wooden mills for textile and metals operation existed. In the next decade, there was some expansion of the industrial plant at Central Falls, with small stone and brick mills supplementing the earlier wooden ones. Mill workers' houses are known to have existed at this time in Central Falls, though none of this period remain; and the first civic building, a small one-room school-house, had been constructed.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Central Falls was still largely an extension of development to the south in Pawtucket and Providence. The major roads of the area and the railroad (1847) were oriented to the south, and the traffic of materials, goods, and people was directed south. In the 1850s, the population (probably under 1500) was still clustered in two small industrial centers on the river: the Chace family's Valley Falls Mill (1849) accounted for the growth of the more northerly village; and Central Falls, the more substantial of the two, was developing in a linear fashion along High Street and Roosevelt Avenue. A number of east-west side streets, existing by the 1860s and crossing from Roosevelt to the Valley Falls Turnpike, were the site of the shops and homes of the residents.

The decades between 1860 and 1895 witnessed a phenomenal growth in economic activity, population, and construction. By the turn of the century, Central Falls' basic street and land use patterns were set in their present form; virtually all of the city's land had been platted and much of it built upon; the villages of Central Falls and Valley Falls were no longer distinct as construction filled in the open space between them; and the area had lost its village orientation. It took on a characteristically urban form, symbolized by the incorporation of the city of Central Falls in 1895.

The political, social, and civic coming-of-age which took place in the late 19th century in Central Falls was revealed in the physical form of the city: significant industrial zones, large tracts of multi-family housing, and a number of imposing religious and civic buildings. In the older, southeastern section of the city there was little undeveloped space by 1895. Mills lined the river bank from

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the middle falls southward, and the land enclosed by the river and the railroad was occupied by a variety of residences and shops. The central section of the city (between Broad Street and Lonsdale Avenue) was, except for its northernmost section, occupied by long, shallow blocks tightly packed with houses. The commercial enterprises of the city were located along Broad and Central Streets. (see also: Accompanying Documentation for series of maps illustrating physical development of the area.)

7C.1.

Central Falls' present building stock was largely created within the few decades of the mid and late 19th century. Little remains of its early 19th century development: only a few mills and a scattering of modified Greek Revival houses. No civic or church buildings constructed prior to the Civil War survive. Likewise, little building has taken place since the 1930s; 90 per cent of Central Falls' housing pre-dates 1939.

The extraordinary expansion of development in the 19th century, a result of industrial prosperity, is reflected in the buildings which remain today. The city's small share of architecturally ambitious houses, built in a variety of Victorian styles, is largely confined to the southern section of Central Falls, the city's most prestigious neighborhood, where they are surrounded by smaller single-family houses built by the middle class.

Modest 2- and 3-family houses and occasional single-family houses, built along narrow blocks, set close together, and with no particular stylistic treatment fill the large central section of the city. Most of these houses were built by small contractor-builders with modest capital and few legal controls. As a result, the neighborhoods built between 1860 and 1900 exhibit a heterogeneous mixture of building types and numerous variations in siting, plan and style. As pressure on limited land grew stronger in the early 20th century, scattered vacant lots were built upon and some landowners subdivided already-established lots and built behind existing buildings. More common was the creation of small side lots between older houses. This "filling-in" process has resulted in a mixture of styles and types along the city's streets.

Central Falls' residential buildings are constructed, for the most part, of wood -- the solidity of brick and stone being reserved for industrial, church, and civic buildings. Most structures are 2 or 3 stories tall, even along the commercial

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areas of Broad and Dexter Streets. Notably out of scale with their environment are two new elderly housing projects -- tall massive structures, without precedent in the city.

7C.2.

The man-made environment of Central Falls is unusually extensive, with little open land remaining, and is characterized by dense development with structures set close together.

The city's land use pattern is heterogeneous; land use controls were adopted only in the 1960s and, since most of the city had been built by then, zoning is not prescriptive, but rather descriptive of building decisions made decades earlier and based on economics, convenience, and idiosyncrasy.

Industry is concentrated on the east between Broad Street and the Blackstone and west of Dexter Street. Although both areas contain residential sections, most of the city's housing is located in the truncated triangle formed by Dexter and Broad Streets and varies in density, with the least compact development occupying the area around Shawmut Avenue.

The river front industrial section and the neighboring residential areas are separated from the rest of the city by the tracks of the Providence and Worcester Railroad line, traversing the area in a north-south direction and branching off across the Blackstone River south of Blackstone Street. Although the tracks interrupt east-west traffic across the city, there are crossings at Clay, Jenks, and Cross Streets, Sacred Heart Avenue, and Blackstone, Hunt and High Streets.

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

The street pattern of Central Falls reflects its stages of growth. The south-eastern section, where the earliest development occurred, is characterized by an irregular street pattern, with dead-end streets and uneven lot and block sizes.

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The rest of the city, developed largely in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, has a more even pattern, with streets and lots typically meeting at right angles.

7C.3. See land use map of Central Falls.

7D.

No comprehensive archaeological survey or testing has yet taken place in Central Falls; no archaeological sites are listed on the state inventory. Although river banks near the fall lines were likely the location of seasonal fisheries activity during the prehistoric period, intensive development of these same locations during the recent historic period suggests a very low survival potential for prehistoric resources.

A cultural resource reconnaissance survey undertaken for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers evaluated the proposed impact of flood control measures for sections of the lower Blackstone River, including portions of Central Falls (G. Moran, 1976. Cultural Resource Reconnaissance: Slater Mill Dam Modification and Blackstone River Basin Study). While no subsurface testing was undertaken, industrial archaeology potential of standing and below grade components in Central Falls was briefly described and evaluated.

A more systematic description of industrial archaeology is represented by the recently completed HAER Survey (Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites, to be published, 1978).

7E.

The historical and architectural survey of Central Falls was initiated by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission in cooperation with the Division of Planning, of the City of Central Falls in July, 1975. The survey was conducted by Pamela A. Kennedy, Senior Historical Survey Specialist (historian) and Richard W. Longstreth, Consultant (architectural historian), of the Preservation Commission's staff. The results of the survey were reviewed by David Chase, Deputy Director (architectural historian), and by members of the Rhode Island Review Board: Winslow Ames (architectural historian), Antoinette F. Downing (architectural historian), Irving Haynes (architect) William Jordy (architectural historian), Albert T. Klyberg (historian), and Geoffrey P. Moran (archaeologist).

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The entire area of Central Falls was included in the survey; every structure visible from a public right-of-way was examined on its exterior. For approximately 500 buildings, standard R. I. Historical Preservation Commission "Historic Building Data Sheets" were completed (see p. 59 of survey report). Each survey property was identified by plat and lot numbers, address, ownership, present use, neighborhood land use, and at least one photograph. Each property is identified by one or more broad time period designations. The "comments" section of the data sheet includes brief notations regarding a building's style, structure, details, function, present condition, architectural significance, and relationship to its environment. The "History and Sources" section includes notes on individuals, organizations, and events associated with the building; dates and nature of significant additions or alterations; and selected bibliographical references, including identifications on historical maps and in city directories. An "Evaluation" section appraises various aspects of a property's preservation value.

A large area of the city (roughly, the southern tier), including approximately one fourth of the city, was surveyed intensively; that is, every building, regardless of apparent architectural or historical value, was surveyed. This area was chosen because it represented the limits of earliest development and because, on the basis of preliminary work, it seemed to present the highest concentration of historically valuable structures. The remainder of the city, though it was examined as completely, was surveyed selectively for important and representative buildings.

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1. Name: Central Falls Congregational Church
2. Location: 376 High Street
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: St. Joseph's Church
391 High Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: Central Falls Congregational Church is a fine example of the Queen Anne style. The church is essentially one story high, although its fenestration is arranged in three levels. The basic plan is rectangular, but the steep cross-gable roof, interrupted by a variety of porches, overhangs, and bays, creates an asymmetry of form and massing. The exterior is clapboarded, with various patterned shingles and stained glass windows. A 3-level, flat-roofed tower (originally capped by a spire) rises from the northern facade.

The interior of the church is simple and restrained - its lack of ornament a striking contrast with the exterior. The main framing of the church is visible and forms the principal ornament; arches of laminated oak rise from the floor to the ridge of the ceiling where their intersections are filled in by wooden fretwork. The arches are decorated only with incised concentric circles. The sanctuary at the south end is framed by a round arch.

5. Significance: The Central Falls Congregational Church is one of the most handsome buildings in the city of Central Falls and is the focus of one of its oldest neighborhoods. The history of the church reflects the demographic and social changes in the High Street area from its construction by an affluent Yankee congregation to its present use as the parish center of a Polish-American Catholic Church.

The church was built by a congregation whose history reaches back to the beginnings of industrial development in Central Falls and whose members have included many of the city's manufacturers, businessmen and professionals. When its earlier building was outgrown in the 1880s, the congregation replaced it with this handsome structure which became the visual focus of the High Street residential neighborhood.

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In the early 20th century, the High Street neighborhood became the center of Central Falls' Polish community -- densely populated, less affluent, and Catholic. The Congregational Church, its population declining, merged with two Pawtucket churches and sold its church to the Polish Catholic St. Joseph's Church for use as its parish center.

7. Acreage: Less than one acre
8. Plat 1, lot 44
9. UTM Reference: 19.302160 463530
10. Entered on National Register, July 12, 1976

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1. Name: Central Falls Mill Historic District
2. Location: Between Roosevelt Avenue and Blackstone River
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Multiple, see individual inventory sheets
4. Description: The Central Falls Mill Historic District is an exclusively industrial district, including six major mill buildings and a stone dam. The district is a concentrated grouping of structures, ranged between Roosevelt Avenue (which forms the western border) and the Blackstone River (which is the eastern border).

Most of the buildings date from the nineteenth century, are massive, utilitarian structures of several stories, and are constructed of red brick; only one of the buildings is of stone. Except for the later Bryan Marsh Mill, where glass products were manufactured, all of the mills in the district were constructed for and occupied by textile and metals operations.

Most of the buildings in the district are oriented with their shorter sides facing Roosevelt Avenue and the Blackstone. This relationship of the mills to each other and the river was largely determined by a now-filled trench system, dating from the 1860s. The trench originally had two separate entry gates located above the dams, one of which led under the Kennedy/Stafford Mill, the other passed under the Pawtucket Thread Mill, the Central Falls Woolen Mill, and the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill.

No building in the district is unaltered; each has undergone varying degrees of modification and alteration. The district remains a textile manufacturing center and the altered condition of the buildings reflects the changing needs of manufacturers.

5. Dates: 1825, 1863, 1864, 1870, 1897, c. 1910.
6. Significance: The structures in the Central Falls Mill Historic District are the largest concentration of architecturally and historically significant buildings in the city. Central Falls developed as a manufacturing city whose economy was tied firmly to the growth of the textile and metals

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industries in the Blackstone Valley. This industrial district has always been the core of the city's economic life.

The boundaries of the district are drawn to include the original six water privileges created when, in 1823, the Central Falls Mill Owners Association was incorporated, and one additional mill adjacent to the privileged land. This regularized apportionment of water rights in the early 19th century, largely accounts for the orderly and increasingly intensive use of water power at this site throughout the 1800s. Of the mills which originally occupied the water privileges, two remain -- the Kennedy/Stafford Mill and the Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill. Other mills in the district are the successors to the small plants located here in the 1820s.

