

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Greenwich Mills

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 42 Ladd Street

not for publication

city or town Warwick

vicinity

state Rhode Island

code RI

county Kent

code 003

zip code 02818

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Edward Anderson 11/1/2006
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- other (explain)

Greenwich Mills
Name of Property

Kent County, Rhode Island
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
4	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

SYNTHETICS: vinyl

roof ASPHALT; SYNTHETICS: rubber

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY
 ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1918-1950

Significant Dates

1918

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository
 Providence Public Library; RI Historical Society Library

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4+ acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	9	2	9	6	2	0	6	4	6	1	5	4	8	6
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
2															

3															
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
4															

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Vanessa Reiman

organization Newport Collaborative Architects, Inc. date May 2005

street & number 38 Washington Square telephone 401 846-9583

city or town Newport state Rhode Island zip code 02840

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Alan Blazer c/o Greenwich Mills, LLC.

street & number PO Box 1954 telephone 401 885-4329

city or town East Greenwich state Rhode Island zip code 02818

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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DESCRIPTION

The Greenwich Mills complex consists of four, early twentieth-century, brick buildings, located in Warwick, Rhode Island, just north of the Warwick/East Greenwich town line. The site, just over four acres in area, is bounded by Ladd Street (formerly Greene Street) on the north, Duane Street on the west, Division Street and an abutting parcel on the south, and the Amtrak Northeast Corridor railroad right of way on the east. Blackmore Street (formerly Spring Street), runs through the complex from north to south. The site is flat and completely covered by buildings and asphalt paving. The Greenwich Mills complex was constructed between 1918 and 1927, and is composed of the following buildings:

Weave Shed (ca 1918):

The Weave Shed is the oldest extant building on the site. It was constructed in 1918 at the southeast corner of Duane and Ladd streets. Typical of weave sheds of the era, it is a one-story building with a heavy timber frame and pier and panel brick exterior walls. The building has a flat roof covered with rubber membrane roofing and with two, north-facing, sawtooth monitors. The monitor windows are intact under wood panels. This construction method originally provided a single, large, open floor plan for weaving machinery, with abundant natural light from the monitor windows above.

The building is nineteen bays long on the north and south elevations, and six bays wide. Each bay is recessed slightly into the wall plane and has corbelled brick at the top where it steps out to meet the façade plane. The north elevation of the building has a segmental-arched window opening in each bay containing two, six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows with a fixed, six-pane, rectangular, wood sash above, and a wood panel filling the space between the top of the transom and the brick, arched lintel. A single, cast concrete sill stretches across each double opening. On the south elevation, the window openings have been infilled with concrete blocks. The west elevation contains six, rectangular window bays with steel lintels and cast concrete sills. One of the bays has been filled with a modern, metal, overhead, garage door, and a second filled with a wood, pedestrian door. The other bays retain triple, metal sash windows, with 24 panes (six rows of four), of which eight are arranged into a tilting sash.

The interior of the weave shed retains the original, open floor plan, with a single row of wood columns running east-to-west at the center of the span. The interior space has a concrete floor and exposed wood frame. The building is currently in use as storage space.

Office Building (c. 1920):

Approximately two years after the construction of the Weave Shed, an Office Building was erected at its east end. The new building is three-stories tall, with a C-plan formed by four-story towers extending west at the

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building's northwest and southwest corners. The building has a heavy timber frame and a flat roof with a tar and gravel surface. The exterior walls of the building are brick, with three bays on the north and south elevations and four bays on the east and west elevations. A simple, wood cornice wraps around the perimeter of the building.

The primary entrance to the building is located in the westernmost bay of the north elevation, and consists of an aluminum-framed, glass entry door with a single-pane sidelight to the left, and a single-pane transom. The door and its surrounding lights are modern modifications. Many original windows remain on the building. Basement level original windows include: fixed, six-pane, steel sash on the north elevation, and 12-pane (two rows of six), steel sash with an eight-pane, tilting center sash on the east elevation. Above the basement, the original windows are arranged with three in each opening. North and south elevation original windows are one-over-one, single-hung, wood sash with a fixed, single-pane, transom light. Each bay of the first floor of the east elevation retains three original windows - each consisting of a tilting, 10-pane, wood sash above and below a fixed, 10-pane, wood sash. On the second and third floors of the east and west elevations, the remaining original windows are triple, three-over-three, single-hung, wood sash with a fixed, three-light, wood transom sash. Modern, double-hung, replacement windows have replaced some of the sash on the building, without altering the window spacing or window opening locations. The north elevation's first floor windows have been replaced with a single, plate glass pane and three-pane transom in the two easternmost bays, while the westernmost bay is filled with wood sheathing. All of the window bays have cast concrete sills and steel lintels. The northwest corner tower's top level has filled window openings on its north and west sides, and a door on its south side, while the southwest tower has two filled window openings. The east elevation of the building has doors in three bays: a loading dock with a modern, overhead door; an older (possibly 1970s) overhead, wood door; and an original, double-leaf, wood, pedestrian door in the southernmost bay. A two-story, elevated, enclosed walkway connects the second and third floors of the east elevation of the building to those of the Finishing Mill.

