

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation)

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

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

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by Olney St., Canal St., South Water St., _____
the Providence River, the Providence Harbor, Governor St., Williams St. and Hope St.

City or town: Providence State: RI County: Providence

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

	6/15/18
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

- *Ownership of Property* and *Category of Property* are not changing.
- *Number of Resources within Property*: The existing nomination (1976) does not include a resource count. One property is changing from noncontributing to contributing, the Olney Street Baptist Church at 100 Olney Street; see Section 7 for more information.

6. Function or Use

- *Historic Functions* and *Current Functions* are not changing.

7. Description

- *Narrative Description* is being amended; see continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

- *Areas of Significance*: The existing nomination (1976) identifies several areas of significance, all of which still apply. Another area of significance is being added (Ethnic Heritage – Black); see continuation sheets for more information.
- *Period of Significance* is not changing.
- *Narrative Statement of Significance* is being amended; see continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographic References

- *Bibliography* is being amended; see continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

- The boundaries of the district are not changing.

11. Form Prepared By

- See continuation sheets.

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- *Maps*: The boundaries of the district are not changing, and this Additional Documentation does not include a USGS Map or equivalent.
- *Sketch Map and Photographs*: Photographs of selected properties discussed in this Additional Documentation are attached. Photographs have been keyed to a sketch map; see attached.
- *Photo Log*: See continuation sheets.

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INTRODUCTION

The College Hill Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, and its boundaries were significantly expanded in 1976.¹ This Additional Documentation document is specifically intended to augment the existing National Register nomination (1976) to reflect the presence and contributions of people of African descent.² While the historic buildings and places of the College Hill neighborhood are widely recognized for their association with people and events related to over 300 years of history, the role of African Americans in the historical development of the area has largely been overlooked. Given the prevalence of west African ancestry among Cape Verdeans, this Additional Documentation also includes information about places in the district with historical associations with the Cape Verdean community. Beginning in the late 19th century, College Hill (particularly the southern part of the district in the neighborhood now known as Fox Point) was a locus for settlement among people from the Cape Verde Islands.³

Preparing this Additional Documentation did not involve surveying all of the properties in the College Hill Historic District, but, rather, focused on properties with significant historical associations with people of African descent. Changes that have occurred to those properties since they were last surveyed for the National Register are noted (see Inventory, below). This Additional Documentation does not alter the district's boundaries nor change its period of significance. One property, the Olney Street Baptist Church at 100 Olney Street (1962-63; Photo 34), which was identified as non-contributing in the existing nomination is now considered contributing. The existing nomination identifies several areas of significance, including Architecture, Community Planning, and Exploration/Settlement, among others, all of which still apply; an additional area of significance, Ethnic Heritage—Black, has been added (see Section 8 for more information).

Historical information presented in Section 7 and Section 8 is based on research with primary sources, including census records, city directories, historical atlases and manuscript collections, biographies, and personal narratives. Secondary sources on the history of Providence's African American and Cape Verdean communities were also consulted.

¹ In 1989, a comprehensive list of all properties in the College Hill Historic District, including brief architectural descriptions for most properties, was incorporated into the National Register nomination as Additional Documentation.

² In addition to people of African heritage, the College Hill Historic District has been home to significant numbers of Irish and Irish-Americans, Jews from Eastern Europe, and people from the Azorean archipelago (colonized by Portugal in the 16th century, the Azores have been an autonomous region of Portugal since 1976), among others. Additional research is required to gain a more complete understanding of the district's historical development and significance in relation to these communities.

³ The Cape Verde Islands are located about 300 miles west of Senegal. Colonized by the Portuguese in the 15th century, Cape Verde has been an independent nation since 1975; its official name is the Republic of Cabo Verde. People of the Cape Verde Islands represent African, European, Moorish and Jewish cultures, and, consequently, racial identity among Cape Verdeans may be complex. Waltraud Berger Coli and Richard A. Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island: A Brief History* (Providence, RI: The Rhode Island Heritage Commission and the Rhode Island Publications Society, 1990), 2-3.

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SECTION 7: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Property Types Associated with African Americans and Cape Verdeans on College Hill

The College Hill Historic District contains a variety of property types associated with African American and Cape Verdean life in the neighborhood, though by far the most prevalent is domestic – homes where people of African descent lived as well as those in which they worked. Institutions – religious, educational, and civic – are also present in the district. A few properties associated with African American businesses are also extant; most commonly, these were residences used for commercial pursuits rather than buildings designed for commerce.

Domestic Spaces

African Americans have resided on College Hill since at least the mid-18th century; by the last quarter of the century they made up a higher share of the neighborhood's population than they did in the city as a whole. Some African Americans living in College Hill in the Colonial period were free and lived in their own households, but many were servants – enslaved, indentured or free – living in white-headed households.

The Browns were one of Providence's most prominent 18th century families, involved in mercantile and shipping pursuits that included the West Indies trade, the slave trade, the China trade, as well as manufacturing. The houses associated with the family on College Hill represent Georgian and Federal-style architecture, and are considered some of the best examples of the residences of Providence's elite. The street façade of Joseph Brown's house at 50 South Main Street (1774; Photo 4), which he designed himself, provided access to commercial and service areas in its basement level. Entrance to Brown's residence was made on the second story using external stairs bypassing the basement door; the current arrangement was created in the 1790s when the house was renovated for use as a bank. In its original configuration, the house probably also had a service wing on the rear, which has since been altered and enlarged in what appears to have been numerous stages. At least one enslaved person, Phillis, has been documented to have lived in the house. Joseph's brother John Brown built a large three-story house on the hill at 52 Power Street (1786-88; Photo 5) in which servants may have occupied the third floor, when space was available, and the small second-floor areas in outbuildings. However, despite extensive research, very little documentation has been found regarding the people of color who lived and worked at 52 Power Street and where, exactly, they resided. The current wing is a mid-19th-century addition, but it may have replaced a smaller annex. The census notes that as many as four African Americans were living in the household in 1800, and all of them are listed as free.

College Hill was home to many people of means during this period, and the homes they occupied, while smaller and far less elaborate than the Brown family mansions, exhibited the forms and architectural details that are characteristic of the Georgian and Federal periods. The Dr. Jabez Bowen House at 39 Bowen St. (1739; Photo 3), in which African Americans resided, is typical: it is 2½ stories tall, with a gable roof, interior chimneys, a

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symmetrical 5-bay façade with center entry, and second-story windows at the eaves line.⁴ The Benjamin Cushing Sr. House at 40 North Court Street (ca. 1737) has a central chimney, a gable roof with an overhang at one end, and a pedimented central doorway. It, too, was occupied by African Americans; in 1770, Cushing manumitted his enslaved man Cesar, and the 1776 census shows him with two people of African descent in his home. *Providence Gazette* publisher John Carter enslaved African Americans at his center-chimney house at 21 Meeting Street (1772; Photo 7), since enlarged with a third story, before manumitting them in 1789.

It was not just the elite class who enslaved African Americans on College Hill. The merchant Joseph Whipple lived in a small center chimney house on Star Street – since moved to 8 Burr's Lane (ca. 1720; Photo 2) – in 1790 when he was recorded in the census as owning one slave. Shortly after, Whipple relocated to Smithfield, at which time the house was said to have been occupied by black tenants.⁵ The front-gable, center-chimney house is a rare surviving example of a simple, once common 18th-century house type.⁶

In a shift from the Colonial period, by 1790 more African Americans in Providence were living in households headed by black people (278) than in households headed by white people (148). An 1822 list of “colored heads of families and the owners of their residences” provides an intriguing glimpse into the types of rental properties available to African Americans at the time (only one of the “colored heads of families” listed was a property owner).⁷ The list did not provide specific addresses, but it is possible to match names of property owners against other sources to determine likely addresses. Some were located on the north end of Benefit Street where several slaveholders had resided, but many more were in the southern part of the district. There appears to have been a high concentration of rental properties with African American tenants on Thayer, Transit, Arnold, Sheldon and Wickenden Streets. Two houses owned by the architect John Holden Greene (1777-1850)⁸ contained spaces rented to seven black households. Greene’s rental properties included a three-story double house or tenement at 33 Thayer Street (1806), a two-story, side-hall front-gable house at 51 Thayer Street (1813), and a story-and-a-half front-gable cottage at 55 Thayer Street (1817). “T. Peck” had three houses in which seven black households resided. No one named Peck with that first initial has been identified in public records, but the teamster Isaac Peck (1765-1833) owned five houses in Fox Point at that time, including three simple homes with four-bay facades that were likely rental properties: 120 Transit Street (1809-25), 132 Transit Street (1825), and 162 Transit Street (pre-1809). Two African American households resided in a house owned by white manufacturer William H. Mason (1795-1878) either at 123 Transit Street (1829) or 136 Transit Street (1812), both small, two-story, four-bays-wide, wood-frame houses.