Two of the largest mills in the district date from the post-Civil War boom period in Central Falls -- the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill and the Central Falls Woolen Mill. At the same period, the Kennedy Mill was enlarged, the trench system reconstructed to allow for two entry gates, and a new dam constructed. This renovation of the trenches in the 1860s increased the power available to these riverfront mill sites and prolonged the use of water power in the area.

Two later mills complete the district -- the Royal Weaving Mill, built in 1897, and the Bryan Marsh Mill, constructed c. 1910.

Architecturally, the Central Falls Mill Historic District contains the finest of the city's 19th-century mills. Located on the sixth privilege, the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company factory has a handsome tower decorated with blind arches and an elaborately corbeled cornice. Other mills in the district are not so finely detailed, but taken together they form an impressive industrial riverfront.

7. Acreage: Approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres
8. Plat 1, lots 95, 320, 14
9. UTM Reference: 19.302360 4639700

See also inventory sheets for:
Kennedy/Stafford Mill

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Pawtucket HairCloth Company Mill
Central Falls Woolen Mill
Bryan Marsh Mill
Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill
Royal Weaving Mill

See also photographs # 1-4.

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1. Name: Kennedy/Stafford Mill
2. Location: 561 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Roosevelt Realty Company
561 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: This is a 4½-story, red brick mill (1825), with gable roof and clerestory monitor. It has a square end tower, originally capped by a flat-roofed belfry, now removed. There are brick additions on the north side (3 stories, 140 x 30 feet, 6 bays long) and on the east side (4 stories, 70 x 36 feet, 13 bays long), which date from the 1860s. The original mill is 10 bays long. Its floors, carried on wood beams and cylindrical wood posts, are of board-on-joist construction. A single story dye house with hip roof adjoins the eastern end of the mill. No water power equipment is in place.
5. Date: 1825, 1860s
6. Significance: The Stafford/Kennedy Mill is built on the earliest industrial site in Central Falls and is one of the oldest buildings in the city. The first dam was constructed here in 1780, and the water power used by manufacturers of scythes, other edged tools, and chocolate. Stephen Jenks located here in 1811 to finish 10,000 muskets under a contract with the federal government.

In 1825, John Kennedy (with Samuel Slater's partners, Almy & Brown) built the present mill. His choice of brick as a building material at this early date makes his mill a regional rarity. Kennedy manufactured cotton cloth here; the mill was later operated by John Gardner and, still later, by Rufus J. Stafford. The Stafford Manufacturing Company continued to produce cotton products here into the 20th century. Stafford built the additions to the mill, rebuilt the dam, and reconstructed the power canal system. The mill is now occupied by commercial tenants.

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7. Acreage: less than 1 acre.

8. Plat 1, lot 95

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1. Name: Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company Mill
2. Location: 501 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Roosevelt Realty Company, Inc.
527 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: This is a long, rectangular, 3½-story mill, designed by William Walker. The Hair Cloth Mill is about 200 feet long (7 by 25 bays), with an ell. Its gable roof has remarkable brick corbeling; the most prominent feature of the mill is its projecting central tower, decorated with blind arches and an open arched belfry. The mill's plank-on-timber framing is carried on both cast iron and wooden columns. Alterations include a new door opening in the west facade, removal of the belfry roof, and installation of a ramp into the tower.
5. Date: 1864
6. Significance: In terms of industrial history, this is a unique building in Rhode Island. Architecturally, it is an outstanding early work of a major Rhode Island architect. The Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company had been in operation for 8 years prior to the construction of the mill but had not been particularly successful; with the acquisition of Isaac Lindsley's patents for weaving haircloth in 1861, however, the company built up a virtual monopoly on the manufacture of the fabric which was used for furniture coverings, crinolines, and interlinings. Much of the raw fiber was imported from the great horse hair markets of Russia. The company was reorganized as the American Cloth Company in 1893 and, in the late 19th century, operated several hundred looms here.
7. Acreage: less than one acre
8. Plat 1, lot 320

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1. Name: Central Falls Woolen Mill
2. Location: 523 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Roosevelt Realty Company
527 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: The Central Falls Woolen Mill is a long, rectangular, red brick mill, set between the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company Mill and the Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill. The mill has a gable roof with a monitor, is 18 bays long, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ stories tall. The original mansard-roofed end tower was removed in the early 20th century when the Bryan Marsh Mill was constructed across its facade.
5. Date: 1870
6. Significance: The Central Falls Woolen Company was incorporated in 1870 by Phetteplace and Seagrave of Providence and James L. Pierce; the company operated 24 broad looms in the production of cassimeres and doeskins. Purchased in 1894 by Frederick Farwell of Newfane, Vermont, who used it for worsted production. In the early 20th century, the mill was used for glass products, it is now used for manufacture of narrow fabrics. The canal, now filled in, originally ran under the mill; Farwell supplemented water power with a 300-horsepower Harris-Corliss steam engine, since removed.
7. Acreage: less than one acre.
8. Plat 1, Lot 95

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1. Name: Bryan Marsh Mill
2. Location: 523 Roosevelt Avenue
3. Owner: Roosevelt Realty Company
527 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: The Bryan Marsh Mill is a long, rectangular industrial building, set at right angles to the other major mills of the district and obscuring two of them from view. The mill is constructed of red brick, is 4 stories tall, and has a flat roof. The large rectangular tri-partite windows are separated by spandrels recessed behind the piers which divide the long 13-bay facades. A shallow corbeled cornice terminates the facade and is the only decoration of the building.
5. Date: c. 1910
6. Significance: The Bryan Marsh Mill, the newest building in the district, was the site of the introduction of glass manufacture to Central Falls. Bryan Marsh (and its parent company, General Electric) produced light bulbs here and in the Stafford Mill in the early 20th century. The Bryan Marsh Mill is now occupied by a metal cladding concern. The Central Falls' glass industry, now carried on by Corning Glass Company, is the largest single employer in the city.
7. Acreage: less than one acre
8. Plat 1, lot 95

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1. Name: Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill
2. Location: 527 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Roosevelt Realty Company
527 Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: This is a 4-story rubble stone mill (1825) built on the third privilege at Central Falls. The mill originally had a gable roof with clerestory monitor and a small cupola. The pitch of the roof has been modified, so that it is now virtually flat. The mill is about 78 by 44 feet, 5 by 7 bays; its granite-trimmed window and door openings have been modified, but some of the original 6/6 sash remains. Its stair tower has been converted into a passageway between the original mill and a 20th century mill built across its facade. Much of the interior framing has been modified; no historic machinery survives. The mill is now used to produce narrow fabrics and webbing.
5. Date: 1825
6. Significance: Despite its many alterations, the Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill is one of the most significant industrial buildings in Central Falls. With the Kennedy Mill, it is one of the two oldest buildings in the city. The Pawtucket Company was formed by Jabel Ingraham, Bosworth Walker, William Allen, and Uriah Benedict, who manufactured cotton thread and yarn. By 1827, they had leased the lower story to Field and Jacobs, who were the first in Central Falls to manufacture textile machinery. The mill was later owned by Rufus Stafford; by 1881, it was used by Thurber, Horton and Wood for the production of sheetings, cotton cloth, thread and yarn.
7. Acreage: less than 1 acre
8. Plat 1, lot 95

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1. Name: Royal Weaving Mill
2. Location: 467-471, Roosevelt Avenue
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Fabrics by Lyon, Inc.
2 Cross Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: The oldest section of this mill (1897) was designed by Dwight Seabury of Pawtucket for silk production. A long rectangular brick building, it is 1-story on its west elevation facing Roosevelt Avenue and, as the land slopes away toward the river, becomes a full 2 stories tall. The mill is covered by a wooden saw-tooth roof to provide the soft light favored for weaving. The mill windows are double-hung, 12/2 sash. The main entrance is in the center of the west facade and, like the mill itself, is undecorated. A 3-story addition is set between the river bank and the mill; the two sections are separated by a freight access. A second addition, equal in size to the original mill was constructed on the south side in 1898; it was also designed by Seabury. Like the original mill, this is a long rectangular building, 1-story on the west end and rising to a full four stories on the eastern end as the land slopes away to the river. The western facade is asymmetrical, with a small office projecting from the southwest corner, a second entry off-center, and a freight door on the northwest corner. Windows have segmental or round heads, granite sills and 1/1 sash. The cornice of the mill is boldly corbelled. A narrow, 15-foot passage separates this addition from the original mill. The western end of the addition originally had a saw tooth roof, but this has since been replaced by a flat roof.
5. Date: 1897, 1898
6. Significance: The Royal Weaving Company was started by Joseph Ott, a German who had been a designer and a silk operative before his emigration in 1834. In 1887, he began a weaving business after perfecting a silk loom. He incorporated the Royal Weaving Company with Darius Goff and Daniel Littlefield (president of the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company whose mill is located just across the street). The Royal Weaving operations were carried on in the Hair Cloth Mill before construction of this mill. With its large addition, constructed within a year, and further construction in Pawtucket, Royal Weaving became a major producer in northern Rhode Island. In the early 20th century the Central Falls plant housed 700 looms.

See continuation sheet 19

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7. Acreage: less than one acre

8. Plat 1, lot 14

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1. Name: Central Street School
2. Location: 379 Central Street
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: City of Central Falls
580 Broad Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: This is a small, clapboarded 2½-story schoolhouse, of cruciform shape, with a cross-gable roof. The cornice is bracketed as are the four gables of the roof. There are identical entrances placed in the centers of shorter east-west axis; each is covered by an Italianate hood. Its windows are surrounded by frames with a simple molding. On the interior, there are 2 school rooms on each floor and two central staircases. The interiors are finished simply with plain plastered walls.
5. Date: 1881
6. Significance: The Central Street School is a relatively unaltered example of a late 19th century city schoolhouse. It is significant as a representative example of the expanded governmental functions required by the village during its decades of increasing industrialization and immigration. Between 1875 and 1886, four schoolhouses were built in the village, supplementing its two tiny district schoolhouses and the brick school on Broad Street. This dramatic expansion of the educational plant is accounted for by greatly increased population and industrial employment.
7. Acreage: less than 1 acre
8. Plat 6, lot 41
9. UTM Reference: 19.301380 4639510

See Photo # 5.

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1. Name: Samuel B. Conant House
2. Address: 104 Clay Street
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: The Mansion, Inc.
104 Clay Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: The Conant House is one of the most elegant in the city, a massive, red brick and clapboard Colonial Revival composition of 2½ stories, set beneath a broad gambrel roof. The bulky form of the symmetrically arranged house is emphasized by the two broad curves of the facade which reach from the basement level to the dentil cornice and are topped by balustrades. An elaborate balustraded porch stretches across the facade, supported by Corinthian columns and enclosing the central entrance. The two panelled doors are set under an elliptical top lite and surrounded by side lights of leaded glass. Double-hung sash (for the most part 6/2) is surrounded by molded window frames. A three-part Palladian window is set in the center of the second story. Four dormers are lined across the gambrel roof - the two inner ones capped by simple triangular pediments, the two outer ones by broken scroll pediments.

The interior of the Conant House is equally elaborate. On the first floor, large rooms are arranged symmetrically around a central hallway. All rooms on this floor are decorated with largely scaled cornices and mantels in various Colonial Revival compositions. An ornate staircase, lit by a tall window on its landing is located at the back of the center hall. The rooms of the second floor are as highly decorated, though their scale is somewhat reduced. The third floor is furnished plainly with simpler mantels and originally served as maids' quarters.