This building was historically used as office space for the Greenwich Mills and continues to be office space for the varied businesses that are now located on the site. The northwest corner tower contains a stairway, while the southwest tower contains an elevator.

Finishing Mill (c. 1924, c. 1930):

The Finishing Mill, located at the northeast corner of Blackmore and Ladd streets, is the largest building in the complex. It is a three-story building, roughly rectangular in plan, with a projecting, full-height, two-bay wide and one bay deep block at the northeast corner of the building. The northernmost 100 feet of the building were constructed before the southern end, though the exterior presents a seamless appearance. The building has a steel frame with timber roof framing and brick exterior walls set atop a half-story, concrete foundation. It has a

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slightly pitched, tar-and-gravel-surfaced, gable roof with a box roof monitor extending from the rear wall of the building almost to the front. The monitor is clad with vinyl siding, which covers the extant monitor windows. The rafter tails are exposed under the overhanging eaves of the main block and monitor roofs.

The north elevation of the Finishing Mill is eight bays wide, with six, arched, three-story bays recessed into the wall plane between the flat corner bays. The corner bays have 15-pane, metal sash windows with pivoting sections and fixed, six-pane, metal sash in the top floor. The westernmost recessed bay is a blind arch. The next bay to the east has a 20-light, metal sash window on the second floor and a 16-light, fixed, metal sash window on the third floor, and a sliding, wood, loading dock door under a shed awning on the first floor. The next four bays to the east each contain a triple, metal, 18-light sash with a six-light, tilting section on the first and second floors, and a triple, metal, 15-light, modern replacement sash with a six-light, tilting section on the third floor. The windows have cast concrete sills and steel lintels.

The primary entrance to the building is located at the north end of its west elevation, and consists of a glass, double-leaf door under paired, four-light, fixed, wood transom sash above which are a concrete lintel and keystone. A loading dock door under a wood-framed hood is also located on the west elevation. The fenestration of the west and east elevations of the mill is primarily original on the first and second floors, consisting of rectangular openings in each bay, containing paired, 28-light, steel sash with a tilting 8-light section, and on the third story, segmental arched openings with modern, paired, 20-light, steel replacement sash with a tilting 8-light section. The space between the top of the window and the segmental arch is filled with brick. The windows on the projecting bays at the northeast corner of the building are 12-light, fixed, steel sash on the first two stories and 8-light, fixed, steel sash on the third story. All of the sills on the west and east elevations are cast concrete, and the lintels are steel with brick veneer. The second bay from the front on the first floor of the west elevation contains an overhead, wood loading door. The fifth bay contains an original, double-leaf, wood door elevated from the grade, but without a loading platform.

The south (rear) elevation of the building is a wood-framed wall clad with wood clapboard siding. This construction method was used to facilitate future expansion to the south by reducing the amount of demolition that would be required in the event of the expansion of the building. The south elevation is divided into three bays, with a modern stair tower (erected in 2006) covering the east half of the center bay and west half of the easternmost bay. The stair tower is the same height as the building, and rectangular in plan. The westernmost bay of the south elevation contains paired window openings on each floor. Each rectangular opening contains a pair of modern, 35-light, steel sash windows. This fenestration is repeated in the western half of the center bay. Single 35-pane, steel sash are located in each floor of the south and east elevations of the stair tower. The center bay on the first floor contains a modern, metal, overhead garage door that opens onto a concrete loading dock. The loading dock entrance is under a standing-seam, metal, shed roof supported by metal columns. The

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loading dock ramp is sloped up from below grade at the dock to the parking lot grade. The stair tower has a one-story ell that fills the width of the east bay of the elevation. It has a standing-seam, metal roof.

Ornament on the building consists of corbelled brick at the tops of the piers between the window bays, a molded cornice under the eaves, exposed rafter tails, and arched window bays.

The interior spaces of the Finishing Mill are large open floor plans with two rows of wood columns dividing the space into three bays. The first and second floors are currently divided into industrial and manufacturing units with modern gypsum walls and aluminum doors. A majority of the third floor space has retained the open floor plan, with one bay occupied by an office unit. The floors on the first floor are concrete and the floors of the second and third are wood floors laid in a diagonal pattern across the space. The two corner bays at the north end of the building contain a stair tower on the northwest corner and bathrooms for each floor on the northeast corner.