⁴ Oriented with its gable end facing the street, this house may have been sited to face North Main Street, with its original lot subdivided as the hillside urbanized.

⁵ Henry R. Chace, *Owners and Occupants of the Lots, Houses and Shops in the Town of Providence Rhode Island in 1798* (1914).

⁶ The ca. 1720 construction date for the house should be verified by further examination and research.

⁷ Providence RI, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence Town Papers (Mss 214), SG 1, Ser. 3, Vol. 112, Doc. #0039155. This was done in compliance with an ordinance forbidding householders to board transients.

⁸ Greene is credited with designing many notable buildings on College Hill, including the Sullivan Dorr House at 109 Benefit Street, the Candace Allen House at 301 Benefit Street, the Thomas Peckham House at 395 Benefit Street, St. John’s Church at 271 North Main Street, and the First Congregational Church at the corner of Benefit and Benevolent Streets.

http://www.brown.edu/cis/sta/dev/providence_architecture/architects/greene_john/.

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Some African Americans on College Hill in the early 19th century were able to purchase, rather than rent, their homes; a typical surviving example is the two-story, wood-frame, gable-end house at 10 Thayer Street (1817-25; Photo 12) that African American mariner William S. Nichols purchased in 1835. Built between 1817 and 1825, the center-chimney house has its entrance on the south wall (perpendicular to the street) in a traditional 18th-century urban fashion. Gable-end houses were a popular house form in small-lot, narrow-frontage subdivisions in eastern New England cities. A gable-end house at 5 Burr's Lane (ca. 1855; Photo 26) shows the evolution of the type in the mid-19th century. Although its name plaque associates it with William Rea, a mariner living at 5 Benefit Street, it was owned—and possibly built—by Edwin Gorham Angell and occupied by his African American coachman, Doctor B. Jones, who later bought the property. It is larger and more commodious than its earlier counterparts, but exhibits less elaborate corner, cornice and entrance details – perhaps a reflection of its later construction date, or of a more modest budget. Farther up on the north end of College Hill, a house was built at 54 Pratt St. (before 1857) for African American coachman Lorin Jackson. The hillside site exposed the brick-fronted basement at street level, with a trabeated entry centered on it. (Though much altered and enlarged since its initial construction, the house retains some Greek Revival-style features, most notably gable-end cornice returns.)

In the second half of the 19th century, College Hill saw the construction of two-family houses with flats on each floor – a progressive development in the plan and quality of urban housing that became ubiquitous in New England cities. Since the west side of College Hill was essentially built out by this period, “two-families” appear more commonly in the eastern half of the district. Examples include the house at 4-6 Burr's Lane (ca. 1882), which was built for Albert G. Angell and was rented to African American families. It retains the wide corner boards and frieze along the roof edge of the Greek Revival style, combined with entrance hood, window cornices and arched attic windows in the Italianate taste. Mansard-roofed examples are found at 42 John St. (ca. 1875), where African Americans William and Josephine Heath lived in 1878, and 287 and 291 Brook St. (ca. 1890; Photo 23), which were built by an African American real estate developer, Alexander Gorham. The dentist Andrew L. Jackson, a co-founder of the Providence chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, owned 150 Prospect Street (1867; Photo 32) in the 1930s and 1940s. Two of the four attached townhouses at 149-155 Benefit Street (1862; Photo 29) opposite the Old State House, which were constructed by Edward P. Knowles, a former mayor of Providence, were bought by African American Thomas Crowder in 1919. He and his wife, Jane, rented space to African American lodgers into the late 1950s. By the turn of the century, the triple-decker had emerged as a distinct urban house type in Providence and southern New England: a three-story wood structure containing three identical dwelling units, one per floor, each with its own front porch stacked one above the other across the façade. Tall and narrow, triple-deckers could be squeezed into tight spaces next to or even behind existing houses in built-up areas like College Hill. They were primarily intended for lower-income families, although some triple-deckers with extra amenities were marketed to middle-income renters. Examples of triple-deckers in the district include 50 Pratt Street (ca. 1900) and 21-23 Jenckes Street (ca. 1900), which appear to have been built on land belonging to the African American Lorin Jackson, who lived next door at 54 Pratt Street.

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Although there were exceptions, the majority of black householders on College Hill in the early 20th century were renters; in fact, this period saw a decline in homeownership rates among African Americans as compared to a century before. Whether buying or renting, black residents generally found only older houses to be within their means. Examples in the northern part of the district include the mid-18th-century house at 50 Benefit Street (ca. 1805; Photo 27), rented from about 1903 until about 1935 by teamster and driver Walter Williams. In 1915, Annie Moore, who worked as a hotel maid, rented part of the 18th-century house at 43 Benefit Street (1774; Photo 6), along with her mother Lucy Henry and two male boarders. The residence at 58 Meeting Street (before 1857) features a bracketed cornice, doors and windows embellished with projecting cornices and hoods, bay windows, and ornate porches; in the 1940s, it was a boarding house operated by African Americans Frank and Martha Greene. In the southern part of the district, the Greek Revival-style house at 43 Transit Street (1840-45; Photo 24) was home to both African American and Cape Verdean families in the 1930s and 1940s.

In the second half of the 20th century, College Hill's African American community found itself increasingly living in old, often poorly-maintained dwellings owned by absentee landlords, many in the northern end of the district. Some Cape Verdean Americans also lived in the blocks off northern Benefit Street, but the heart of the community was the area called "Fox Point" in the southern end of the district. Construction by Brown University in the 1940s and 1950s obliterated a predominantly black neighborhood along Benevolent Street, much as the development of Brown's women's college, Pembroke, had in the area of Cushing and Meeting Streets in the 1910s and 1920s. Urban renewal and "slum" clearance efforts claimed a historically black residential neighborhood called Lippitt Hill, just north of the district, and an organized gentrification effort on College Hill, particularly on Benefit Street, displaced many African American residents – either directly, by encouraging them to relocate, or by increasing real estate values, making homes unaffordable.

Institutions

Religious

Several churches on College Hill are associated with African Americans and Cape Verdeans. Slaveholders and enslaved people worshipped at the Episcopal King's Church, later St. John's Church and the Cathedral of St. John, at 265 North Main Street (1810); its burial ground contains a slate marker "in memory of three respectable Black Persons, Phillis, Rose and Fannie Chace, who served in the Family of Samuel Chace Esq." The First Baptist Meetinghouse at 75 North Main Street (1774-75) had African American members as early as 1764, though they would have been restricted to the "Negroes Gallery" until it was dismantled in 1818.⁹ Members of First Baptist helped fund the construction of the African Union Meeting House and School, built between 1819 and 1821 at the northeast corner of Congdon and Meeting Streets (not extant), which in turn led to the formation of the Congdon Street Baptist Church at 17 Congdon Street (1874-75; Photo 33), the oldest and

⁹ John Wood Sweet, *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 347.