The Conant House is now used as a nursing home. The transition to this new use has required a number of interior alterations; however, these changes have been made with some sympathy for the character of the house and many of them are reversible. The great stairway, for example, is now enclosed by a wall, but this wall is built inside the stair rail and leaves it unharmed. One of the four large rooms of the first floor has been modified into a nurses station; fire doors have been installed; and the Conant House has been connected to an adjacent building by a passageway constructed in the rear of the house.

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5. Date: 1895

6. Significance: The significance of the Conant House is primarily architectural, though the house is also associated with one of the leading industrial families of the Blackstone Valley. The house is the only fully developed example of the Colonial Revival in the city and is an accomplished and informative example of that style. In spite of its alterations to accommodate a new use, the Conant House is well preserved and is a unique architectural resource for Central Falls. Its architect is as yet unknown.

The house was built for Samuel M. Conant, president of Adam Sutcliffe, a Pawtucket printing firm. Samuel Conant was the son of Hezekiah Conant whose huge Conant Thread Works is nearby on the city line between Pawtucket and Central Falls. Hezekiah Conant himself lived in Central Falls, though his Stick Style mansion no longer stands.

7. Acreage: less than one acre

8. Plat 15, lot 21

9. UTM Reference 19.301660 4639340

See Photos # 6-10.

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1. Name: David G. Fales House
2. Address: 476 High Street
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wilks
476 High Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: The Fales House sits at the junction of High and Central streets, which was in the mid-19th century the commercial center of Central Falls and the heart of one of its more desirable residential neighborhoods. The Fales House is a symmetrical 2½ story block, capped by a flaring mansard roof; its symmetry is interrupted only on the south side by a short extension from the rear half of that side. The house sits upon a high basement of granite blocks; its walls are covered by 4" wide tongue-in-groove boards, giving it a flat, smooth surface. The eastern entrance facade is three bays wide; its panelled door is set in the center of the facade and is protected by a bracketed hood. The window sash is for the most part 2/2 and double-hung. Most of the windows are paired and have simple moldings and caps supported by small consoles. On the first story, there are bracketed bay windows on the east and north sides. There is an ornamental cast-iron balcony on the parlor window flanking the main door. The Fales House was built c. 1858 and was remodelled in 1867 by Providence architect Clifton A. Hall who replaced its flat roof with the flaring mansard. Its broad eaves are supported by brackets with pendants; segmental-head dormers are set in the mansard and a square belvedere with round-head windows tops the roof.

On the interior of the Fales House, there are only vestiges of its original character. A major fire gutted the house in the 1960s and, in the subsequent rebuilding of the interior, some partitions have been moved and all floor, ceiling, and wall surfaces changed. The rooms of the Fales House were arranged symmetrically around a long central stair hall, running the length of the house.
5. Date: c. 1858, 1867.

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6. Significance: Though it is a handsome example on its exterior of the Second Empire, the primary significance of the Fales House is historical, its association with one of the premier manufacturers of the city's 19th century. Built in the late 1850s, this house was the home of David G. Fales, one of the original partners in the firm of Fales and Jenks. With his brother-in-law, Alvin Jenks, a scion of one of the Blackstone Valley's pioneer metals manufacturing families, Fales began the fabrication of textile machinery (in particular, Thorpe's spinning ring) in 1845 in Pawtucket. In 1861, only a few years after Fales built this elegant house in Central Falls, the firm moved its operations to the village, constructing a large mill there on the railroad. Fales and Jenks remained in Central Falls only a few years before removing again to Pawtucket, where throughout the 19th century they remained one of the state's largest and most important machinery manufacturers. Together with the Fales and Jenks Mill, the Fales House testifies to the presence here of a major industrial concern.

When David Fales built this house, the corner of High and Central streets was the hub of Central Falls' commercial and residential development. In the past two decades, this neighborhood has been the focus of the city's limited urban renewal efforts and, unfortunately, the site of several major demolitions. Of the major mid-19th century buildings in the vicinity, only the Fales House and a much altered commercial block on the opposite corner remain.

7. Acreage: less than 1 acre
8. That portion of Plat 1, lot 86 which is occupied by the Fales House.
9. UTM Reference: 19.302140 4639670

See Photo # 11.

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1. Name: Benjamin F. Greene House

2. Address: 85 Cross Street
Central Falls, RI

3. Owner: Mr. Philip Smiley
16 Fairmount Avenue
Lincoln, Rhode Island

4. Description: One of Central Falls' most important residences, Benjamin F. Greene's house is an elegant Second Empire composition. The mansard-roofed, 2½-story house displays a variety of bold ornament. The main block of the house is three bays wide; on the west side are two first story bay windows and on the east side is a 2½-story ell with porch.

The ornamentation of the Greene House is extraordinary for its elaboration, relieving the severity of the simple, block-like shape of the house. The central door is set under a flat-roofed porch which is supported by trios of Corinthian columns; a scale-shaped ornament decorates the lower third of each of the columns and they rest on piers with circular, incised ornaments. The roof of the porch rests on tiny curved brackets and is decorated with applied Maltese crosses. Above the porch a trio of round-head windows is set under a "sunbonnet" gabled dormer which caps the central pavilion, is supported by brackets, and encloses a round-head window with a small balcony.

The window sash of the Greene House is 2/2 and double-hung. On the first story the windows are surrounded by wide, flat frames with keystones at the top center; shallow segmental hoods over each window are supported on brackets. On the second story the hoods are flat, while the dormer windows duplicate those on the first floor.

A two-bay wide extension from the east side of the house is faced with a wide porch. The decoration of the porch columns and roof duplicates that on the entrance portico; the porch is enclosed by a railing of flat sawn sections.

Examination of the interior of the Greene House has only been possible since a very recent change of ownership. Fortunately, despite the house's present use as a rooming house, its elaborate interiors remain essentially intact. Portions of a fine period cast-iron fence still front the Greene House property.

5. Date: 1868

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6. Significance: The Benjamin F. Greene House has both architectural and historical significance for the city of Central Falls. It is one of only a few high-style residences left from the mid-nineteenth century, when industrialization's full expansion provided manufacturers such as Greene with fortunes to be expended on their houses. Designed by Providence architect Clifton A. Hall and built by the Wheeler and Marchant carpentry firm, it is a good example of the Second Empire; on its exterior, the Greene House stands virtually as it was built, lacking only the belvedere which once topped its roof. While the large lawns which once graced the Greene House have since been encroached upon, the house still suggests the pre-eminence Greene intended.

Benjamin Franklin Greene was the leader among Central Falls' second generation of mill owners, able to consolidate and make full use of the gains of the pioneer generation. As a youth Greene worked in the Crompton and Natick mills; in 1840, he went into business with Stephen and Thomas Benedict and Samuel Wood in Central Falls. In 1855, Greene and Horace Daniels leased a mill on Roosevelt Avenue (on the site of the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company Mill) to produce thread. The Greene and Daniels operation was eminently successful, so much so that in 1860 they moved directly across the river to Pawtucket and into a much larger mill where they continued to flourish through the nineteenth century. Greene continued to live in Central Falls until the 1880s.

7. Acreage: about 1 acre
8. Plat 1, lot 268
9. UTM Reference: 19.301990 4639610

See Photos # 12 and 13.

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1. Name: Holy Trinity Church Complex
2. Location: 134 Fuller Avenue
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Corporation of the Church of the Holy Trinity
134 Fuller Avenue
Central Falls, RI
and
City of Central Falls
580 Broad Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: Holy Trinity Church Complex is an architecturally harmonious group of buildings -- church, rectory, convent, school, and parish house -- designed for the activities of the only Irish Catholic parish in Central Falls. The Victorian Gothic church (James Murphy; 1889-1897), executed in red brick and dominated by its 4-level tower, is the centerpiece of the group. Complementing and surrounding the church are the red brick, mansard-roofed, 2½-story rectory (1893); a red brick convent (Murphy and Hindle; 1905), distinguished by its heavy entrance portico; the large school building (Murphy and Hindle; 1905); and the parish house (Irving Gorman; 1925) containing a variety of recreational facilities.
5. Dates: 1889, 1893, 1905, 1925
6. Significance: The Holy Trinity Church Complex is a handsome, unified group of structures, the principal architectural monument of its closely-packed neighborhood. Though the complex would ordinarily be excluded from the National Register as a church-owned property, its primary significance derives from its historic role as the institutional center of the city's Irish Catholic immigrant community in the 19th and 20th centuries. The parish was formed in 1888 and its continuing importance as the religious, educational, and social center of its Irish working class neighborhood is represented by the number of auxiliary buildings added to the church complex in the following decades.

DEMOLISHED

Only parish house extant.

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7. Acreage: about 2 acres.
8. Plat 6, lot 244
9. UTM Reference: 19.301180 4639990
10. Entered on the National Register: January 3, 1978

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1. Name: Jenks Park and Cogswell Tower
2. Location: Adjoining 580 Broad Street, Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: City of Central Falls
580 Broad Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: Jenks Park is a late-19th century urban park, located on a deep, narrow lot. Broad paths meander among several rocky outcroppings and the various memorials and ornaments. The park contains three seating pavilions, roofed with arching umbrellas of sheet metal and supported by central iron masts. Cogswell Tower (1904), the focus of the park, is an imposing stone clock tower, 18 feet square and 70 feet tall, and supported by a brick barrel vault. The tower was designed by Albert Humes, a Pawtucket architect who was mayor of Central Falls in 1903-04; the contractor was George Humes, brother of the mayor-architect.
5. Dates: 1890, 1904
6. Significance: Jenks Park is the only major park in Central Falls. Built on land donated by Alvin Jenks, whose family's firm had been tied to the city since the early 19th century, the park has been since its opening been the city's "breathing space." The designer of the park is unknown, but, in the history of recreation in the densely-developed city, Jenks Park is a vital element. Cogswell Tower, the gift of Caroline Cogswell, is the city's symbol and its festive ornament, the sign and emblem of Central Falls.
7. Acreage: 4½-5 acres
8. Plat 5, lot 6
9. UTM Reference: 19.301770 4639850
10. Entered on National Register September 22, 1972

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1. Name: Saint Matthew's Church
2. Location: Dexter and West Hunt Streets
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Corporation of the Church of St. Matthew's
1030 Dexter Street
Central Falls, RI
4. Description: Saint Matthew's is a large stone Gothic church, set on a small triangular site, atop a knoll at the junction of Dexter and West Hunt streets and Lonsdale Avenue. The church, completed in 1929 and designed by Walter F. Fontaine, is an imposing structure modeled on French Gothic churches, built of Weymouth granite and trimmed with limestone. The church is basilican in plan, its nave covered by a high, wide gable roof separated from the shed roofs of the aisles by a series of arched clerestory windows. The church walls are constructed of granite ashlar of mellow browns and reds, buttressed at the corners and between the bays. The main and eastern facade is dominated by a great traceried window, set under a shallow pointed arch and consisting of a large circular window set over three central lancet windows and flanked by two taller lancets; a similar window fills the western chancel end of the church. The primary entrance into the church is located under the window; the main doors of traceried oak, are placed under a sharply pointed arch and are flanked on each side by subsidiary doors. A square, five-level tower rises from the southeast corner; it is lit by various size lancet windows and topped by pinnacles decorated with crockets.

On the interior of St. Matthew's, the nave is separated from the north and south aisles by colonnades of pointed arches and is lit by the arched windows of the main level and a series of smaller, arched clerestory windows. The ceiling is vaulted, its ribs meeting at the roof ridge. The chancel is framed by a broad pointed arch (whose shape is repeated by the chancel window over the high altar) and is flanked by side altars enclosed under smaller versions of the colonnade arches; the chancel is separated from the nave by three steps and a marble altar rail. An octagonal pulpit is set at the southeast corner of the chancel. Four rows of pews occupy the nave; there is no seating in the narrow aisles.