A small guard house addition (c. 1960) is located at the west end of the north elevation. This small, wood-framed, clapboard-sided building with a shed roof covered with asphalt paper was added to the main brick structure and is only accessible from the outside. Fenestration of the guard shack consists of six, six-over-one, double-hung, wood sash windows on the north elevation and one on the west elevation, beside a pedestrian entrance.

An elevated walkway (c. 1924) connects the Office Building to the Finishing Mill and attaches to each building at the second and third floors. It is a two-story, wood-framed structure. The north exterior wall is clad with asbestos shingles set with a diagonal reveal, while the south elevation is clad with vinyl siding. The north elevation retains much of its original fabric, including a simple, bracketed cornice and windows. The first story has 20-pane, steel sash windows, with a four-pane, tilting section, while the windows on the second story are eight-pane, fixed, steel sash. The original south elevation windows are behind plexiglass panels.

The interior of the Elevated Walkway is currently used for storage and closet space for the Finishing Mill building. It is no longer used as a footbridge between the two buildings and is closed off at the Office Building wall.

Dye House and Boiler House (c. 1925, 1947):

The Dye House and Boiler House is a single building, rectangular in plan, enclosing two distinct areas: the boiler room is located at the southwest corner of the building, while the main space was historically the dye house. The western half of the building was constructed about 1925, and the eastern half was added about 22

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years later. The dye house is one story tall, with a shallow front gable roof (its ridge runs north-south), while the boiler room is a taller, one-story, flat-roofed section of the building. The west, south, and east walls of the Dye House and Boiler House are of brick, with the north wall of wood framing and modern clapboard siding. The only ornament on the building is a simple, molded, wood cornice around the edge of the roof. The Dye House and Boiler House is connected by a link (c. 1950) from its north wall to the east wall of the Finishing Mill. A small addition was constructed along the west side of the Dye House between 1941 and 1958. The remaining space between the Dye House and the Finishing Mill appears to have been infilled at a later date.

Fenestration of the Dye House and Boiler House is varied. The north elevation of the building has six-pane, fixed, wood sash above the connector to the Finishing Mill, and 15-pane, fixed wood sash with six-pane, fixed, wood transoms on the 1947 eastern half of the building. There are also a modern, steel, pedestrian door and an original opening containing a double-leaf door that appears to have been constructed of or sheathed with wood in the recent past. The east elevation of the building (1947) has 13 window openings with cast concrete sills and steel lintels, all filled with glass blocks. In some cases, the glass blocks have a protective covering of clear plexiglass. The south elevation of the 1947 portion of the Dye House has a loading dock with an overhead, garage-type door in the center bay, a double-leaf, glass door with an aluminum frame, and two window bays that are filled with glass block. The south elevation of the boiler room section of the building has 24-pane, steel sash with two, integrated eight-pane, tilting sash, under a 12-pane transom with an integrated, eight-pane, tilting sash. While its west elevation has nine-pane, steel sash with an integrated six-pane, tilting sash. This portion of the building also has multiple entrances: at the west end of the south elevation is an original, sliding, wood door; at the south end of the west elevation are two, large, double-leaf, wood doors with six glass panes; and at the north end of the west elevation are two filled bays.

The structure that connects the north elevation of the Dye House and Boiler House to the east elevation of the Finishing Mill is one-story tall, with a wood frame and clapboard siding. It does not contain any windows, but has modern steel doors at two locations, in what appear to have once been garage door-sized openings.

Filling the space between the east elevation of the Finishing Mill and the west elevation of the Dye House and Boiler House is an addition that was constructed about 1950. Its only visible exterior elevation is on the south, which has brick and modern wood sheathing, aluminum-frame windows with single-pane glass, and a double-leaf, glass door with an aluminum frame.

The Dye House and Boiler House currently houses office and manufacturing spaces in the dye house section, while the boiler room remains in that use.

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Photographic Information

(Note: These photographs were taken with a digital camera at high resolution and printed on Hewlett Packard Premium Soft Gloss paper using Hewlett Packard Vivera pigmented inks per the National Park Service March 2005 Photo Policy Expansion list of Acceptable Ink and Paper Combinations for Digital Images).