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most significant surviving African American institution of College Hill's post-Civil War period. Designed by the architect Charles F. Wilcox, the wood-frame building is elevated on a tall brick basement in response to its steep hillside location on the east side of Congdon Street. Economically built with a clapboard exterior, it is distinguished by arched windows and arcaded friezes and belts in an up-to-date Romanesque style. A four-story tower (counting the basement) is fenestrated on the lower levels and topped by section with large round openings intended to be blind, filled with clocks or open for bell soundings. Centered on the south-facing gable façade is a large triple-arched window; windows appear to have contained common glazed sash. While showing desired (expected) restraint, the Congdon Street Baptist Church projects a sense of dignity and permanence for its congregation.

In the 1890s the congregation of the Congdon Street Baptist Church split over the pastorate of Rev. J. A. Presley, who left with his followers to form the Olney Street Baptist Church, which assembled in the former Olney Street Congregational Church at 28 Olney Street (not extant). When that church was lost to Urban Renewal, the congregation built a new building at 100 Olney Street (1962-63; Photo 34). The Modernist brick church was designed by Johnson & Haynes, architects of Pawtucket. Carl F. Johnson, the elder partner, had worked with Pawtucket architect R.C.N. Monahan until his retirement in 1962, at which time Johnson entered into partnership with Irving B. Haynes, who had obtained his architectural degree from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1953. The Olney Street Baptist Church was one of their earliest commissions, followed by other new churches in Rhode Island and Massachusetts and the restoration of the First Unitarian Church on Benefit Street in the College Hill Historic District.

The Portuguese Chapel and Parish House/Sheldon Street Mission, now known as the Sheldon Street Church, was constructed at 51 Sheldon Street (1904; Photo 35) in 1904 and is reputed to be the first Cape Verdean Protestant church in America. At the time, Sheldon Street – and Fox Point in general – was developing into a locus for the Cape Verdean community, who had begun immigrating to the United States in the late 19th century. The low, brick building with prominent hipped roof and dormers reflects the eclecticism of the period, inspired by Queen Anne and Arts & Crafts design. Given that the majority of the Cape Verdean community was Catholic, they also worshipped at churches established by other ethnic groups in Fox Point. These included the Gothic Revival-style St. Joseph's Church at 86 Hope Street (1851-53), designed by Irish-American architect Patrick C. Keeley and built by Irish laborers, and Our Lady of the Rosary Church at 21 Traverse Street (1905) erected for a Portuguese parish that had been founded in 1885. The Greek Revival-style St. Stephen's Church at 400 Benefit Street (1840) housed the St. Augustine's Episcopal Mission, which had been organized to serve African American Episcopalians on the city's west side in 1913, from the 1910s through approximately 1932.

Educational

The College Hill Historic District contains a property with significant associations with the education of African American children in Providence: the Brick Schoolhouse at 24 Meeting Street (1769-70, Photo 16). Built in 1769, the two-story, brick building with a central entrance pavilion served as a school for African American children from 1828 to 1865, when Providence's public schools were integrated. Located in a neighborhood with

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a large black population, the school continued to serve a primarily African American population even after integration.¹⁰

Civic/Community Service

College Hill includes properties associated with civic matters significant to the neighborhood's African Americans population, as well as institutions founded to provide service to the black community. It was in the Old State House at 150 Benefit Street (1760-62 et seq.) that the General Assembly passed the Gradual Emancipation Act of 1784 (also known as the act "authorizing the manumission of negroes, mulattoes, and others, and for the gradual abolition of slavery"). In 1839, a group of Quaker women founded the Providence Shelter for Colored Children; ten years later, the organization constructed the building at 20 Olive Street (1849-50; photo 17). The large two-story wood-frame building, while domestic in appearance is larger in scale than most of the single-family dwellings comprising the immediate neighborhood. A wide, gabled five-bay front façade has widely-spaced windows and a central entrance with a common Greek architrave. The square plan accommodated numerous rooms and open dormitories; windows and dormers in attic story expanded the plan into the attic. A two-story service wing was expanded with a two-story addition with a mansard roof, all of which reflects the demand for beds in the facility. Nearly a century later, in 1941, the John Hope Community Center moved into the Albert G. Angell House at 15 Pratt Street (1849-52; Photo 36), offering recreational activities, skills training and a nursery for working mothers. The Community Center remained at this address until 1946. The Salvation Army Social Settlement and Day Nursery operated at 183-185 Transit Street (before 1857) from 1926 to 1960; located in the heart of the Fox Point neighborhood, the Salvation Army was an important institution for the neighborhood's Cape Verdean community.

Workplaces and Commercial Spaces

As detailed in Section 8 of this Additional Documentation, African Americans worked as live-in domestic servants in College Hill's wealthy white households from the 18th century well into the 20th century. Thus, for many black residents of the district, the stately homes of College Hill were places of work as well as places of residence. Others in the domestic service industry lived in households of their own, away from their workplaces.

At least five African American men, probably all but one held in servitude helped construct Brown University's first building: The College Edifice (1770), now known as University Hall. Several African American vendors kept stalls at the Market House (1773 et seq.), as evidenced by records of licenses issued in 1815. Several African American businesses operated on College Hill in the first half of the 20th century: there were black boarding houses and tourist homes at 72 Meeting Street (before 1857), 164 Prospect Street (1886) and 12 Benefit Street (1889-93; Photo 31), and a beauty shop at 18 Benefit Street (1864-67). Dr. Carl Gross, an African

¹⁰ *Report of the School Committee for the Year 1899-1900* (Providence, RI: Snow & Farnham, 1901), 131-133.

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American physician, kept his medical practice at 51 Olney Street (1853; Photo 30) from 1916 to 1942. The wharves that lined the east bank of the Providence River – now gone – were an important source of employment for Cape Verdeans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

INVENTORY

The following inventory includes approximately 75 properties in the College Hill Historic District that have associations with events, people and institutions significant to the neighborhood's African American heritage, or that are particularly good examples of broad demographic trends in the district.¹¹ The inventory follows the format of the original nomination: properties are listed by address, in alphabetical order by street name and numerical order by street number. Physical descriptions of the properties are copied from the original nomination; bracketed text represents corrections or additions. Information about the property's African American or Cape Verdean association is provided after the physical description (more may be found in Section 8). All properties included in the inventory are contributing to the significance of the historic district. Photo numbers, where applicable, are provided below the addresses.

ANGELL STREET

48 Pardon Miller House, 1822. Federal; 2-1/2 stories; end gable; clapboard; 3-bay facade; raised above street level with terraced yard and flight of entrance steps; side-hall entrance with sidelights, banded colonette trim, and ogee shelf cap with incised ornament; entrance under later Doric portico; 2-story ell at rear; basement entrance under portico; convex molding under eaves with drill hole pattern.

African American James S. Singleton, born in North Carolina in 1882, lived and worked as a cook in the house of manufacturer David C. Scott at 48 Angell Street from about 1930 to 1942.

64 Photo 11 Capt. George Benson House, 1794. Federal; 2-1/2 stories; hip roof with deck and roof balustrades; clapboard; 5-bay facade; central entrance under Doric portico with segmental pedimented roof; splayed lintel window caps with carved keystones; pedimented dormers; set above street on lot fronted by stone retaining wall topped with Federal Revival fence/ Originally owned by partner in important Providence merchant firm Brown, Benson & Ives.

¹¹ Not every property identified through this project that has a historical association with African Americans or Cape Verdeans is included in the inventory. Properties were selected for inclusion in the inventory based on, for example, an association with a significant individual, a particularly lengthy association with a black family, or an ability to illustrate broader historical themes. The narrative portion of Section 7 and the Statement of Significance in Section 8 contain information about additional properties.

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George Benson (1752-1836), who had come to Providence in 1767 to work as a clerk at Nicholas Brown and Company, was an abolitionist. He was among the founders of the Providence Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1789, and may have been involved in the establishment of the African Union Meetinghouse and School in 1819.¹² The property was sold to Seth Wheaton in 1826; his daughter, Abby, and her husband Matthew Watson lived here with African American domestics from the 1840s to the 1870s. Abby Watson's 1872 will included bequests to her servants Francis Jackson and Susan Roberts, and to the Providence Association for the Benefit of Colored Children.