Though the plan of the interior of St. Matthew's is not unusual, its decoration is extraordinary. The church is richly figured and lavishly decorated. Fine marbles are used throughout the church -- the dado is made

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of marble, as are the lower edge of the clerestory wall, the colonettes framing the aisle arches, the pedestals of the columns, and the molding around the chancel arch. All of the windows, which were produced by Mommejean de Paris, are of stained glass with granite tracery and depict various saints and scenes from the life of Christ. The painting of the interior was executed by Guido Nincheri; scenes from the life of Christ fill the spandrels of colonnade arches and the spaces over the entrances to the side altars; the interstices between the ribs of the ceiling are painted to resemble stone building blocks, as are the spaces over the vestry doors flanking the altar and the marble reredos.

5. Date: 1929
6. Significance: Though St. Matthew's is a church-owned property and would thus ordinarily be excluded from the National Register, its primary significance is derived from its architectural merit. Both within and without, this is a beautiful building. A major landmark of western Central Falls, it is rare in the city for its monumentality and its magnificent interior.

The church has its origins in a parish formed in 1906, when the French-Canadian population of the city had expanded to the city's western section. The church building is itself largely the product of the vision of Monseignor Joseph Laliberte, a noted French-Canadian cleric who led the parish for its first forty-six years. Laliberte had earlier served as the vicar of St. Ann's in Woonsocket and, when in the mid-1920s, the parish began planning for its church, he chose as its architect Walter F. Fontaine (1871-1938). Fontaine had prepared the designs for St. Ann's in 1914, and was by the 1920s a noted and prolific church architect. Among his other extant churches are St. Lawrence's Church (1907) in North Providence and St. Joseph's (1938) in Woonsocket. Fontaine had designed the earliest of St. Matthew's parish buildings in 1907 -- a 2-story, yellow brick chapel-school; his work was familiar to St. Matthew's pastor and parishioners not only from their own school, but from the school he had designed in 1909 for the earlier French parish in Central Falls, Notre Dame.

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By the mid-1920s, many of St. Matthew's parishioners had entered the entrepreneurial and professional classes and, while most of the congregation were still largely employees of the textile and machine industries, the parish was relatively affluent; St. Matthew's Church is testimony to that affluence (it cost \$600,00 to build) and to economic achievements of the French community.

7. Acreage: less than 1 acre
8. That portion of Plat 7, lot 18 which is occupied by Saint Matthew's Church.
9. UTM Reference: 19.300710 4640060

See Photos # 14 - 18.

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1. Name: Valley Falls Mill (see also: Amendment, continuation sheet 34)
2. Location: 1363 Broad Street
Central Falls, RI
3. Owner: Blackstone Falls Associates
c/o Gelardin/Bruner/Cott, Inc.
534a Green Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
4. Description: This mill site includes three structures dating from the mid-19th century -- a large brick mill, a smaller stone mill, and a small boiler house. In addition, much of the water power system remains, including a hewn-stone dam (1853), which provided 14 feet of head, the gate, and its house; and portions of a once-extensive canal system.

The Valley Falls Mill (1849) is 156 by 44 feet, 20 bays long; built of red brick and trimmed with granite, the mill is 4 stories tall and has a hip roof. The floors are supported by heavy timber columns; the fourth floor of the mill has no posts -- its roof is supported by king post trusses. At the center of the south elevation is a five-level, projecting Italianate tower.

Joined to the mill by a passageway is a smaller, 3-story, gable-roofed rubble mill (1860s). Adjacent to this smaller mill is a shed-roofed boiler house (1860s).

5. Dates: 1849, 1860s.
6. Significance: The Valley Falls Mill is a major industrial building, located on a key site. The water power of the Valley Falls was first used by the Wilkinson family, noted for their mechanical genius, in 1812. The present mill was constructed by Samuel and Harvey B. Chace; it was designed for the manufacture of cotton products and was the site of the first use of American-made, Sharp and Roberts self-actor mules.

The Chaces (incorporated as the Valley Falls Company) operated mills on both sides of Blackstone and in other towns. The Valley Falls Mill encouraged the growth of a substantial village here at the falls, though it is now

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virtually indistinguishable from the rest of Central Falls. Apart from its historic interest, the mill is an architectural landmark, its distinctive tower visible in much of the city.

7. Acreage: 2.8 acres
 8. Plat 3, lots 37, 178a, 181, and that portion of lot 178B formed by a line from High Street (68.80' from lot 37) running 108.5' at 45 -37'3"W to lot 81.
 9. UTM Reference: 19. 301830 4641080
 10. Entered on the National Register, September 27, 1977.
1. Valley Falls Mill Complex Amendment: Office and Bath House
 2. Location: 1359 and 1361 Broad Street, Central Falls, RI
 3. Owner: Blackstone Falls Associates, 534a Green Street, Cambridge, MA
 4. Description: This amendment includes two buildings constructed as part of the mill complex. The company office is a 1-story Italianate structure, of stone rubble with a stucco cover, low overhanging roof and exposed purlin ends. The bath house is a 1-story brick and wood building, with a steep hip roof and cupola.
 5. Dates: c. 1855, c. 1870.
 6. Significance: The company office, which served as the administrative center of the mill complex, and the bath house, which served both mill workers and the community, have been added to the nomination; together, they enhance the visual quality of the mills and historically they add a new dimension to the complex.
 7. Acreage: less than one acre
 8. Plat 2, lot 192, formerly part of lot 178B.
 9. UTM Reference: 19. 301790 4641030

3 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
___PREHISTORIC	___ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	___COMMUNITY PLANNING	X_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	X_RELIGION
___1400-1499	___ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	___CONSERVATION	___LAW	___SCIENCE
___1500-1599	___AGRICULTURE	X_ECONOMICS	___LITERATURE	___SCULPTURE
___1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	X_EDUCATION	___MILITARY	X_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
___1700-1799	___ART	___ENGINEERING	___MUSIC	___THEATER
___1800-1899	___COMMERCE	___EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	___PHILOSOPHY	___TRANSPORTATION
___1900-	___COMMUNICATIONS	X_INDUSTRY	___POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	___OTHER (SPECIFY)
		X_INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(8A.)

The historic resources of Central Falls, including one district and nine individual structures (four of which are already entered on the National Register) represent many of the historical forces which shaped the growth of this small industrial city. They include three important houses, two major churches, a mill district, an individual mill, a small neighborhood schoolhouse, and a city park.

In its earliest years, the undeveloped land of Central Falls was part of the "North Woods" of Providence. Only sparsely settled throughout the 18th century, the area did not experience intensive development until technological innovations made the water power of the Blackstone River a valuable resource. The community was shaped largely by the process of industrialization, and, among the historic resources of the city, industrial structures hold primacy. They include two dams, part of a trench system, an industrial district and an individual mill located on major falls of the river. Central Falls' location on the east coast rail corridor was a key factor in sustaining its 19th century industrial development and included in this nomination is one major industrial building on the rail line. The wealth created by manufacturing is visible not only in the mills themselves, but also in the houses built by several of Central Falls' industrial magnates.

Central Falls' early population consisted mostly of Yankee families and some Englishmen and Scots employed in the textile industries. However, the city as it exists today is largely the product of building for and by the large immigrant population which arrived in Central Falls between 1840 and 1920. As in many New England industrial cities, these immigrants were drawn first from Ireland, and later from French Canada (especially Quebec's small towns and farms), Poland, Syria and Russia. Most of the immigrants came to work in the city's mills and the demands they placed on the city's housing market for eighty years resulted in the extensive development of densely concentrated residential building which characterizes Central Falls. Architecturally and culturally, the most significant legacy of these ethnic groups is the Catholic church built by each community.

For most of its history, Central Falls was not an independent municipal entity; it had been a village in the town of Smithfield, and was later a semi-independent fire district in Smithfield and Lincoln, before its eventual incorporation in 1895. The continuing theme of Central Falls 19th-century political history is the pressure of population and the demands for municipal services placed on an inadequate

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(until 1895) governmental framework. One well-preserved 19th-century schoolhouse remains to document this long-standing political dilemma.

8B and C.

First Settlement (to 1750)

Before the arrival of European settlers, the land which is now the city of Central Falls was probably common ground used by the Nipmuc, Wampanoag, and Narragansett Indians. When European settlement began in Rhode Island, this Indian territory offered few advantages to the early settlers and development in the vicinity preceded very slowly in the 17th century.

In 1636, Roger Williams and his followers acquired the land of Central Falls as part of Providence. The land was not included in the original laying out of Providence and remained the common property of the town, "lands of public domain," to be sold to newcomers to the colony. It is unclear whether 17th century landowners actually lived in the area, but it is likely that they did not.

Central Falls was, however, the scene of a major confrontation between white settlers and Indians during King Philip's War. In March, 1676, the garrison of Rehoboth, Massachusetts, on the offensive against Canonchet, was wiped out on the banks of the Blackstone River.

In 1714, the Smithfield Road (now Lonsdale Avenue) was built to provide access from Providence to the Blackstone Valley. In Central Falls this north-south road was connected to the falls and fords of the river by footpaths. Despite the thinly-scattered population of the region, the colony's legislature, prompted by transportation and communication difficulties between Providence and this "North Woods" region, created three new towns in the area in 1730. The small area now known as Central Falls became part of the new town of Smithfield, one of the largest towns in the state.

Early Use of Water Power (1750-1820)

The first use of Central Falls' most valuable natural resource, its water power, and the origin of all later industrial development occurred during the 1750s when Benjamin Jenks built a power trench by the side of the river and erected a snuff

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mill. However, it was not until the construction of the first dam in 1780 that extensive use of the middle falls was made possible. The dam was built by Sylvanus Brown of Pawtucket for Charles Keene, who manufactured edged tools in a shop near Roosevelt Avenue.

By 1812, there was two small mills and two dwelling houses at the site. The War of 1812 provided a boost for the infant settlement when Stephen Jenks, under a contract with the federal government to manufacture 10,000 muskets, set up a machine shop here to finish the weapons.

Development at the Valley Falls proceeded at an equally small scale during this period. The Wilkinson family, known for their mechanical and inventive enterprise, were the first to use the water power here. The Wilkinson brothers, David, Abraham, and Isaac, built a small metal products mill here in 1823, located on the recently completed Valley Falls Turnpike (now Broad Street; chartered in 1813). The turnpike was built by Isaac Wilkinson and considerably mitigated transportation difficulties for these early manufacturers.

By 1820, the two villages of Central Falls were still infant settlements of but a few families, accessible from the south only by two roads and separated by uninhabited territory. But the industrial pattern set in these early decades of development continued through Central Falls' history. The metals industry (soon to be joined by textile manufacture) remained a cornerstone of the city's economy throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. None of the houses or factories of this early period remain today.

Emergence of an Industrial Center (1820-1830)

During the 1820s, the development of Central Falls expanded considerably as a regulation of water power rights led to an expansion of the small industries and, in turn, attracted a growing population. In 1823, the water power of the middle falls was divided among the members of the Central Falls Mill Owners Association. The power was divided into six separate privileges apportioned to individual owners, who were each entitled to an aperture in the side of a canal dug roughly parallel to the Blackstone River. This division and regulation of the use of the river's power promoted the first real boom in Central Falls' development; in 1815, there had been three small thread mills here; by 1825 there were eight textile operations, six making cotton cloth, two spinning cotton thread. Within a few years, four of the six power rights were occupied; two mills from this period survive, the

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Kennedy mill (on Privilege 1) and the Pawtucket Thread Mill (on Privilege 3). Both are included in the Central Falls Mill Historic District.