The information in numbers 1, 2, and 5 is the same for all photographs in this nomination:

1. Greenwich Mills
2. Kent County, Rhode Island
5. Original digital file on file at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
150 Benefit Street
Providence, RI 02903

3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
4. October 22, 2006
6. North and west elevations of the Weave Shed. View facing southeast.
7. Photograph #1

3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
4. October 22, 2006
6. West elevation of the Weave Shed. View facing northeast.
7. Photograph #2

3. Vanessa Reiman, photographer
4. July 2005
6. Interior of the Weave Shed. View facing west.
7. Photograph #3

3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
4. October 22, 2006
6. East and north elevations of the Office. View facing southwest.
7. Photograph #4

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-
3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
 4. October 22, 2006
 6. North elevation of the Finishing Mill. View facing southwest.
 7. Photograph #5
-
3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
 4. October 22, 2006
 6. West elevation of the Finishing Mill. View facing northeast.
 7. Photograph #6
-
3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
 4. October 22, 2006
 6. South elevation of the Finishing Mill. View facing north.
 7. Photograph #7
-
3. Vanessa Reiman, photographer
 4. July 2005
 6. Interior of the Finishing Mill, third floor. View facing south.
 7. Photograph #8
-
3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
 4. October 22, 2006
 6. North and west elevations of the Finishing Mill guard house . View facing southeast.
 7. Photograph #9
-
3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
 4. October 22, 2006
 6. North elevation of the Dye House and Boiler House. View facing south.
 7. Photograph #10
-
3. Jeffrey D. Emidy, photographer
 4. October 22, 2006
 6. West and south elevations of the Dye House and Boiler House. View facing northeast.
 7. Photograph #11

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Greenwich Mills complex is significant as an element of the industrialization that fostered the growth of the City of Warwick and the Town of East Greenwich during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The four buildings at the site retain a high degree of their original materials and form, as a result serving as a typical example of early-twentieth century textile mills as they were constructed in Rhode Island.

Warwick was characterized as an agricultural economy from its founding in 1643 into the late eighteenth century, though it was only after the end of King Philip's War, in 1677, that the agrarian pursuit played more than a subsistence role. The most abundant agricultural use of the land was as meadow or pasture for grazing cattle, though small areas were planted with beans, corn, and squash for the families. Tobacco and apple cider were the primary early trade products grown in Warwick. By the 1770s, the coast of Warwick had developed a maritime economy, particularly at the ports of Apponaug, Potowomut, and Pawtuxet. Ships were fitted out in these ports for travel throughout the colonies and abroad, and through their access to trade goods, these villages also became commercial centers of the town.

Abutting Warwick to the south, East Greenwich was founded in 1677 with a 500-acre section known as the "city lots" (later to become downtown East Greenwich) along the waterfront, and 50, 90-acre lots to the west for farming. Like Warwick, East Greenwich had an agrarian economy in the seventeenth century. The downtown area of East Greenwich was first surveyed in 1700, and 50 house lots were set among two operating shipyards on the waterfront. This area was slow to develop until just prior to the American Revolution, when agriculture in the town had reached a plateau – the Town of West Greenwich was set off from East Greenwich in 1741, removing a large part of East Greenwich's agricultural land.

In 1770, the Port of East Greenwich was established, and mercantile interests flourished as a result of the more efficient transportation of goods into and away from the town. Overland transportation was improved with the reconstruction of Division Street – which separates East Greenwich, in the south, from Warwick, to the north – as a major highway. Village artisans took advantage of the strong transportation system to create goods for both East Greenwich and distant markets.

By 1790, the maritime development of East Greenwich had moved to the forefront of the town's economy, supplanting agriculture and lumber. The town had become an established shipbuilding and ropemaking center, and the town's fishing fleet was highly successful. The waterfront had finally grown to become the center of town life that was planned at the town's establishment. Manufacturing pursuits had also become established by this time, with the Dawson Mill, a calico print works, and the Mathewson & Mowry Mill, a manufacturer of woolen cards, in operation by 1790.

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The Jeffersonian Embargo (1808) and the War of 1812 effectively ended East Greenwich's prosperous trade economy, and by 1820, the town's only successful maritime industry was fishing. Textile and other industrial pursuits became more important in this period as the town's new economic standard bearer. The first cotton mill in East Greenwich was constructed in the western portion of the town between 1812 and 1814. With the development of steam power for manufacturing, mills began to appear in the port area, and the use of coal to heat and power the mills caused the reactivation of the dormant shipyards as coal yards. In 1827, the East Greenwich Manufacturing Company was established in the port area, at a site on King Street. In 1836, two new woolen mills were established: the Union Mill on Main Street and the Pollard Mill at Duke and Division streets. The latter mill, on the north side of Division Street, was actually in Warwick, however, its development is associated with the history of the town of East Greenwich as much as it is with its home city. This site, with later buildings, would later become part of the Greenwich Mills holdings (see below).