ARNOLD STREET

12 Menzies Sweet House, 1850. Thomas A. Tefft, architect. Italianate; 3 stories; hip roof; flush board scored to look like stone; 3-bay façade; row house in palazzo mode with pedimented doorway to right and pedimented first-story windows; wide modillion and dentil cornice; segmental headed third story windows breaking into architrave. Connected to numbers 8-10 [q.v.].

13 John Howland House, before 1840. Federal? and Late Victorian; 3-1/2 stories; flank gable roof with pedimented ends; clapboard; 5-bay facade; central entrance under hip-roof hood supported by massive brackets; 2-story polygonal bay windows flanking entrance; bracketed cornice. The bay windows, bracketed trim, 3rd story, and roof appear to be Victorian additions to a Federal house.

Julius L. Mitchell, an African American attorney and prominent member of the Rhode Island bar who often argued cases involving racial discrimination, rented living quarters at 13 Arnold Street in 1908 and 1909, and at 12 Arnold Street in 1910 and 1911. Mitchell was a founder of the Providence branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1913, by which time he had moved outside the district.

BENEFIT STREET

12-14 Stephen B. Miller House, 1889-93. Mansard; 2-1/2 stories; mansard; clapboard; dwelling of flats following double house format; rectangular block mass; symmetrical 6-bay facade; paired central entrances under double hood supported by massive brackets; twin 2-story, rectangular bays

¹² [Moses Brown], *A Short History of the African Union Meeting and School-House, Erected in Providence (R.I.) in the Years 1819, '20, '21; with Rules for its Future Government* (Providence: Brown & Danforth, 1821), 28.

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flanking entrances; molded window caps; narrow corner boards; wide fascia; prominent molded cornice; gabled dormers; turned-post porches on rear added during rehabilitation ca. 1980.

The property at 12 Benefit Street was listed as a tourist home in the 1947 edition of *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. It was operated by Walter W. Joyce, a Maryland native who had moved to Providence with his Virginia-born wife Emma by 1928. Joyce worked at various times as a laborer, a butler, and a "houseman." By 1942 he had moved to 12 Benefit Street; the city directory from that year lists him as a "helper."

16-18 Christopher R. Drowne House, 1864-7. Italianate; 2-1/2 stories; end gable roof with returns; clapboard; 2-bay facade; 2-story flat-roof projection at rear of south side fronted by a 1-story enclosed entrance vestibule with side entrance (originally an open porch); early 20th century plate-glass storefront with central double-door entrance on 1st story; modillion eaves cornice.

According to *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, the Marie Wells Beauty Shop operated out of 18 Benefit Street as of 1947. The city directory from that year gives the name of the business as the Marinello Beauty Shop, with Mary Ingham Young its proprietor; the similarity between the two names suggests the businesses were one and the same. Young was a native of Bermuda who had married Providence native Raymond Profitt Young in 1927. She was listed as a hairdresser in her 1942 naturalization record, but had earlier done household domestic work. Marinello Beauty Shop remained in business at 18 Benefit Street until at least 1964.

24 Samuel Staples, Jr. House, 1828. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable end to street; paneled corner pilasters; 3-bay facade with side-hall doorway with fanlight and sidelights.

In 1905, the Samuel Staples Jr. House was being rented to six African Americans—Martha A. Cummings, a department store stock clerk; her adult son George, also a store stock clerk; her adult son Frank, an ash team driver, a ten-year-old granddaughter, and two boarders. By 1917 African American carpenter James A. Cooper, born in North Carolina in 1858, rented the house; by 1920, the Cooper family owned the house. The Coopers remained at 24 Benefit through the late 1950s.

30 William G. Angell House, 1864-7. Alpheus Morse, architect. Italianate; 2-1/2 stories; brick with brownstone trim, quoining; hip roof, decked with gable dormers; somewhat severe palazzo facade; 3-bay, pedimented windows; Ionic entrance porch with balustrade; projecting pavilion on south; arcaded porches at rear of north and south sides; 2 story carriage house with cupola at north rear.

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Edwin Gorham Angell employed seven African American servants in his 30 Benefit Street home. His coachman, Doctor B. Jones, had come from Virginia first to Warwick, where the 1875 state census shows him as a farm worker, but by 1880 he was living in Angell's household with his wife Jennie, born in North Carolina, and their two children. By 1895 Jones had acquired the house at 5 Burr's Lane (see below).

43
Photo 6 Joseph Jencks House, 1774. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; gambrel roof with pedimented dormers; clapboard; 5-bay façade; central doorway topped by transom and framed by fluted pilasters supporting a cushion-frieze entablature and triangular pediment.

The original owner of this house, Joseph Jenckes, had people of color in his household through 1810. By the early 20th century it was a rental property, owned by realtor Israel Levy and leased to a series of African American tenants. In 1915, part of the house was rented to hotel maid Annie Moore, her mother Lucy Henry, and two male boarders, one a store porter and the other a restaurant cook. By 1935 that part of the house was occupied by laundress Catherine Fuqua; she stayed until at least 1940.

50
Photo 27 Samuel Staples House II, ca. 1805.¹³ Federal; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable roof end-to-street; center chimney; paneled corner pilasters; 5-bay entrance façade on south; splayed lintel window caps; central pedimented doorway with transom.

African American teamster and driver Walter Williams rented this house from about 1903 until about 1935. Williams was born in the District of Columbia and was living in Providence by 1885; he worked for several city caterers, including Henry W. Potter at 16 College Street (not extant) in the first decade of the 1900s and the L. M. Carr Company at 107 Angell Street through at least the early 1940s. George Mitchell, an African American porter at the W. T. Grant Company and library janitor, occupied the property from the late 1940s through 1959.

62 Amos Allen House, ca. 1773. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof with center chimney; 4-bay façade with pedimented doorway flanked by pilasters.

The house at 62 Benefit Street was occupied by the painter and sculptor Nancy Elizabeth Prophet (1890-1960) in 1920. The census from that year shows her living there (with her occupation given as "Painting") with her then-husband, Francis Ford (they later divorced) and her father William H. Prophet. Born in Warwick to an African American mother and a Narragansett Indian father,¹⁴ Prophet graduated from RISD in 1918, the school's first graduate of color. She left Providence for Paris in 1922, returned to the United States in 1932 and to Providence in the mid-

¹³ The Providence Preservation Society historic house marker states that the house was built ca. 1760 and moved to the site ca. 1805.

¹⁴ Some sources state that her parents were of mixed African American and Narragansett descent.

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1940s.¹⁵ In 1945 the Rhode Island Episcopal Convention acquired the house at 62 Benefit Street, and in 1959 it was purchased by the Diocese of Rhode Island; still owned by the Diocese, whose Cathedral of St. John is located in the same city block, the building houses a rehabilitation and nursing facility.

81
Photo 38 Seth Wheaton House, 1786. Federal; 2-1/2 stories; flank gable; clapboard; 5-bay façade with center chimney and entrance; many later additions to south and rear; fine double flight of stairs with iron railing under hooded entrance.

81[R]
Photo 38 House, 1857-75. 2-1/2 stories; flank gable; clapboard; Greek Revival cottage with transomed door and wide entablature; set behind #81.

African Americans Jesse and Willie Edwards Chapman were living in the house at 81 Benefit Street by 1940; in 1944, they bought the property. (They had previously lived at 31 Olney Street [see below]). Jesse Chapman worked as a houseman for the Phi Delta Theta fraternity at Brown. The Chapmans rented part of the house to another African American family, headed by John Soares, a stevedore, and rented the house at the rear of the lot to three African American households: James Thomas, his wife, and their two children; janitor James Tuchson and his wife Mary Jane; and the widow Eliza Jane Hooper.

