

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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ITEM NUMBER 7

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1. Name: David G. Fales House 030
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.

*Remodel Empire*

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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.