When, in 1837, a railroad was constructed between Providence and Stonington, Connecticut, via East Greenwich, town officials insisted that it be routed through the waterfront. While East Greenwich's industrial development had been slow before the railroad was constructed, the ease of transporting materials by rail was a catalyst to the expansion of the town's industrial base. In 1840, the Bay Mill replaced the earlier East Greenwich Manufacturing Company building. Also by this date, eight fulling mills had been erected in the town, where none existed before the railroad was constructed. By 1850, over 90 percent of East Greenwich's industry was in textile manufacture. The emergence of the textile industry brought a large influx of Irish immigrants to East Greenwich in the 1840s and 1850s, however, as the industrial economy of Providence outstripped that of East Greenwich, many workers took jobs in Providence. As early as 1870, East Greenwich was described as being a suburb of the capitol city. Industrial growth slowed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in East Greenwich, and only a few industrial buildings, including the Greenwich Mills complex, were constructed in the port area. As occurred throughout Rhode Island, textile factories moved to the southern United States or overseas by the mid-twentieth century. The age of the automobile, in combination with the decline of the textile industry, completed the transformation of East Greenwich to a suburb of Providence over the course of the twentieth century.

The industrial development of Warwick began with the establishment of a textile mill at Centreville in 1794. Though the Greene family had operated an anchor forge at Potowomut as early as the 1720s, it was the emergence of textile manufacturing and the success of the Centreville operation and that signaled the beginning of a sustained industrial presence in the town. The Centreville Mill was followed by textile mills at Apponaug and Pawtuxet about 1800, Crompton and Natick in 1807, Lippitt in 1809, Phenix and Pontiac about 1810, and Riverpoint in 1812. By 1820, there were 15 cotton processing and two woolen processing factories in Warwick (Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission 1981:19). Large textile mills were established at Clyde in 1828, and at Arctic in 1834. The majority of these early manufacturing concerns were located in the western

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part of Warwick, in the Pawtuxet River Valley, because of the abundance of water power available there. With the development and improvement of steam engines in the mid-nineteenth century, industrial production increased. In the 1850s, additions were made to the mills at Pontiac and Natick, and operations at Centreville were expanded as a result of the new power source. The Elizabeth Mill, at Hillsgrove, in central Warwick, was constructed in 1875, marking an important point in Warwick's industrialization. Removed from the water power associated with the early textile mills of the town, the Elizabeth Mill relied completely on steam power to run its cotton processing machinery. Warwick's economy became reliant on steam-powered mills like the Elizabeth Mill when, in 1913, West Warwick was split from Warwick, removing the majority of Warwick's mills from the Pawtuxet River and its economic base.

The property on which the Greenwich Mills complex is located has a rich history of industrial activity. In 1836, Ezra Pollard constructed a wood-framed woolen mill on the block between Duane, Ladd (formerly Greene), Blackmore (formerly Spring), and Division streets (Kulik and Bonham 1978:76; Walling 1855). After this mill and its successor were destroyed by fire, the extant mill (brick, three-and-one-half-stories, facing south) was constructed in 1868 by Richard Howland. The absence of a viable source of water power nearby indicates that this was likely constructed as a steam-powered mill. By 1884, the complex was owned by the Phoenix Woolen Company, makers of fine cassimeres. The bulk of the complex consisted of four buildings running to the north along the east side of Duane Street: a three-and-one-half-story, brick building facing south at the northeast corner of Division and Duane streets; a one-and-one-half-story engine room attached at the rear; a one-story dye house with a monitor roof attached at the north end; and, at the rear, a one-story, brick, spooling, dressing, weaving, and finishing house with a monitor roof. Also present on the parcel were an office, a store house, a repair shop and picker house, an oil shed, a waste storage shed and shipping room, an iron gas holder, and two other outbuildings. The two steam engines in the engine house produced 150 horsepower, to operate all of the machinery in the complex save for the lights, which were gas-powered, and heat, which was supplied by steam. (Sanborn 1884).

By 1891, changes to the main building had been made, and a substantial, one-story wool sorting and scouring and drying building had been erected along Blackmore (then Spring) Street, while much of the other building stock of the complex remained as it had been seven years earlier. Lighting the complex had been converted to electricity by this time (Sanborn 1891). Another building was added along Ladd (then Greene) Street by 1896 (Sanborn 1896).

The Phoenix Woolen Company vacated the property in 1903 and it was sold to the Boston Wire Stitcher Company, which, in 1948, would become Bostitch. Thomas A. Briggs invented an improved wire stitching machine that created fasteners from a coil of wire in 1896, and founded the company in 1902. The company utilized Howland's 1868 building for their manufacturing needs. In 1910, the former spooling, dressing,

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weaving, and finishing house was rented to Regina Manufacturing Company, the former wool sorting and scouring and drying building was rented to A.H. Esten Dye Works, which had been founded in 1906, and the former gas holder had been converted to a carriage house (Sanborn 1910).