94 William Snow House, 1792. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof with center chimney; 5-bay façade with central doorway framed by pilasters and a pediment.

The nationally prominent African American opera and musical comedy singer Matilda Sissieretta Joyner Jones (1869-1933) is said to have owned the house at 94 Benefit Street and/or the adjacent property at 15 Church Street in the 1920s, but this cannot be confirmed by city directory listings or census records. Reviews so often compared Jones' voice to that of Italian diva Adelina Patti that she became known as "the Black Patti." She was the first African American to perform at Carnegie Hall, in 1892. Three years later she founded Black Patti Troubadours, which traveled the country performing through 1915, when the group disbanded and Jones returned to Providence.

102
Photo 37 Gershom Jones-John Howland House, 1784. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof; center chimney; 5-bay facade; central doorway trimmed with pilasters and a pediment.

Augustus and Bertha Montiero, who were of Cape Verdean descent, acquired the house at 102 Benefit Street in 1943 and remained there until 1959. One of their children, Clifford (b. 1938), grew up to become the first black police officer in Providence as well as a prominent civil rights

¹⁵ Steven Otfinoski, *African Americans in the Visual Arts* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2003):161-162.

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activist, joining the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March and serving as the President of the Providence chapter of the NAACP from 2000-2010.¹⁶

109
Photo 9 Sullivan Dorr House, 1809. Federal; three-story, three-bay center section flanked by two-story, one bay wings, all surmounted by paneled and turned balustrades; clapboard; central entrance portico supported by clustered "Gothick" colonnettes; coved cornices elaborated with a complicated running pattern of pointed arches which is repeated on the portico. Palladian window above the portico is also adorned with clustered colonnettes and tracery. Sited end to Benefit Street, facing Bowen Street, above street level on stone-walled terrace. L-plan service and carriage house wing borders front lawn on east. John Holden Greene.

Three generations of the African American Lippitt family worked as domestic servants in the house at 109 Benefit Street, for the family of cotton manufacturer Sullivan Dorr. Dorcas Lippitt appears to have come from Warwick to Providence to work for the family, probably in the 1810s. When she died in 1845, her granddaughter Patience and Patience's daughter Ann Celia Lippitt continued to work in the household, now headed by Sullivan Dorr Jr., into the 1880s. Other African American servants worked for the Dorrns, as well, including Marquis, who lived in the household in the late 1810s and early 1820s, and four servants of color who appear in both the 1840 and 1850 census.¹⁷

132 Israel J. Bullock, 1853. Italianate; 1-1/2 stories; clapboard; cross gable roof with cupola; T-plan with lattice-trimmed porches in the angles; bracketed cornice; Italianate window caps; round-headed windows.

The Hiram Lodge No. 3 of Prince Hall Masons, founded in 1797 and the second oldest African American Masonic chapter in the nation, used 132 Benefit Street as its lodge between 1927 and 1938.

149-155
Photo 29 Edward P. Knowles Block, 1862. Victorian Italianate; 4 stories; flat roof; clapboard; four narrow row houses with recessed side-hall entrances; mutule block cornice; bracketed second-story bay windows.

Thomas Crowder, an African American born in Virginia around 1865, bought two of the rowhouses in the four-unit Edward P. Knowles Block in 1919. By 1920, he was living at 153 Benefit Street with his children, Hope and Thomas, and four African American lodgers. The 1925 state census shows him at 155 Benefit Street, with his second wife, Jane, and thirteen

¹⁶ "Civil Rights Icon Montiero Honored," *The Providence Journal*, 1 March 2018.

¹⁷ On Marquis, see William J. Brown, *The Life of William J. Brown, of Providence, R.I.; With Personal Recollections of Incidents in Rhode Island* (Providence: Angel & Co., Printers, 1883), 28-29.

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lodgers, all African American. Thomas Crowder died in 1956, but Jane continued to run a lodging house in the Knowles Block until her death two years later.

- 150 Old State House, 1760-62, 1850-1, 1867-8, 1906. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; brick with brownstone quoins and rusticated window and door trim; double hip roof; 5-bay facade. Sympathetically enlarged and altered twice in the 19th century including a fine clock tower entrance on west (1850 Thomas A. Tefft) and Benefit Street addition on east (1867-8 James C. Bucklin). Building housed sessions of the Rhode Island legislature from 1763 to 1900 and county and Superior courts from 1763 to 1877. Remodeled for use by Sixth District Court in 1906 (Banning & Thornton). Remained in courthouse use until 1975.

It was in the Old State House that the Rhode Island General Assembly passed the 1784 act "authorizing the manumission of negroes, mulattoes, and others, and for the gradual abolition of slavery." The act freed enslaved people born on or after 1 March 1784 but required towns to reimburse those who enslaved the mothers of these children for their support and education until they came of age. The act also permitted enslavers to free any person up to the age of forty if town councils certified that they were healthy. In the same building, legislators convened in October 1785 to amend the gradual abolition law, changing some of its provisions. Manumissions of enslaved people of color are believed to have increased because of the complex legislation.¹⁸

- 314 General Ambrose Burnside House, 1866. Second Empire; 2-1/2 stories; concave mansard roof; brick with stone and wood trim; adapted to irregular hillside corner site; curved corner bay; fine iron lace work, hood roofed porch with iron work railings and brackets; continuous belt courses; varied materials; brick, stone, copper, iron, patterned slate; carriage house in rear. Alfred Stone.

Ambrose E. Burnside (1824-1881), a Major General in the United States Army and Governor of Rhode Island from 1866 to 1869, built this house in 1866. African American Robert Holloway (about 1819-1877), who was born in Virginia, worked for Burnside for nearly three decades, including time in New Mexico, at Fort Adams in Newport, in the District of Columbia, and in Providence. Holloway worked for Burnside as a coachman at this address, likely from 1866 until Holloway's death in 1877.¹⁹

- 400 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, now Barker Playhouse, 1840. Greek Revival; 1-1/2 stories; stucco; pedimented gable roof end-to-street with a bow front one-story vestibule; corner pilasters; colossal pilasters flank central entry.

¹⁸ Robert J. Cottrol, *The Afro-Yankees: Providence's Black Community in the Antebellum Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 31-33; Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780-1860* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 71-73.

¹⁹ Ronald S. Coddington, "The Capture of Ambrose Burnside's Valet," *New York Times*, 21 July 2011.

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St. Augustine's Episcopal Mission was organized for African American Episcopalians in a building on Broad and Fenner Streets (outside the district) in 1913, and moved to St. Stephen's Church at 400 Benefit Street soon after. The mission had ceased to operate at this location by 1932, when Barker Playhouse bought the property.

BENEVOLENT STREET

5
Photo 15 Henry B. Anthony House, 1844. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable roof set end-to-street; panelled corner pilasters; 3 bay facade with off-center recessed entry in classical enframingent.

Henry B. Anthony was the editor of the *Providence Journal*. His household at 5 Benevolent Street included Julianna Freeman, who lived and worked there from at least 1850 until she died in 1872. Born in Maryland about 1803, Freeman may have escaped slavery; she was one of forty-one Providence people of color who signed a petition urging state legislators to work for the immediate repeal of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act and to establish "safeguards of our rights and liberties" to thwart the act's intention.²⁰

93
Photo 21 Edward [& Christiana Carteaux] Bannister House, before 1857. Probably originally a simple 2-1/2 story, gable roofed cottage; the home of the prominent black artist Edward Bannister. The house was remodeled 1938-41 when the exterior was faced with brick and other alterations completely changed its character. [Rehabilitation completed in 2016. 2-1/2 stories; clapboard at first story, wood shingle above; pedimented gable roof set end-to-street; 3 bay façade with recessed entry in first bay.]

