

**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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NAME: Greene-Durfffee House  
 LOCATION: 1272 West Shore Road  
 OWNER: Mrs. Dorothy Wilbur  
 1272 West Shore Road  
 Warwick, R.I. 02889  
 CONDITION: Good; Altered; Original Site

## DESCRIPTION:

The Greene-Durfffee House is located east of West Shore Road (State Route 117) in a mixed commercial and residential suburban neighborhood, opposite Church Avenue and a historical cemetery marking the site of the community's first church. The Greene-Durfffee House is set back on its lot behind a small wooden commercial structure no longer in use, and is partly obscured from view by this structure and by dense shrubbery in front of the house itself. It is a rectangular, two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, timber-framed structure with a brick center chimney stuccoed above the roofline, a fieldstone foundation, a veranda along the front (west) and north sides, and a rear ell. It is now partly sheathed in clapboard and partly in aluminum siding applied in a manner which leaves the door and window frames intact. The main entrance, with a four-panel heavily molded Victorian door flanked by sidelights and fluted pilasters, is set in the center of a five-bay facade (west side).

The main block of the house follows a slightly modified five-room plan. The small entry and stair hall in front of the chimney contains a tight triple-run staircase with a heavily molded closed string and acorn drops on the newels. The wall between the southwest parlor and southeast back room has been opened up, creating a sort of double-parlor arrangement with a broad archway between the two rooms, and an extra partition has been erected in the northwest parlor along the east side, cutting into the closed-up fireplace and its mantel; the narrow space thus created is used for closets opening off the parlor and dining room. The kitchen is located in the rear ell and contains a fireplace with an oven and woodbox to one side. The southwest parlor is elaborately detailed, with eared door and window architraves, a dentil cornice, and a two-story mantel with an eared architrave around the firebox, a mantel shelf, and a beveled panel above flanked by fluted pilasters topped by a cushion-frieze entablature. The fireplace in the dining room (rear center room) has a two-story mantel with bolection molding around the firebox, a mantel shelf and a recessed rectangular china cabinet flanked by beveled panels. The fireplace in the northwest parlor--cut by a partition and partly obscured--has a bolection molding around the closed-off firebox and probably originally had a beveled panel above, now either removed or covered up. On the second floor,

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the fireplace in the southwest chamber has a two-story mantel with bolection molding and beveled panel.

PERIOD: 1700-1799

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

SPECIFIC DATE: ca 1780

BUILDER/ARCHITECT: Unknown

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Greene-Durfffee House is a fine example of a late Colonial dwelling with important historical associations. It was built for Captain William Greene (1763-1852), who sold it to his son Charles Wells Greene in 1846. Upon Charles' death in 1856, his estate was divided among his sisters and this house became the property of Almira (Greene) Durfffee (1807-1888), widow of Edward G. Durfffee. Mrs. Durfffee's daughter and son-in-law, Sarah D. and John F. Woodmansee, subsequently acquired the house.

The Greene-Durfffee House is primarily notable for its well-preserved, handsomely executed interior features. Historically, it is one of the few remaining eighteenth-century structures within the Old Warwick area, site of the original town settlement and long the community's civic center. Practically all of the structures that once constituted Old Warwick have been destroyed; thus the Greene-Durfffee House is an important artifact attesting to the antiquity and former status of this neighborhood.

ACREAGE: less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME: East Greenwich, R.I.

UTM: 19 302000 4620400

**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION:**

The nominated property is coextensive with lot 67 in Assessor's Plat 336, as defined by the City of Warwick, and measures 11,436 square feet. This parcel encompasses the cultural resource and its immediate surroundings.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: LOCAL