In 1917, Granville A. Beals incorporated the Greenwich Mills Company, producing worsted cloth in a rented factory space. The company experienced immediate success, allowing Beals to expand his business with the construction of the Greenwich Mills factory in 1918.

Granville A. Beals was born to S. Granville and Julia A. (Lockwood) Beals on June 26, 1892, in Astoria, on New York's Long Island. S. Granville Beals, born in Stoughton, Massachusetts, was a banker and had been involved for many years in the worsted textile business. Granville Beals attended both public and private schools on Long Island, before enrolling in Flushing High School, from which he graduated in 1911. After graduation, he attained a position in the sales department of Andrews Mills, in Philadelphia. He left Andrews in 1912 for employment at Andrew Demetre and Brothers, a textile sales firm in New York City. During the five years that Beals spent at Demetre, he organized and developed their menswear department and was in charge of the firm's import business. He gained additional income during this time as a stockholder of French Dyeing and Finishing Company, located in Philadelphia (Providence Journal, 21 January 1969).

The knowledge and capital that Beals had amassed in the six years since he graduated from high school enabled him to establish the Greenwich Mills Company in 1917. The initial success of his small operation of 40 automatic looms in a rented space was built upon after only one year when, in 1918, Beals purchased a parcel of land at the rear of the Boston Wire Stitcher Company complex, on the Warwick side of Division Street, the boundary between Warwick and East Greenwich. It is possible that Greenwich Mills had been in operation at this site from its beginning, in 1917. The Boston Wire Stitcher Company rented out the weave shed at the rear of its property in 1910, and in 1923, it was in use by Greenwich Mills (Sanborn 1923). The parcel that Beals purchased contained four buildings remaining from the Phoenix Woolen Company ownership of the land: H&M Sanitary Laundry occupied the two-story, former Phoenix storage and packing building at the corner of Duane and Greene streets; a one-story former sewing room and store house ran parallel to Greene Street, ending at Blackmore Street; and a small gas house and a hose house were located between the two larger buildings. These four buildings were demolished to clear space for the 1918 construction of the Greenwich Mills weave shed (Sanborn 1910).

The site for the new Greenwich Mills buildings was ideal for a start-up industrial concern. As stated above, it is possible that Greenwich Mills was already in operation in the former Phoenix Woolen Company weave shed, and it is confirmed that they were utilizing the space by 1923. At least through 1923, power, lights, electricity, and heat were provided to Greenwich Mills 1918 weave shed and office by the Boston Wire Stitcher Company

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plant (the plant also supplied the A.H. Esten Dye Works, abutting it to the east) (Sanborn 1923). This allowed Greenwich Mills to delay the construction of its own power- and electricity-generating facilities. A second benefit of the site was its proximity to the rail line of the Providence and Stonington Railroad, which would later be purchased by the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, allowing simplified transportation of raw materials and finished products to and from the mill. A nearby pool of potential employees in the surrounding residential neighborhood also benefited the company.

The first building that Beals constructed on the site was the weave shed, at the corner of Duane and Ladd (then Greene) streets. Within five years, the office building was added on to the east elevation of the weave shed, extending the continuous mass from Duane Street to Blackmore Street. Between 1923 and 1927, Beals expanded the holdings of Greenwich Mills by purchasing a large piece of property on the east side of Blackmore Street which was, at that time, occupied by two houses. By 1927, two new buildings, the Finishing Mill and Dye House, had been erected on the property and one house remained. The Finishing Mill was constructed in two phases: its first phase, erected by 1927, was the northernmost 100-foot-long section of the building, which was connected to the office building by an enclosed, elevated walkway. It is unknown whether the construction of the Finishing Mill may have been the cause or the effect of the expansion of Boston Wire Stitcher Company into the former Phoenix Woolen Company weave shed, which is known to have occurred by 1927, however, by 1927, Greenwich Mills had used the old weave shed for the last time. Also by 1927, the Dye House had been constructed. It too, was in a preliminary form, with only a 45-foot-wide structure present. Inside the south end of the Dye House was the boiler room, where two boilers generated power for the complex (Sanborn 1923, 1927).

With demand for wool products soaring as a result of World War I, and the popularity of what became known as "Greenwich Worsteds," the original Greenwich Mills operation of 40 looms had expanded by 1932 to 170 looms and 400 employees (Carroll 1932:387). In 1927 alone, the anticipated output of the facility was 1,250,000 yards of worsted cloth (Town of East Greenwich 1927:46). Continued success into the mid-1920s spurred the addition of another 100-foot-long section to the rear (south) elevation of the Finishing Mill by 1939, effectively doubling the mill's size. The extant rooftop monitor was also constructed at this time (Rhode Island Department of Statewide Planning 1939). After this major building campaign, the complex remained essentially unchanged through 1941 (Sanborn 1941).