The importance of the hamlet lay in its industrial plant since the village was still outside the major commercial and industrial areas of the state and was, for the most part, an extension of development further to the south in Pawtucket. Little genuine community life existed as yet: a small schoolhouse was built in 1920, but religious services were conducted only intermittently by visiting clergy.

The Beginnings of Urbanization (1830-1860)

In the thirty years between 1830 and 1860, the potential for growth revealed in the 1820s was realized, though Central Falls and Valley Falls remained discrete industrial villages.

In Central Falls, industrial development continued along the riverside and followed the earlier pattern of textile and metal enterprises. Several small wooden mills, none of which survive, were added to the industrial plant. The small brick Kennedy Mill was expanded by the Stafford Company until it reached its present large dimensions.

The more extensive development of Valley Falls was largely the product of investment by the Chace family and their Valley Falls Company. Samuel and Harvey B. Chace built a large mill here in 1849 and, in 1854, constructed a new dam and canal.

Although the number of mills in the area did not increase substantially (from 14 in 1835 to 17 in 1845), the productive capacity of each expanded considerably, as did their average size, number of employess, and the output of individual workers. This change in the scale of operations brought an increasingly population; it is estimated that in 1832 about 500 people were employed in manufacturing here; by 1850, there were 800 and over 1000 by 1860.

Increasing population and productivity intensified the need for a more sophisticated transport system, a need filled by the construction of the Providence and Worcester Railroad line. The Worcester line was completed in 1847 and the Boston connector was completed the following year, joining Central Falls to a far-ranging rail distribution line and allowing movement of goods and materials in and out with relative ease.

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As industry and population expanded, so did the need for local institutions. Two Protestant congregations, the Baptists and Congregationalists, built churches in the 1840s. Their presence reflected the early demography of the area - most residents were white, Protestant, and American-born. In the 1840s and 1850s, however, a large number of Irish immigrated to the area. Most worked in manufacturing, providing a ready source of labor for industry.

As the Central Falls area took on an increasingly urban character, a division of interests arose between it and the larger township of Smithfield and their political relationship became strained over the question of public services. The conflict was temporarily resolved in 1847 when the state legislature created the Central Falls Fire District, a quasi-municipal organization with the power to tax residents for fire protection. Creation of such districts was a common response by the state to the needs of quickly developing manufacturing centers. As the need for other services became more imperative, the fire district was empowered to provide them. In 1860, for example, a street-lighting system was authorized.

Industrial Expansion (1860-1890)

In the 1860s under the pressure of war-time demands, Central Falls' industrial plant expanded considerably. Interrupted only by the depression of the 1870s, this great boom continued until the 20th century. By 1862, though the two villages were still distinct, both were expanding, leaving less open space between them. All of the water privileges along Roosevelt Avenue were occupied.

As in previous decades, Central Falls' economy continued to be based upon the textile and metals trades. Several of the city's largest extant mill complexes date from this era, including the Stafford Mill (1829, 1860s), the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company Mill (1864), and the Central Falls Woolen Mill (1870), all located on the river. The Stafford Company built a new dam in 1863 at the middle falls and rebuilt the power trenches, increasing the available water power and making the waterfront mill sites as attractive as ever despite the availability of steam power. The largest mill constructed on the rail line was Fales and Jenks' textile machinery mill (1863).

Political, Social, and Civic Developments (1860-1890)

The expansion of the industrial capacity of Central Falls was reflected in its growing population. Early figures are imprecise, but, by 1870, an estimated

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9,000 people lived in the area; by 1890 the population had jumped to nearly fourteen thousand. Much of this increase was accounted for by the great influx of French Canadians who constituted the largest group of immigrants to Central Falls in the second half of the 19th century. Prompted by an agricultural depression in eastern Canada and by the opportunity for work in the expanding mills, workers journeyed south to settle in the manufacturing towns of the Blackstone River Valley. The continuing arrival of Irish (although immigration from Ireland had peaked before the Civil War) also swelled the population figures. Of the 9,000 people in Central Falls in 1870, 40 per cent were foreign born and an additional 10 per cent had at least one foreign-born parent.

Church building in these decades reflects the general prosperity and an increasing heterogeneity in nationality and religion. The Baptists and Congregationalists replaced their early churches; the Congregational Church (1883) still stands -- a handsome Queen Anne structure reflecting the wealth and social prominence of its 19th-century members. In addition, the Episcopalians and Methodists organized and built churches as well.

With foreign immigration, the Roman Catholic population expanded rapidly. The French Canadians, under the leadership of Fr. Charles Dauray, organized in 1873 and built a church (since demolished and replaced) in 1875. In 1889, the Irish formed the parish of Holy Trinity and began construction of their church the same year.

Throughout the second half of the 19th century, the urban-rural dichotomy that had led in 1849 to the creation of the Central Falls Fire District continued. Agitation to reorganize the town government led to the division of Smithfield in 1871, and Central Falls, once the largest industrial village in Smithfield, now occupied the same position in the new town of Lincoln. The new town hall was erected on Summit Street in Central Falls, reflecting the village's civic and economic pre-eminence. The status of the fire district was upgraded as the state legislature extended its powers -- first, to provide for a water, hydrant, and sewer system in 1874; to set up a police department in 1875; and to provide library services in 1887.

The number of institutional and civic buildings which were erected between 1860 and 1890 to accommodate the demands of the expanding population of the area reflects the change in Central Falls' character from industrial village to small city: the Broad Street Fire Station (1889), the Broad Street School (1861), four small neighborhood schoolhouses (between 1875 and 1886), the Lincoln High School (1889, now City Hall), and, finally, Jenks Park in 1890.

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Residential Development (1860-1900)

The extraordinary expansion of industry and population in the second half of the 19th century produced a rapid growth of residential development. In the 1860s, development was concentrated in the southeastern corner of the community; by 1870, construction on east-west cross streets was extending the area of dense development. By 1880 most of the land of the city had been platted except for the northern tier and a few scattered large estates; by 1895 even these had been broken into building lots. This rapid expansion of residential building produced a number of architecturally ambitious dwellings built by Central Falls' wealthy citizens and, in far greater numbers, modest multi-family houses built for the thousands of immigrants. This late 19th-century housing stock still dominates the city's environment.

Several of Central Falls major manufacturing and business leaders constructed large houses on the tree-lined streets of the southern section, its most prestigious neighborhood, and some fine examples of Victorian styles remain. Three such houses (the Greene, Fales, and Conant houses) are nominated to the National Register.

Surrounding such grand houses and filling much of the rest of the city were the more modest houses of Central Falls' middle and working classes. With the rise in population during the second half of the century and the necessity of housing thousands of new residents, several forms of multi-family housing became popular. Double houses (usually 2½ stories, gable-roofed, with entrances set at each end) were built from the 1860s on, but by far the predominant form of 2-family dwelling is the 1½-story, sidehall-plan house, divided horizontally into two flats. Built from the 1860s through the 1890s and beyond, this became a standard form decorated by details reflecting the progression of architectural tastes in these decades: earlier examples exhibit Italianate detailing while later examples have the contrasting wall covers of clapboard and shingle typical of the Queen Anne style.

By the 1880s and 1890s, this 2½-story form had evolved into a full three-decker. Such houses were an expedient way of housing the influx of industrial workers in an era of rising land values and are the building type most closely associated in the popular mind with Central Falls, though, in fact, they are actually outnumbered by 2-family houses. In a few cases, the three-decker form was expanded to a full four stories, but houses for more than three families are relatively rare in the city and only a few large tenement buildings were constructed.

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

Continued Prosperity (1890-1920)

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

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

The new municipality was based on a mayor and city council form of government; Charles P. Moies was elected its first mayor. The city acquired all of the property of the former Central Falls Fire District and extended beyond those bounds to include the part of Valley Falls on the southern bank of the river. The northern section of that village had become part of the town of Cumberland.

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

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the French Canadians tended to settle in the eastern and western section of the city, the English were concentrated in the south.

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

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

By 1920, there were large Polish and Syrian communities in the city, as well as smaller numbers of immigrants from Russia and Portugal. These new immigrants continued the tradition of ethnic cohesion in Central Falls; many Syrians lived in the central section of the city, while the Polish community located on the southern end of High Street. Again, the center of each of these neighborhoods was a church.

Residential building to accommodate the still increasing population in these decades followed patterns set in earlier years. Between 1900 and 1920, Central Falls' population rose from 18,167 to 24,174 and the city was well on the way to becoming the most densely populated municipality in the nation. Multi-family housing continued to predominate.

Most Central Falls workers continued to be employed in manufacturing plants. Depressions in 1893 and 1897 slowed industrial growth somewhat, but there was further diversification in productive capacity and, for the most part, these were prosperous years in Central Falls. Two major new mills were added to the Blackstone's riverfront: the Royal Weaving Mill and Bryan Marsh's mill built for light bulb production.

The prosperity of these decades was reflected in additions to the public buildings of the city: three new schools were built as well as a fire station, library, and police station and court house.

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The Shifting Economy (1920-1950)

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

The great expansion in municipal building which characterized earlier decades drew to an end in the mid-20th century; the only city building erected was the 1927 high school. Despite economic difficulties, however, several churches added to, or replaced, their buildings. The Episcopalians built a new church; Holy Trinity congregation added a parish house to its complex; and Notre Dame parish replaced its small wooden church with a large Romanesque church, completed in 1933, but since extensively altered. St. Matthew's, the second French Catholic parish, created the major visual landmark of the western side of the city when it constructed its imposing granite Gothic church in 1929.

As in other Rhode Island industrial cities, the Great Depression of the 1930s posed particular difficulties. Already faced with a weakened economy, many industrial concerns closed and increasing unemployment and declining trade ended Central Falls' last period of economic expansion. In 1933, at the worst of the depression, there were 1400 unemployed residents of Central Falls. The city's economic difficulties were further complicated by the unrest of labor disputes when a 1934 strike in the textile industry erupted into violence which necessitated the calling-up of the National Guard. Unemployment was relieved slightly when federal public works became available -- unemployed workers built a small baseball stadium, laid sidewalks through much of the city, and built several streets in the Valley Pond area, the last major tract of vacant land in the city.

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

Recent Developments (1950-present)

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

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

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

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

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Municipal and institutional building has accounted for many of the changes in the physical fabric of the city during the last two decades. Two new churches have replaced older structures. A branch bank and two credit unions have located on Broad Street. Some municipal buildings which were outmoded have been replaced; a new fire station and school have been built. The most extensive city construction projects have been the Forand and Wilfrid Manors, high-rise housing for older residents supported by loans from the Federal Housing Authority. While increasing the opportunities for Central Falls' elderly citizens to remain in the city, these buildings are out of scale with the neighborhoods in which they are located.

In the last ten years, a new group of immigrants has come to Central Falls; a significant Hispanic community -- mostly from Colombia -- has been added to the city's population. Settled for the most part in the northern section of the city, they, like earlier immigrants, are often employed in the textile industry.

8D.

Areas of significance checked in Block 8 and examples of buildings and sites related to each are listed below:

Architecture: Despite the fact that most buildings in Central Falls are examples of vernacular types and are not particularly noteworthy for architectural historians, there are among these properties a number of significant buildings of outstanding architectural merit. Among industrial structures, the entire Central Falls Mill Historic District is an unusual grouping of industrial buildings; of special note is the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company Mill designed by the prolific Rhode Island architect, William R. Walker. Both the Valley Falls Mill and the Fales and Jenks Mill are architecturally notable.