In 1883, the African American artist Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901) and his wife, the well-known hairdresser Christiana Carteaux Bannister (1819-1902), moved into the house at 93 Benevolent Street. Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901) was born in New Brunswick, Canada and moved to Boston in 1848, where he worked as a barber and learned to paint. He married wigmaker and hairdresser Christiana Babcock Carteaux, a Narragansett Indian born in North Kingstown, in 1857. The couple moved to Providence in 1870. After winning a bronze medal at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, Bannister quickly became identified as one of the city's leading painters. In 1880 he and fifteen others founded the Providence Art Club. Christiana Bannister continued working as a hairdresser, and she is believed to have used her

²⁰ *Creative Survival: The Providence Black Community in the 19th Century* (Providence, RI: Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, n.d.), 66.

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connections with white clients to help found and support the Home for Aged Colored Women at 45 East Transit Street – later renamed Bannister House and relocated to Dodge Street.²¹

BOWEN STREET

39
Photo 3 Dr. Jabez Bowen House, 1739. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof house is set at right angle to street; 2 interior chimneys; 5 bay entrance facade with early pedimented doorway. [2-story addition off south elevation.]

Dr. Jabez Bowen (1696-1770), who lived at 39 Bowen Street until his death, enslaved several African Americans. In his 1767 will, he left his second wife Hannah “one Cow, also my Negroe Woman Named Jenny, with her Child named Dina” but bequeathed “Full and compleat freedom” to his “faithful Negroe Man named Fortune,” to whom he also left a twenty-acre tract on his farm in Glocester, Rhode Island.²²

BROOK STREET

287
Photo 23 [Alexander Gorham House, ca. 1890. Second Empire; 3 stories; vinyl clapboard; mansard roof with 2 gable dormers on front and side elevations, one on rear; bracketed cornice; 2-bay façade with hooded doorway and 2-story box bay windows.]

291
Photo 23 [Alexander Gorham House, ca. 1890. Second Empire; 3 stories; vinyl clapboard; mansard roof with 2 gable dormers on front and side elevations, one on rear; bracketed cornice; 2-bay façade with hooded doorway and 2-story box bay windows.]

The houses at 287 and 291 Brook Street were built between 1882 and 1895 for Alexander Gorham (1836-1914), an African American real estate developer. They replaced two earlier homes owned by Gorham’s father, William J. Gorham (1810-78). After Alexander Gorham died in 1914, his widow, Caroline, remained at 287 Brook Street with roomers or boarders until her own death in 1925. By 1930, the house was leased to Townsend Derrick Solomon, a jewelry factory shipping clerk who was born in Virginia; he remained there until he died in 1943. His widow Ella Louise Johnson Solomon ran her dressmaking business from the house until at least 1964.

²¹ “Edward Mitchell Bannister,” Rhode Island College website, https://www.ric.edu/bannister/about_emb.php.

²² This Jabez Bowen was the great-uncle of jurist and lieutenant governor Jabez Bowen (1739-1815), whose Market Square house has not survived.

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BROWN UNIVERSITY

The College Edifice, now University Hall, 1770. Robert Smith. Colonial; 4-1/2 stories; brick with belt courses between stories; hip roof with balustraded deck and cupola; pedimented central pavilion. The original building of Brown University, based on the design of Nassau Hall, Princeton College.

This, the first building of what would become Brown University, was built in part by enslaved laborers. At least five African American men are documented to have worked on the construction: Pero (enslaved to Henry Paget), "Mary Young's Negro Man," "Earle's Negro," "Abraham," and "Mingow Negro." All but the last were probably held in servitude.²³

BURR'S LANE

4-6 Albert G. Angell House, ca. 1882. 2-1/2 stories; flank gable; clapboard; duplex workers cottage with bracketed door hood over paired center entries; bracketed window caps.

African American Emily Dyer, who worked as a laundress, and her brother, longshoreman Collin Cox, were living at 4 Burr's Lane by 1897; by 1900 they owned the property. African American Robert Diggs, a longshoreman, rented 6 Burr's Lane and lived there with his wife and two daughters in 1900.

5
Photo 26 William Rea House, ca. 1855. 2-1/2 stories; flank gable; clapboard; entrance on east side; 6 bays with off-center entrance; Greek Revival door with transom; molded window caps. [2-story addition at rear.]

The property at 5 Burr's Lane was occupied by people of color for decades, beginning when Doctor B. Jones, an African American coachman, purchased the property around 1895. Jones died in 1904, and his widow remained there through at least 1910; the house was occupied by African American and Cape Verdean tenants through at least 1940. These include the families of Howard Lewis and James Viall in 1930 and the family of Cape Verdean immigrant dock laborer Richard Morris and of Virginia-born longshoreman John D. Hill in 1940.

²³ *Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice* (Providence: Brown University, n.d.), 25.

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CONGDON STREET

- 17
Photo 33
- Congdon Street Baptist Church, 1874-5. Italianate; 2 stories; brick on first story and clapboard on second story; gable roof with corbel cornice; large round-headed triple window in southern gable end; regularly spaced arched windows along flank with wooden molded labels on second story; entrance in base of 3 story square tower. This church is the outgrowth of the congregation organized in 1819 as the African Union Meeting. C.F. Wilcox. [Charles F. Wilcox, architect.]

The oldest surviving African American religious property in Providence, the Congdon Street Baptist Church is the city's most significant surviving black institution of the Post-Civil War period. The congregation was established in 1840 as an outgrowth of the African Union Meeting; it in turn gave rise to the formation of the Ebenezer Baptist Church (on the West Side of Providence) and the Olney Street Baptist Church (see 100 Olney Street, below). The Congdon Street Baptist Church has had an enduring role as a sanctuary for Providence's black community; in 1968, the Afro-American Student Society of Brown University sought shelter at the church for three nights, after a walk-out protesting the lack of diversity in Brown's student body and faculty, among other issues. The Congdon Street Baptist Church houses an active congregation to this day.

- 131
- [William Henry Johnson House, ca. 1920]. 1-1/2 stories; end gable; asphalt shingles; cottage with entrance porch to south; 2nd story windows cut through the eaves; deep eaves with sawn rafter ends.

The property at 131 Congdon Street is said to have been built in the 1920s by Horatio R. Nightingale Jr. for his African American coachman, William Henry Johnson (1851-1936). Born enslaved in Virginia, Johnson was living here with his wife and son in 1930. His widow appears to have sold the house shortly after Johnson's death in 1936.²⁴

CUSHING STREET

- 10
- Nelson S. Eddy House, 1845. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable end to street; paneled corner pilasters; 3 bay façade with off-center Doric entrance portico with bay window above; ell on east.

George J. Adams (1813-89), a cotton broker and abolitionist, moved into this house around 1865. He had been secretary of the Union (Fiskville) Anti-Slavery Society, an officer and director of

²⁴ See William Henry Johnson's obituary in the *Providence Journal*, 25 June 1936.

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the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society, and a *Liberator* supporter in the 1830s. In 1858 he purchased the freedom of Bethany Veney and her son in Virginia and brought them back to his home in Providence, then on Charlesfield Street (not extant). After living in Worcester, Massachusetts for a period, Veney returned to the Adams household at 10 Cushing Street in 1873. Veney's story, and her involvement with the Adams family, is documented in her narrative, published in 1889.

HOPKINS STREET

15
Photo 1 Stephen Hopkins House, 1707, 1743. Colonial; original 1 ½ story, gable roofed structure built in 1707 by John Field; 2-1/2 story 1743 addition by Stephen Hopkins, clapboarded with gable roof; original interior includes a fine shell-carved cupboard in the parlor; the current pedimented entrance in the 1743 section was designed by Norman Isham in 1927. Stephen Hopkins was a merchant, ten times governor of Rhode Island Colony, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. George Washington was a house-guest in 1776. Today the house is operated as a museum by the Colonial Dames with a garden designed by Alden Hopkins of Colonial Williamsburg.