In December 1945, Granville Beals sold the Greenwich Mills company for over one million dollars to the Verney Corporation, of Boston, Massachusetts. Founded by Gilbert Verney, of Bennington, New Hampshire, the Verney Corporation operated six rayon fabric mills in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Canada (New York Times, 5 December 1945). At the time of the sale, a Verney official praised the Greenwich Mills

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facility as “one of the most modern plants of its kind, which has made an excellent reputation for manufacturing the highest quality worsted overcoatings, suitings, and women’s wear” (Providence Journal, 21 January 1969).

Beals retired after the sale, and split his retirement between Lake George, New York and Hillsboro Beach, Florida. During his ownership of Greenwich Mills, he and his family had lived on Highland Avenue, in Warwick. Beals was active in the community, serving as a member of the local Chamber of Commerce, as chairman of the Board of Water Commissioners of the Town of Warwick (a position that he held from the inception of the board), and in 1934 was named by Governor Theodore Francis Greene to a committee to find ways to develop prison industries. Additionally, Beals was: the president of the S.G. Beals Company, Incorporated, of New York City, the sole sales agents and factors for Greenwich Mills; president of Greenwich Fabrics Corporation; director of the National Association of Wool Manufacturers; and a member of the National Arts Club (New York city), the New York Athletic Club, the Warwick Country Club, the Annaquatacket Country Club, and the Lake George Association. Granville A. Beals died on January 21, 1969, in Hillsboro Beach Florida, leaving his wife, a daughter, and two sons. He is buried in Pine View Cemetery, in Glens Falls, New York (Carroll 1932: 388; Providence Journal, 21 January 1969; New York Times, 4 September 1935).

In 1946, the Boston Wire Stitcher Company left its Division Street location for the former Hamilton Standard Propellor Company factory, in Pawcatuck, Connecticut. After 42 years in Warwick, the 480-employee company cited its expanding business and a lack of useful space at the Warwick facility as its reasons for leaving¹ (Providence Journal, 28 April 1946). The factory was subsequently used by Royal Little, founder of Textron, to make parachute cloth for the war effort (Kulik and Bonham 1978:77).

The Verney Corporation doubled the size of the Dye House in 1947, via an addition to its east elevation. The addition contained six top-dyeing kettles, a three-bowl buckwasher, a four-section perforated-plate conveyor dryer, four single-head intersecting gill boxes, and two double-head single intersecting delivery blenders. The expanded building was part of a four million dollar modernization program at the Warwick facility, and allowed the “East Greenwich” division of Verney to do all of its own dyeing (Providence Journal, 24 October 1947). A one-story addition to the west elevation of the Dye House and an enclosed walkway at grade connecting the east elevation of the Finishing Mill to the west end of the north elevation of the Dye House were also constructed between 1941 and 1958 (Sanborn 1941, 1958).

The Verney Corporation operated the former Greenwich Mills facility as a worsted mill until 1950, when it began a retrenchment program to consolidate rayon production at its Brunswick, Maine, and Peterboro and

¹ The Boston Wire Stitcher Company would return to Rhode Island in 1956 as Bostitch, with the construction of a new production plant in East Greenwich. The primary reason cited for the departure from the Connecticut facility was that it had become too small for the company’s increasing needs.

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Manchester, New Hampshire, facilities. The Warwick mill, which at its peak employed 300 people, was offered for sale. About the same time, Verney sold mills in East Taunton, Massachusetts and Granby, Quebec, to the Crescent Corporation, of Fall River, Massachusetts. Crescent Corporation was in the business of buying faltering industrial concerns and finding buyers for the complexes, often after splitting the properties into smaller units. Crescent purchased the former Greenwich Mills in August 1951 and kept its machinery in place with the intention of returning the factory to worsted production.

In December 1951, Crescent Corporation abandoned its plan to keep worsted production in the mills and reached terms with Pratt & Whitney², a division of the West Hartford, Connecticut, firm of Niles-Bennett-Pond Company. The \$290,000 purchase included 100,000 square feet of manufacturing space and approximately three acres of land upon which Pratt & Whitney hoped to soon expand its operations manufacturing machinery, tools, and engine accessories. The new owners intended to use the space to continue production of war-related materials until those contracts expired, and expected its employment levels at the facility to reach about 1,000 people after 18 months. The Crescent Corporation removed over 120 looms from the mills and stored them in Fall River for later sale, while Pratt & Whitney sought equipment that was scarce at the time due to the war effort. In the end, the equipment was procured through a number of channels, including purchases from the military's own pool of machines (Providence Journal, 15 December 1951).

