

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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- ✓
1. Name: Benjamin F. Greene House 030
  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
- Submitted by \_\_\_\_\_

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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.