Of Central Falls many churches; two are exceptional in their contribution to the visual quality of city: St. Matthew's Church, a Gothic stone building with an elaborately decorated interior, and the Central Falls Congregational Church, a Shingle Style composition. The Holy Trinity Church complex, less notable for the quality of the church itself, derives its architectural significance from the harmonious grouping of several parish-related buildings.

Of the three houses nominated, the Greene and Fales Houses are nominated primarily for their historic significance, but both are also notable as elegant examples of Second Empire; the Greene House is decorated with a variety of bold ornament,

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while the Fales House is a more severe and restrained example. Of special note is the Conant House, an elaborate Colonial Revival mansion, whose interior detailing is unusually well-preserved.

Engineering: Jenks Park's Cogswell Tower is often cited as an unusual engineering achievement, in particular for the manner in which the weight of the tower is supported by a brick barrel vault.

Education: The Central Street School is a good example, well-preserved on its exterior, of late 19th-century neighborhood schoolhouses of Central Falls the better-preserved two surviving schools built in the years of Central Falls' greatest wealth and expansion, it represents an era of expanding population and demand upon municipal services, such as public education.

Industry: Of Central Falls' many historic resources, its industrial buildings are the key to an understanding of the city's origins and development. In the short space of a single century (roughly 1820 to 1920), Central Falls developed from a virtual wilderness into the most highly urbanized and densely populated city in Rhode Island. This dramatic growth was a direct consequence of industrialization, and, in particular, of the textile and metal industries. Several outstanding industrial structures remain to document the impact of industrialization on the city. The Valley Falls Mills, closely associated with the regionally-important Chace family, remains to testify to the overriding importance of manufacturing in Central Falls.

In addition, the Central Falls Mill Historic District contains the earliest extant mill structures in the city, one mill exceptional in its architectural quality, and a variety of other mill structures, spanning the 19th century and illustrating mill construction, design, and technique over the course of nearly a hundred years. The mill district is still largely used by manufacturing concerns and, though underutilized, offers vivid testimony to the continuing influence of manufacturing in the city and to the adaptability of these older structures to the requirements of present-day Rhode Island industrialists. In addition, Central Falls retains two dams located on major falls of the Blackstone River and, at the Valley Falls Mill, portions of the trench system are still intact.

The substantial wealth generated by 19th-century industry in Central Falls is manifest in the large, pretentious houses built by owners of major mills. Two of these houses -- Benjamin Franklin Greene's and David Fales' -- are included in this nomination.

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Invention: The Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company Mill (in the Central Falls Historic Mill District) is particularly notable as the site of the first extensive use of Isaac Lindsley's innovations in the horse-hair loom. The Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company had been in operation for eight years prior to the construction of the mill but had not been particularly successful; with the acquisition of the Lindsley patents in 1861, however, the company built up a virtual monopoly on the manufacture of the fabric. Lindsley's automatic feeder was designed to secure individual horse tail hairs for the notched lance, or "nipper stick," of the loom.

Landscape Architecture: Despite some compromises with the original plan, Jenks Park remains an interesting example of late 19th-century landscape architecture -- with its tree-shaded walks, lawns, pond, and fountains. The use of rocky outcroppings as locations for its tower and pavillions is notable. In densely-developed Central Falls, Jenks Park is a unique resource, the major recreational site in a closely-packed city.

Religion: As a result of immigration, primarily from Canada, Ireland, and Poland, Central Falls was in the late 19th century (and is still today) an overwhelmingly Catholic city. Early settlers had been for the most part Anglo-Saxon Protestants and, while individual Protestant congregations, such as the one which built the Central Falls Congregational Church, remained in the city and served middle and upper class citizens, they were numerically eclipsed by the large Catholic parishes, organized along national lines, and established in the second half of the century. St. Matthew's Church (French Canadian) and Holy Trinity Church Complex (Irish) remain today to manifest the impact of immigration on the religious demography of the city.

8E. See Item 7D.

8F.

To date, preservation and restoration activities in Central Falls have been limited. The municipal administration has given evidence of some concern for preservation in its renovation of city-owned structures. The Central Street School has required some interior renovation for its new use, but the city has preserved its exterior features. In 1974, the city acquired the Parish Center of the Holy Trinity Church Complex for conversion to a Neighborhood Facilities Center; its renovation has left the building's handsome exterior intact. The survey from

See continuation sheet 48

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CONTINUATION SHEET 48

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which this nomination is derived represents the strongest commitment yet of the city to preservation. Funding for the survey was shared by the city and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. It is anticipated that the results of the survey will be utilized in setting goals and developing future policies by the Central Falls Division of Planning.

Prior to this nomination, four properties in Central Falls have been nominated to the National Register: Jenks Park and Cogswell Tower, the Central Falls Congregational Church, the Holy Trinity Church complex, and the Valley Falls Mill. Both Jenks Park and the Central Falls Congregational Church have received grants from the historical Preservation Commission's grant-in-aid program.

A major private preservation effort is now underway in Central Falls, as the Valley Falls Mill is renovated to elderly housing. Gelardin/Bruner/Cott, Inc. are the architects for this extensive project which will utilize the incentives of the Tax Reform Act of 1976.

8G.

The combination of districts and individual structures included in this nomination is dictated by the criteria and standards of the National Register and by the visual quality of the city of Central Falls. The Central Falls Mill Historic District is the single identifiable group of buildings, related by compatible and mutually-enhancing architectural qualities and sharing a common historical evolution. Even though there have been many modifications to individual components of the district, these reflect their continuing industrial uses.

No other grouping of structures in the city shares these qualities with the industrial district. While there are several buildings of exceptional historical and architectural merit, they are widely separated by many structures of only minor or no interest, built in various eras and often much modified. Reflecting its history as a district of a much larger township during its major period of significance, Central Falls lacks a genuine "civic center" which could have been considered for nomination as a district; its major public buildings are strung out along a section of Broad Street and are interspersed with intrusive commercial development.

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8H. See inventory sheets for:

St. Matthew's Church
Holy Trinity Church Complex

8I.

The results of this survey, made available to the city and citizens of Central Falls in April, 1978, will be integrated into the on-going planning efforts of the Central Falls Division of Planning. In its planning for the future of the city, the Division of Planning operates with a group of individual plans for separate aspects of development: economic development, land use, transportation, capital improvements, recreation, and the like. Together these individual components function as a comprehensive plan. The results of this survey will become the historic preservation element of this comprehensive plan.

The inventory sheets, maps, and final report of the survey are deposited at the offices of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission and the Central Falls Division of Planning where they are used in environmental reviews, grant-in-aid funding, and evaluation of certification for Tax Reform Act incentives.

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CONTINUATION SHEET 50 ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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See continuation sheet 51

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ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 3

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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<u>Property Name</u>	<u>Level of Significance</u>
Central Falls Mill Historic District	State
Central Street School	Local
Samuel B. Conant House	Local
David G. Fales House	Local
Benjamin F. Greene House	State
Saint Matthew's Church	Local

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See continuation sheet 50

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY see individual inventory forms

UTM REFERENCES see individual inventory forms

A	_____	_____	_____	B	_____	_____	_____
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Multiple Resource Area includes the entire city of Central Falls; its boundaries are the incorporation limits of the city. For boundaries of individual and district nominations, see inventory forms.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Pamela A. Kennedy, Historical Survey Specialist

ORGANIZATION

R. I. Historical Preservation Commission

DATE

October, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

150 Benefit Street

TELEPHONE

401-277-2678

CITY OR TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

See Continuation Sheet 52

NATIONAL ___

STATE ___

LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Theresa C. Williamson

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE November 27, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

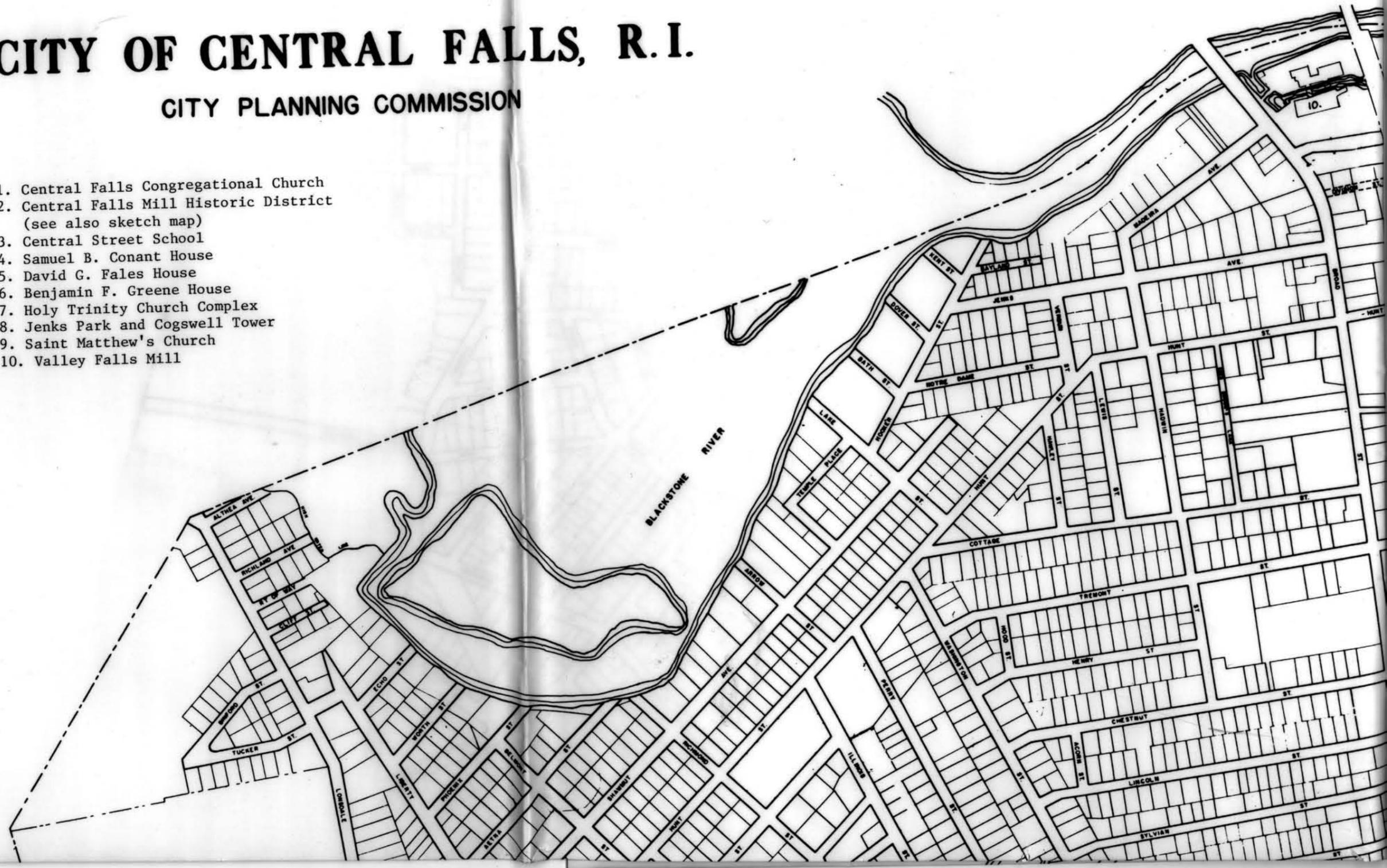
LS, R.I.



CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS, R.I.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

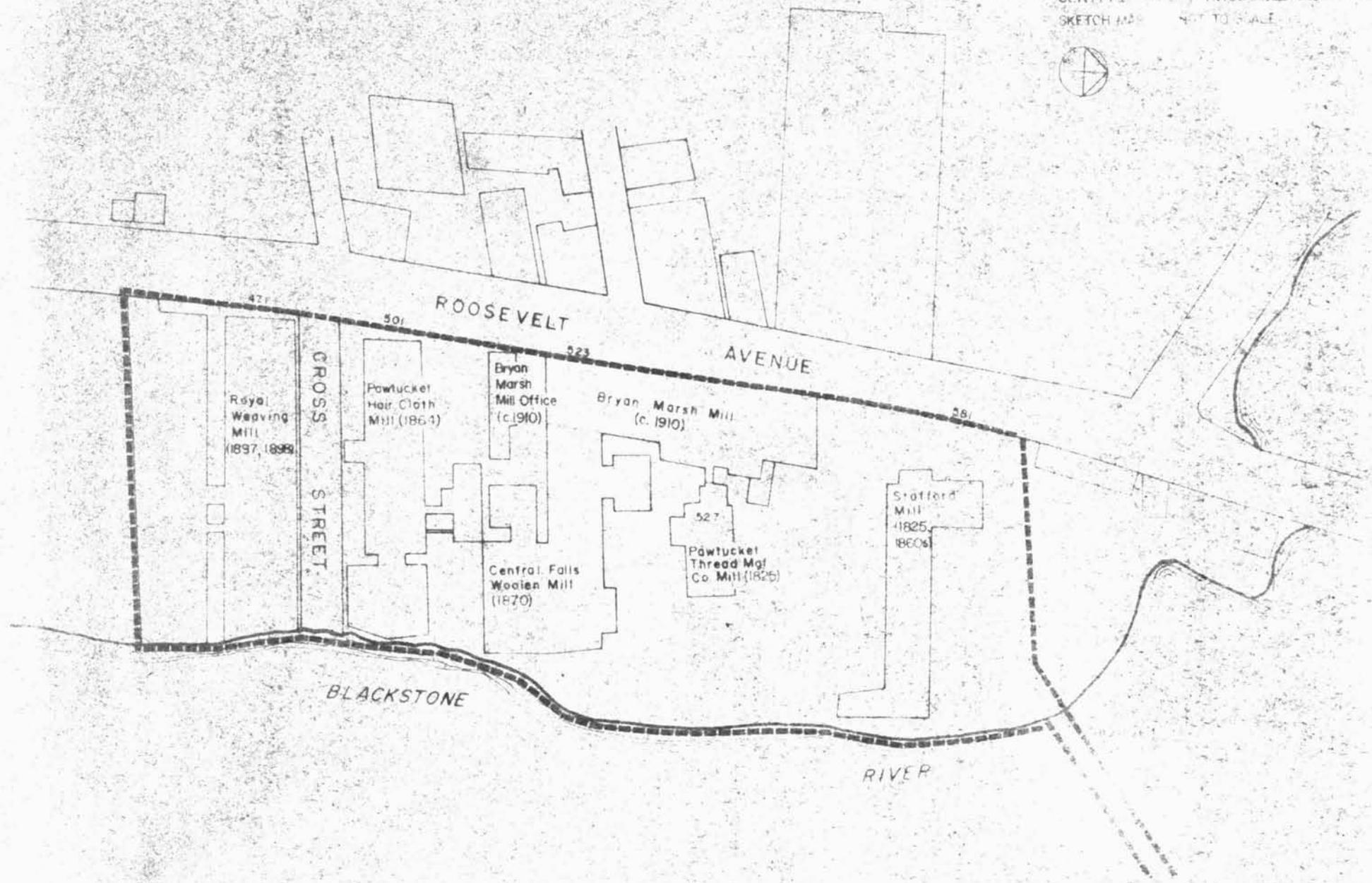
1. Central Falls Congregational Church
2. Central Falls Mill Historic District
(see also sketch map)
3. Central Street School
4. Samuel B. Conant House
5. David G. Fales House
6. Benjamin F. Greene House
7. Holy Trinity Church Complex
8. Jenks Park and Cogswell Tower
9. Saint Matthew's Church
10. Valley Falls Mill







CENTRAL FALLS MILL HISTORIC DISTRICT
CENTRAL FALLS, RHODE ISLAND
SKETCH MAP NOT TO SCALE



Royal Weaving Mill
(1897, 1899)

Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill
(1864)

Bryan Marsh Mill Office
(c. 1910)

Bryan Marsh Mill
(c. 1910)

Central Falls Woolen Mill
(1870)

527
Pawtucket Thread Mfg Co Mill
(1826)

Stafford Mill
(1825, 1806)

CROSS STREET

ROOSEVELT AVENUE

BLACKSTONE RIVER

RIVER



Kennedy/Stafford Mill
Central Falls Mill Historic District
Central Falls, Rhode Island

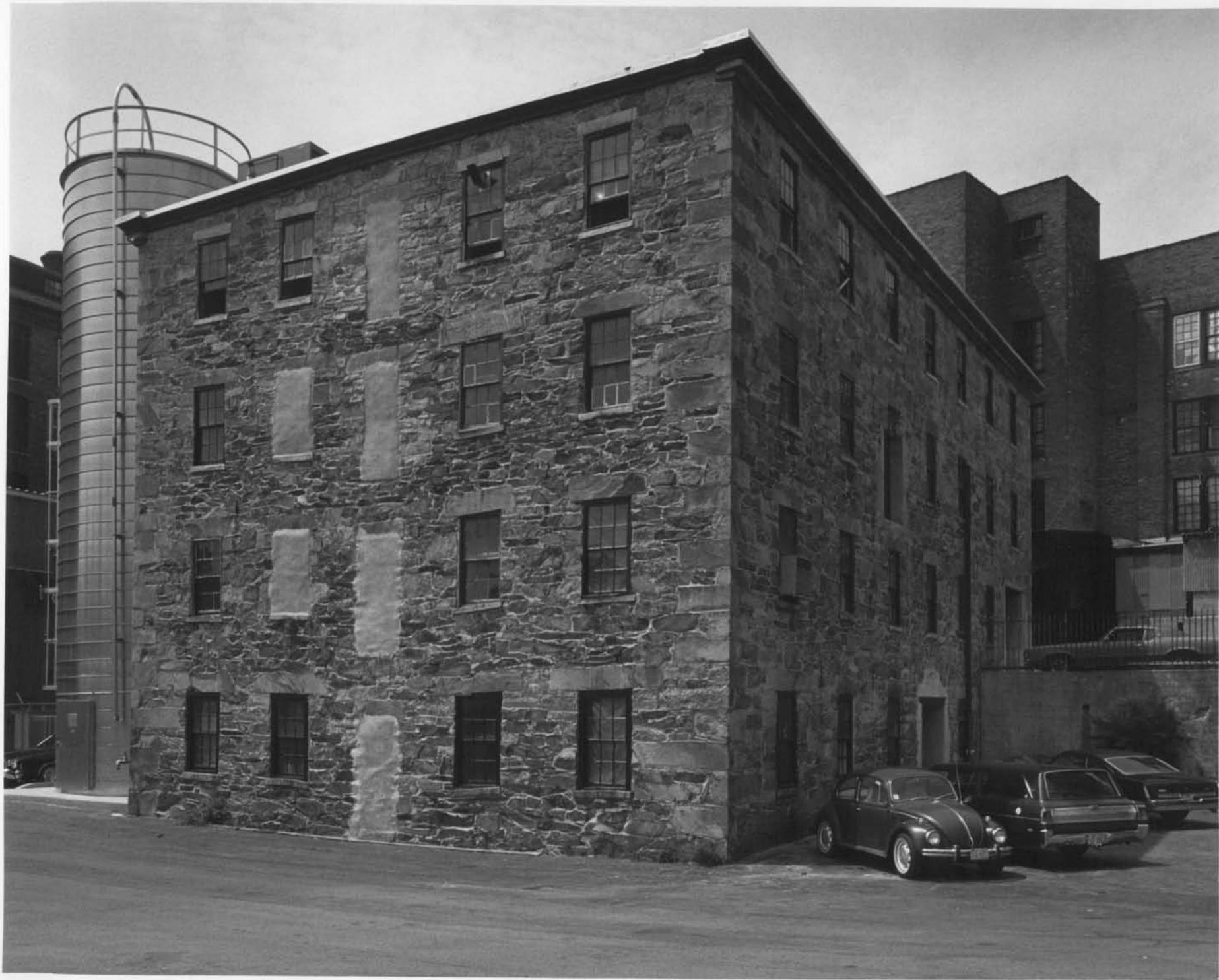
Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Kennedy/Stafford Mill (1825, 1860), from the
southwest.

Photo #2



Central Falls
Roosevelt Ave.
501 -
- Pawtucket Hair
Clothing Company Mill

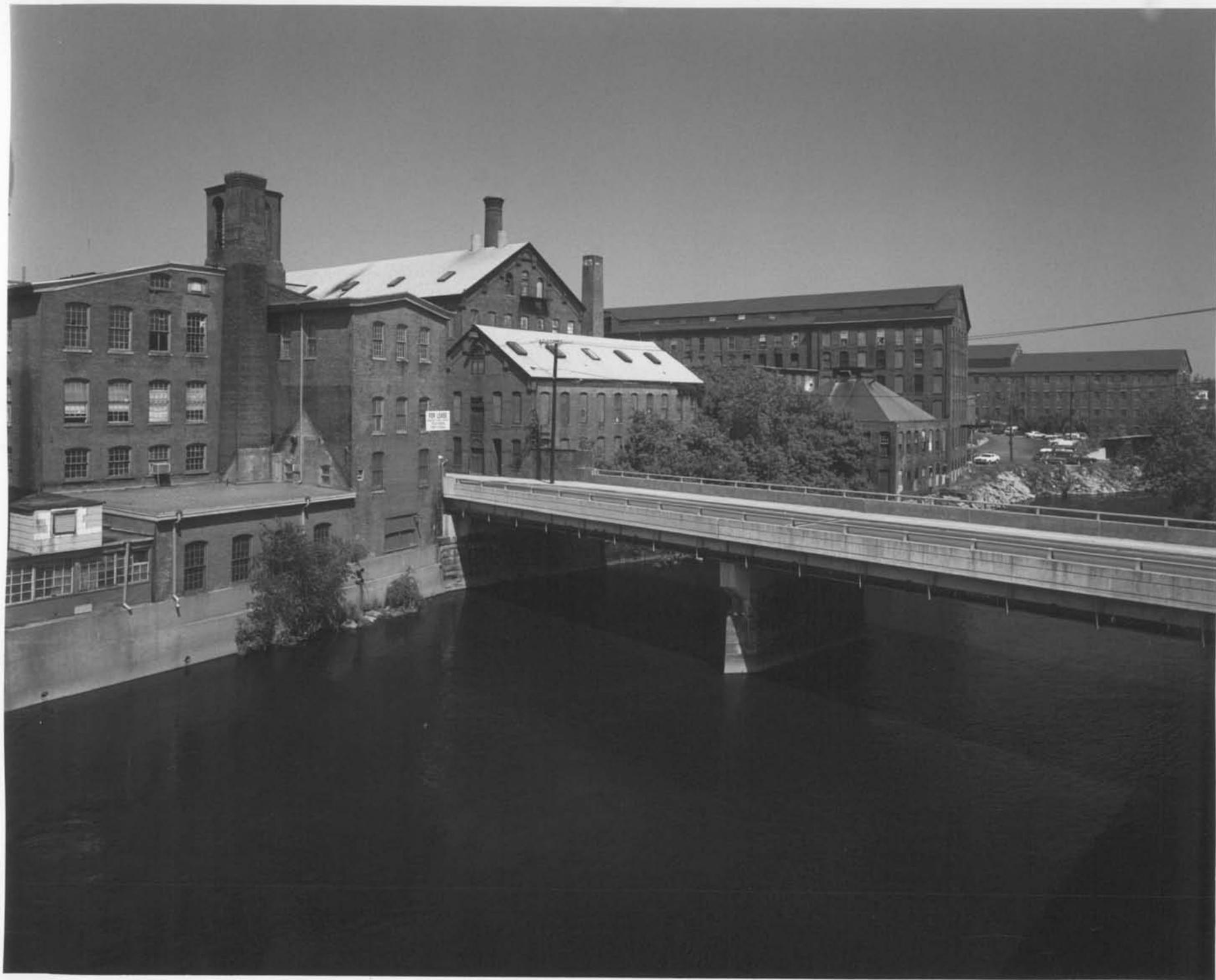


Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill
Central Falls Mill Historic District
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Pawtucket Thread Manufacturing Company Mill
(1825), from the northeast.