In 1954, Niles-Bement-Pond announced its plan to relocate its Warwick facility to Hartford, Connecticut, its company headquarters. In December 1954, the former Greenwich Mills were purchased by General Fittings Company, of Providence. General Fittings was incorporated in January 1929 by Stanley G. Cady, for the manufacture of brass and malleable iron pipe fittings. The company originally rented space in a factory on Hathaway Street, in Providence, moving 18 months later to the city's Baker Street. Around 1935, General Fittings developed its most influential product, a heat exchanger unit that paved the way for the development of the tankless water heater for use in home heating. In January 1937, the company relocated again, this time to Georgia Avenue. The continually expanding company also leased warehouse space on Lexington Avenue, in Providence, in April 1942. During World War II, General Fittings added military items to its production lines, manufacturing boilers and water heaters for ships and buildings, and also torpedo and airplane parts (Providence Journal, 28 April 1946).

By 1958, General Fittings Company had assumed ownership of the Greenwich Mills buildings and those formerly owned by Bostitch³, assembling the entire block between Division Street on the south, Duane Street on

² The Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Company had been sold by Niles-Bennett-Pond in 1929 to the United Aircraft Transport Company.

³ The property is referred to in a 1956 Providence Journal article as being owned by Textron, however, a second reference, in Kulik and Bonham's "Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites" (page 77) states that the complex was bought by the Edward Bosler Company in 1955. Bosler bought and sold yarn and rented warehouse space.

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the west, Ladd Street on the north, and the right-of-way of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad on the east (Providence Journal, 29 July 1956; Sanborn 1958).

General Fittings remained in the building through 1967⁴, when the company was purchased by “Automatic” Sprinkler Corporation of America, a Cleveland, Ohio-based company. The new owner planned to keep the Warwick plant in operation, employing 150 persons at the time (Providence Journal, 24 January 1967). In recent years, the former Greenwich Mills complex and the abutting former Bostitch facility have been occupied simultaneously by multiple, primarily light-industrial, concerns. Among the current tenants of the Greenwich Mills buildings are computer software development companies, a photography studio, a small manufacturing company, and a coffee distributor.

⁴ David Chase mentions General Fittings as an occupant of the mill in his 1969 paper “An Historical Survey of Rhode Island Textile Mills.”

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

FIRST PARCEL: Beginning at a point in the northerly line of Division Street at the southwesterly corner of said parcel and at the southwesterly corner of land now or lately of Arsyl Company, Inc.; thence northerly bounding westerly on said Arsyl Company, Inc. land in part on the THIRD PARCEL, herein described four hundred (400) feet, more or less, to Ladd Street; thence easterly bounding northerly on Ladd Street two hundred sixty-five (265) feet, more or less, to the railroad location of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad Company; thence southerly bounding easterly on said railroad location four hundred (400) feet, more or less, to Division Street; thence westerly bounding southerly on Division Street to the point of beginning.

SECOND PARCEL: Beginning at the northwesterly corner of said parcel at the point of intersection of the southerly line of Ladd Street (formerly Greene Street) with the easterly line of Duane Street as the same are laid out and delineated on the plat entitled, "plot of an estate laid out into house lots belonging to Stephen Greene adjacent to East Greenwich, Surveyed and Platted Providence, May 9, 1847 at Atwater & Schubarth," which plat is recorded with the Records Office and Evidence in said Warwick; thence easterly bounding northerly on Ladd Street two hundred eight (208) feet, more or less, to the FIRST PARCEL herein described; thence southerly bounding easterly on said FIRST PARCEL ninety two (92) feet, more or less, to land now or lately of Arsyl Company, Inc.; thence westerly bounding southerly on said Arsyl Company, Inc. two hundred eight (208) feet, more or less, to Duane Street; thence northerly bounding westerly on Duane Street about ninety three (93) feet to Ladd Street at the point of beginning. Together with all easements, rights and privileges, if any, of this grantor appurtenant to or connected with the above-described premises or any part thereof.

Boundary Justification

The boundary described above contains all of the land deeded to Granville A. Beals for the Greenwich Mills from Thomas A. Briggs, and the parcel that Beals purchased between 1923 and 1927 and upon which the company expanded.

GENERAL
FITTINGS
CO.

STOP
AHEAD

NO
LEFT
TURN
ON
RED



NO PARKING

NO PARKING









The
GREENWICH
MILL

42



Enterprise
van







1000 1000

DISPOSE

GREENNICH MILLS
WARWICK
KENT COUNTY, RI

UTM REFERENCE:
19 296206 4615486