Stephen Hopkins' enslavement of African Americans in his household is well documented. His 1760 will referenced five enslaved people, including "a certain Negro Man named Saint Jago" who had lived with Hopkins "in the Quality of a Servant, or Slave, from his infancy til now." Hopkins manumitted Saint Jago in 1772, but in 1774 six other enslaved people were living in Hopkins's household, including Primus, Adam, Prince, Bonner and Fibbo. Hopkins continued to enslave people until his death in 1785.

JENCKES STREET

8 Nicholas Brown House, ca. 1838. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof set end-to-street; 3 bay façade with off-center elliptical fan doorway with side lights.

The property at 8 Jenckes Street became a rental property in the early 20th century, often with African American tenants. In 1935 it was occupied by Mary L. Diggs, an African American laundress and housekeeper, and African American cook Edward F. Queen.

10
Photo 28 Leonard Blodget House, 1830-32. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable roof; paneled corner pilasters; 5 bay façade with recessed centered entry in classical enframingent.

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The property at 10 Jenckes Street became a rental property in the early 20th century, often with African American tenants. In 1935 and 1940 a portion of the dwelling was occupied by seamstress Bertha Milbourne. The other part was rented to the family of Archibald and Dolly Green Royster; the Royster family remained in the property until at least 1960.

JOHN STREET

- 11 [Before 1857. 2 stories; clapboard; likely originally a 3-bay-wide, side-gable-roof house; 2-story, 1-bay-wide addition built off west side ca.1900; paired entries beneath shallow, bracketed hood in easternmost bay.]

John F. Lopez and his wife, Florence, lived at 11 John Street in 1932. Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1888, Lopez was a leader in Fox Point's Cape Verdean community. He helped organize Local Chapter 1329 of the International Longshoremen's Association, the first union in New England to have a predominantly Cape Verdean membership, in 1933; served as president of the Providence chapter of the NAACP in the 1940s; and was appointed to Rhode Island's Fair Employment Practices Commission in 1948. Lopez ran a funeral home on South Main Street (not extant).²⁵

- 72 [John W. Richmond House (?), before 1850. Greek Revival; 2 stories with basement exposed at grade on street front; clapboard; gable roof; 3 bay façade; basement level with center entrance flanked by separate store entrances and windows (alteration).]
- Photo 18

African American Sylvia Offee and her daughter Mary bought and moved to 72 John Street around 1880, part of which they rented to other people of color. Sylvia Offee died in 1890, and Mary remained in the house until she died in 1910. Sylvia and her husband David had worked in the household of Joseph and Eliza Gano Rogers at 1 George Street (not extant).²⁶

- 85 James Barney House, attributed to John Holden Greene, 1832. Federal; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; hipped roof with monitor; 4 bay façade with elliptical fan doorway.

African American Walter Calvert Occomy (1864-1937) purchased the house at 85 John Street around 1915. Born in Maryland, Occomy worked in Providence at times as a carpenter and also as a waiter and butler for Providence families. The Occomy family retained ownership of 85 John Street until at least 1940.

²⁵ Sam Beck, *Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge: The Cape Verdeans' Struggle for Their Neighborhood* (Providence, RI: Gavea-Brown, 1992), 53. Coli and Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island*, 11-12. Norma LaSalle Daoust, "Building the Democratic Party: Black Voting in Providence in the 1930s." (*Rhode Island History* vol. 44, no. 3, 81-88.

²⁶ *Life of William J. Brown*, 24, 127; *Creative Survival*, 61.

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MARKET SQUARE

Photo 8 Market House (now part of R.I.S.D.), 1773, 1797, 1865, 1950. Joseph Brown, architect (1773); James C. Bucklin, architect (1865 alterations); John Hutchins Cady, architect (1950 rehabilitation). Colonial; originally 2-1/2 stories, 3rd story added in 1797; gable roof; brick; arcaded 1st story (glazed with multi-plane arched windows added mid-20th century); stringcourses between stories; projecting entrance pavilion on east with pier-and-panel articulation and paneled roof parapet (added 1865); roof balustrade. Long an important commercial center, with open stalls on the 1st story and a meeting hall for St. John's Lodge of Masons on the 3rd floor, this structure served as the Providence City Building (with alterations by Bucklin) for a number of years before the erection of the present City Hall in 1874-8, then housed the Providence Board of Trade at the turn of the twentieth century. The Providence produce market continued to assemble in Market Square and on the adjoining Crawford Street Bridge until the late 1920s.

Several vendors of African descent had stalls in the Market House. George McCarty (1774-1863), a native of Montserrat, had a refreshment stand in the northwest corner of the Market House from 1805 until at least 1815.²⁷ McCarty was among the most accomplished people of color in antebellum Providence; he owned property on Meeting and Cushing Streets and on present-day South Court Street, and petitioned for the right of property-owning people of color to vote and of children of color to attend integrated public schools.²⁸ An African American butcher, George Thomas, also kept a stall inside the Market House before the Civil War,²⁹ as did Simon Manuel, Abraham Gibbs and Peter Waters. Manuel is said to have come to Providence from Boston, is listed as head of a household of eight people of color in the 1820 census, was among those who incorporated the African American Christ's Church on the West Side in 1841-42, and died in Providence in 1848.

²⁷ McCarty's grave marker in North Burial Ground is inscribed, "George McCarty, An Accreole, was born on the Island of Mount Sarat, Town of Plymouth, West Indies, Sept. 8, 1774, Died Sept 27, 1863." *Rhode-Island American*, 2 May 1815, 3. *Rhode-Island American*, 28 December 1832, 1.

²⁸ *Creative Survival*, 47, 63; *Providence Republican Herald*, 25 January 1840, 3, and 10 February 1841, 3; *Liberator*, 27 April and 11 May 1833 and 15 August 1835; see also Julian S. Rammelkamp, "The Providence Negro Community, 1820-1842," *Rhode Island History* 7, 1 (January 1948): 23.

²⁹ *Creative Survival*, 47. Thomas Christ Church (Episcopal) Records (Mss 9001-C), RIHS.

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MEETING STREET

21 Photo 7 John Carter House (Shakespeare's Head), 1772. Colonial; 3 story; clapboard; hipped roof with central chimney and modillion cornice; 5 bay facade with central pedimented doorway flanked by Doric pilasters; low double flight of stone steps. *The Providence Gazette* was printed here by Mrs. Sarah Goddard and John Carter.

The pro- and antislavery views of brothers John and Moses Brown were published in *The Providence Gazette* and John Carter, at the behest of Moses Brown, issued antislavery pamphlets from his print shop. Carter manumitted two enslaved African Americans, Ingow and Fanny in 1789.³⁰ Nonetheless, according to census records, one enslaved person remained in the Carter household in 1790.

24 Photo 16 Brick Schoolhouse, 1767 [1769-70].³¹ Colonial; 2-1/2 stories; hip roof; brick; 5 bay façade; center bay projects containing pedimented doorway flanked by pilasters. Built as private school. [Initially, a free, public school was operated on the first floor while a private school occupied the second floor. The city of Providence purchased the Brick School House outright in 1800, when plans for a free school system had been ratified by the Rhode Island Senate.]³²

In 1828, the city's first public school for African American students was established at the Brick Schoolhouse (a second was opened on Pond Street in 1837). It operated until 1865, when the city's public schools were integrated, though it continued to serve primarily black children. The schoolhouse ceased operating as a public school in 1887.³³ Currently occupied by the Providence Preservation Society.

58 Before 1857. Italianate; 2-1/2 stories; end gable; siding [clapboard]; entrance on west side; flat topped bay window on front.

William Page Hyde Freeman was a boarder at 58 Meeting Street from 1925 into the late 1950s. Freeman at one time worked as a glass cutter but later become a realtor, and was one of the founders of the Providence chapter of the NAACP (est. 1913).³⁴ In the 1940s, this property was

³⁰ Charles Rappleye, *Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 260; Sweet, *Bodies Politic*, 444 n. 24.