Photo #4



Central Falls Mill Historic District
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger

May, 1977

Negative at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Historic district viewed from the southeast;
major structures (left to right) include:
Royal Weaving Mill, Pawtucket Hair Cloth Mill,
Central Falls Woolen Mill, and Kennedy/Stafford
Mill.

Photo #1



Central Street School
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Central Street School (1881), from the southeast.

Photo #5



Samuel B. Conant House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Conant House (1895), from the southeast.

Photo #6



Samuel B. Conant House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Conant House (1895), from the northwest.

Photo #7



Samuel B. Conant House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
 Commission

Interior: first floor staircase.

Photo #8



Samuel B. Conant House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by: Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Interior: second floor hall.

Photo #9





David G. Fales House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Fales House (c. 1858, 1867), view of east
facade.

Photo # 11



FOR
HARRIS
FOR
GARRAHY
FOR
STGERMAIN

FOR
GARRAHY
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Benjamin F. Greene House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger June, 1978
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Greene House (1868), from the southeast.

Photo #12



Benjamin F. Greene House
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger June, 1978
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Greene House (1868), porch detail.

Photo # 13



Saint Matthew's Church
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Saint Matthew's Church (1929), from the southeast,
showing its neighborhood dominance.

Photo #14

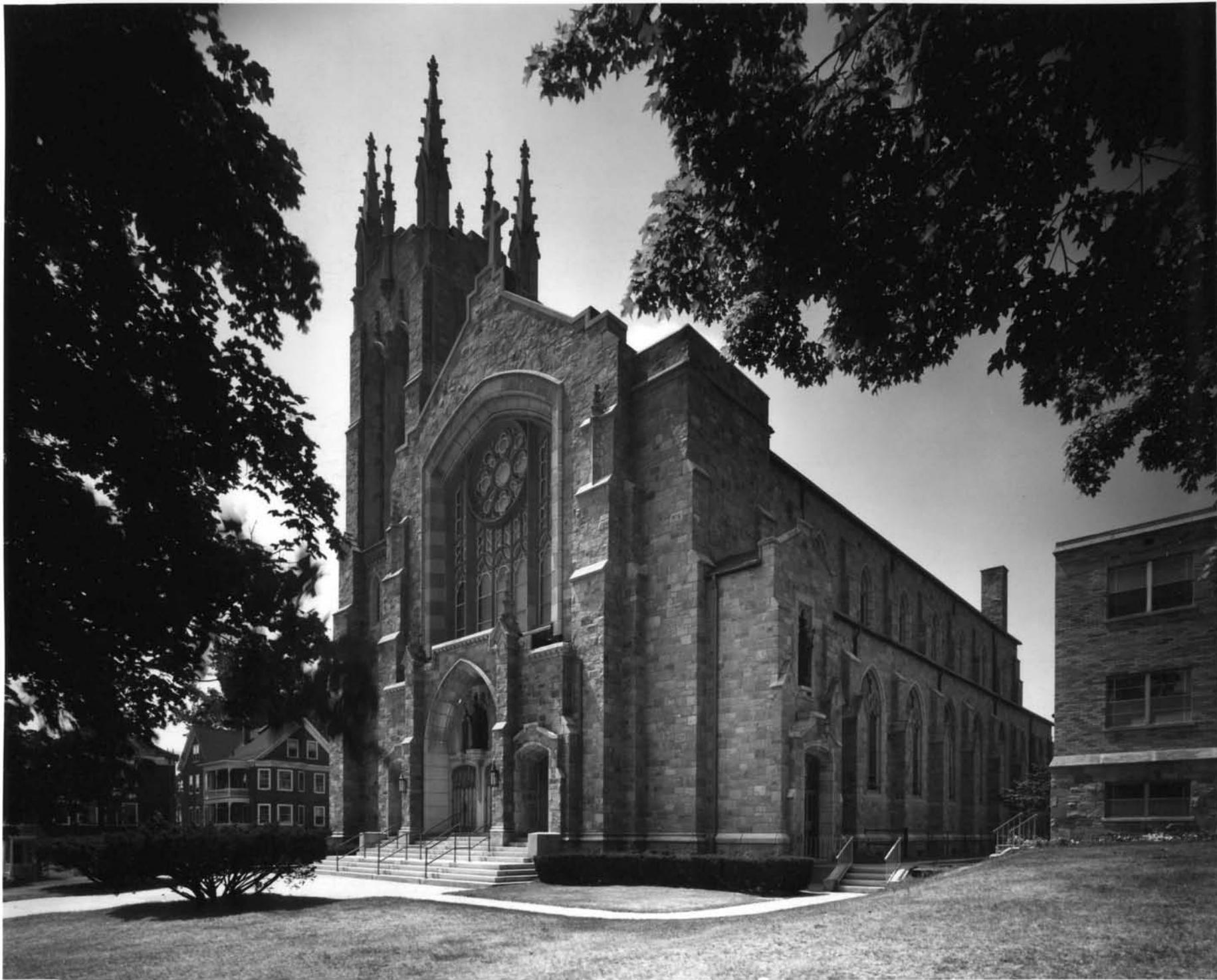


Saint Matthew's Church
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Church viewed from the northeast.

Photo #15



Saint Matthew's Church
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

East facade, main portal.

Photo #16



Saint Matthew's Church
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

West or rear facade.

Photo #17

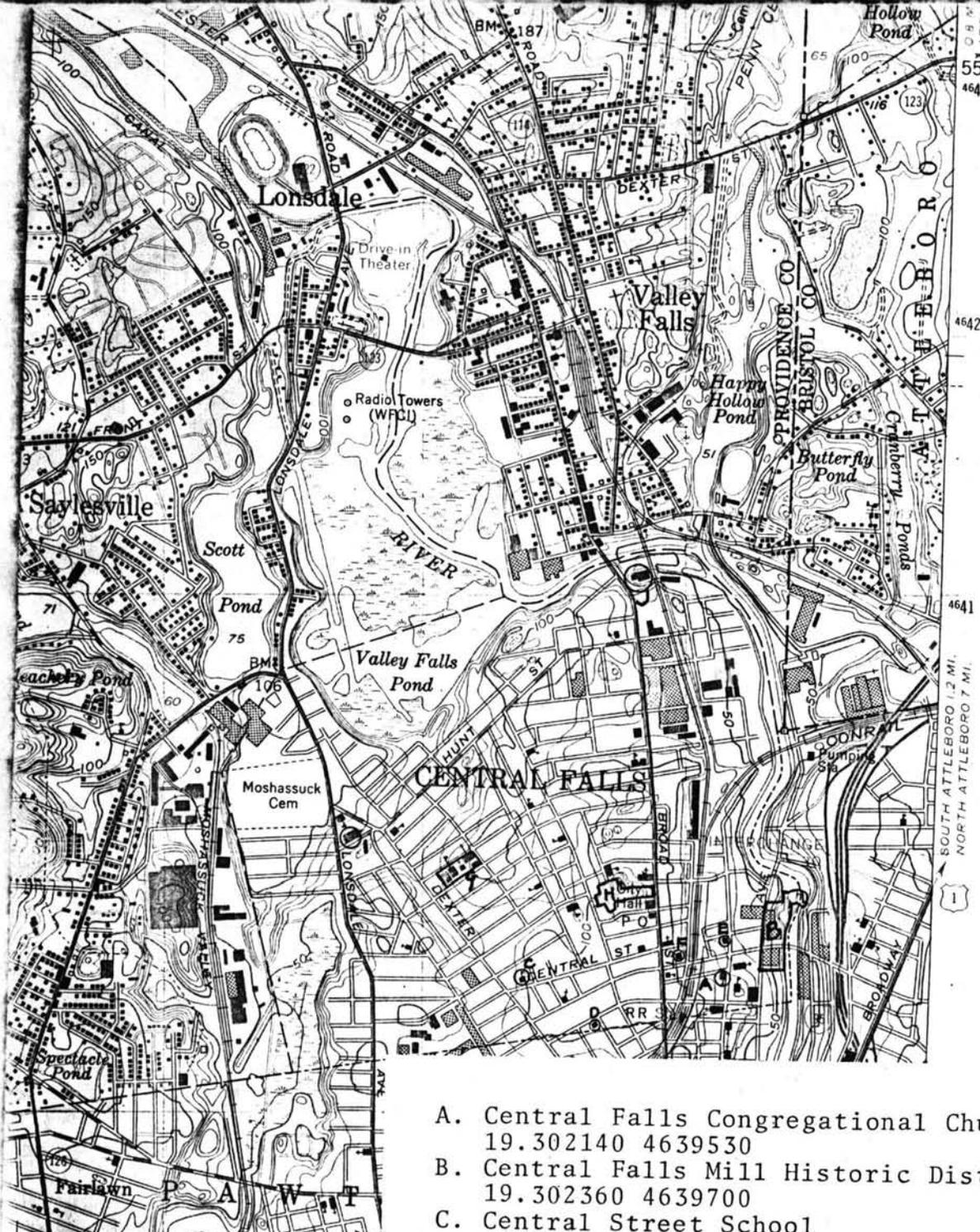


Saint Matthew's Church
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Photograph by Warren Jagger May, 1977
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation
Commission

Interior of Church, looking west, showing
nave and sanctuary.

Photo #18



- A. Central Falls Congregational Church
19.302140 4639530
- B. Central Falls Mill Historic District
19.302360 4639700
- C. Central Street School
19.301380 4639510
- D. Samuel B. Conant House
19.301660 4639340
- E. David G. Fales House
19.302140 4639670
- F. Benjamin F. Greene House
19.301990 4639610
- G. Holy Trinity Church Complex
19.301150 4639950
- H. Jenks Park and Cogswell Tower
19.301770 4639850
- I. Saint Matthew's Church
19.300710 4640060
- J. Valley Falls Mill
19.301830 4641080

300000m E. INTERIOR—GEOLOGIC
MARIEVILLE 1.4 MI.
CENTERDALE (JUNC. U.S. 44) 4.9 MI.
PROVIDER

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Locations shown in purple compiled from aerial photos in 1970 and 1975. This information not field checked. The tint indicates extension of urban areas.