³¹ The 1976 National Register nomination for the College Hill Historic District provides a construction date of 1767 for the Brick Schoolhouse. A more recent research report completed for the Providence Preservation Society states that the building was constructed in 1769-70. Myron O. Stachiw, "Historic Structure Report, Phase I, The Old Brick School House," March 2014.

³² Robert A. Kesack, *The Old Brick School House (1769)* (May 2013), 2.

³³ *Report of the School Committee for the Year 1899-1900* (Providence, RI: Snow & Farnham, 1901):131-133.

³⁴ Freeman lent money to Sissieretta Joyner Jones to pay property taxes and utility bills and to assure that she was not interred in a pauper's grave. See Maureen D. Lee, *Sissieretta Jones: "The Greatest Singer of Her Race," 1866-1933* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2012).

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owned by Frank William Greene and his wife, Martha, who operated it as a tourist home catering to African American travelers.

72 Before 1857; Federal; 2-1/2 stories; end gable; clapboard; 3 bay with Italianate bracketed overhang; 1 story L on rear.

The property at 72 Benefit Street was listed as a hotel, called the Hill Top, in the 1938 edition of *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. Directories suggest it was operated by Milton H. Phillips, a Virginia-born porter who worked for fruit dealer J. H. Preston Company and later at Weybossett Market. Phillips lived at 72 Meeting Street from at least 1903 through at least 1946; censuses often showed lodgers in his household.³⁵

OLIVE STREET

20 Colored Children's Home, 1875-95 [1849-50]. 2-1/2 stories; end gable; siding; broad 5 bay
Photo 17 house with center entry with transom; 2 story L behind; stripped. Built as an orphanage for black children.

The Providence Shelter for Colored Children, also known as the Colored Children's Home or the colored orphans shelter, was established at a different location in 1839 by a group of white Quaker women led by Anna Almy Jenkins. Black women began serving on the organization's Board in the 1940s. This building was purpose-built in 1849-50 and is the only existing building from the antebellum period in the district known to have housed an institution oriented to people of color. The shelter housed not only African American orphans, but also children whose parents were alive but temporarily unable to care for them, in many cases because they worked as live-in domestics. The building continued to house children until 1941. In 1951, the Shelter became a grant-making foundation that supports organizations focused on Providence's African American children.³⁶

OLNEY STREET

31[-33] Before 1857. 2-1/2 stories; end gable; brick, shingle, and glass; first floor storefront with balcony
Photo 20 and bay window above; additions to rear.

³⁵ See Catherine W. Zipf, "A Haven for African-Americans in R. I.," *Providence Journal*, 25 February 2016.

³⁶ <http://www.providenceshelter.org/>

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By 1875 (and possibly earlier), the property at 31-33 Olney Street was owned by John A. Creighton, who lived there with his wife Martha, and their three sons. Born in Providence about 1823, Creighton ran an “intelligence office” on South Main Street from about 1865 to about 1880; the office was probably a clearinghouse for African Americans looking for work and employers wishing to hire them. In 1862, Creighton was secretary of a committee of African American citizens who met with Governor William Sprague about recruiting the Sixth Regiment of Rhode Island Volunteers.³⁷ In the late 1930s, part of the building at 31-33 Olney Street was rented by the family of Jesse Chapman, who worked as a houseman, and his wife, Willie Edwards Chapman. Married in North Carolina in 1932, the couple had moved to Providence by 1938. A grocery store run by Max Talun occupied the main part of the house; in the 1960s, Ruth Correia operated a store in that space, called “Ruth’s Market.”

49-51
Photo 30

Daniel Y. Stickney House, 1853. Italianate-late Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories (plus basement story on street side); clapboard; pedimented gable roof set end-to-street with bracket cornice; paneled corner pilasters; 5 bay entrance façade on west with central doorway in classical enframing.

By 1916 this house had been acquired by African American janitor William H. Gross and his son Carl (1888-1971), a physician. The Gross family lived in 49 Olney Street, while Carl, a graduate of Howard University School of Medicine, set up his medical practice in the other half of the dwelling, where it remained until 1942.

77

1857-75. 2-1/2 stories; end gable; asphalt shingles; 3 bay with flat-roofed Queen Anne porch with enclosed bay above; bracketed eaves; bay on east.

The house at 77 Olney Street was occupied by people of color for decades, beginning in the 1920s. The family of Philip C. and Henrietta Coleman lived there in 1925, along with two other African American families. Denard James (often James D.) Pinderhughes and his wife Florence bought the house in 1927, renting half to African American chauffeur Walter E. Gladding, whose family remained there through 1949. The Pinderhuges’ son Alfred was still living in the house in 1999.³⁸

100
Photo 34

Olney Street Baptist Church, 1962-3. Johnson & Haynes, architects. Modern; 2 story brick block with flat overhanging roof; cement trim; windows at roof line and corners; smaller brick block on E side contains entry. [The design originally included a freestanding campanile, or bell tower, and a parish house; neither was built.]

³⁷ The 1865 census shows the family at 25 Olney Street, the 1875 census shows them at 33 Olney Street, and the 1880 census at 31 Olney. The 1875 map shows John A. Creighton as owning 33 Olney Street, the house now labeled as 31-33 Olney.

³⁸ *African Americans on College Hill: 1950-1979* (Providence, RI: Urban League of Rhode Island, 1999), 7.

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The Olney Street Baptist Church congregation was incorporated in 1901, after splitting off from the Congdon Street Baptist Church, under the pastorate of J. H. Presley. They first met in the former Olney Street Congregational Church at 28 Olney Street (not extant), but built this new edifice in 1962-63. The congregation remains active in this location.³⁹

POWER STREET

52
Photo 5 John Brown House, 1786[-88]. Joseph Brown, architect. Federal; 3 stories; brick with belt courses above first and second stories; hipped roof with balustrade and modillion cornice; 5 bay façade; central pedimented pavilion breaks cornice line and contains second story Palladian window and elliptical fanlight doorway under balustraded Doric portico. Sited on large landscaped lot.

John Brown (1736-1803) was a member of Providence's most prominent 18th-century merchant family, and an adamant supporter of slavery who actively participated in the slave trade. His household on Power Street included African American servants; two are shown in the 1790 census and four in 1800. The censuses indicate that these persons were free. A service wing containing a butler's pantry, service hall, and servants' chambers was added about 1850. While William and Elizabeth Ives Gammell owned and occupied the house, from 1854 to 1897, the household was staffed in most years by white servants, but in 1880 three of the eight domestics listed there were African American.

66
Photo 10 Thomas Poynton Ives House, 1806. Federal Mansion; 3 stories; brick with stone trim; hipped roof with balustrade and modillion cornice; 5 bay façade with central elliptical fanlight doorway under semicircular Corinthian portico; elliptical fanlight second story hall window; fine stable complex and paved courtyard at rear. Stone, Carpenter & Willson added a 3 story rear ell in 1885.

Thomas Poynton Ives (1769-1835), partner in the prominent firm Brown and Ives, built his mansion in 1806, along with an outbuilding to house servants. The 1810 census shows four of Ives' servants were people of color; among these may have been Richard Cozzens and Cudge Brown. By 1830 three people of color were living and working in the household. James W. Gaines lived and worked at 66 Power Street for Ives' widow in the 1850s, as did Rebecca Spicer. As of 1880, when the house was occupied by the widow of Moses Brown Ives, two of the seven servants working there were black.

³⁹ <https://www.olneystreet.com/our-history>

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PRATT STREET

15 Albert G. Angell House, 1849-52. Italianate; 3 stories; mansard; clapboard; 2 bay block with fine
Photo 36 bracketed entry hood flanked by pedimented triple window; bow window on 1st floor south;
heavy modillion cornice; pedimented dormers.

The dwelling at 15 Pratt Street served as the John Hope Community Center from 1941 to 1946. Named in honor of John Hope, president of Morehouse College and an 1894 graduate of Brown University, the Center offered programs in sports, arts and crafts, mechanical arts, metal and woodworking, clerical skills, and citizenship, and the WPA opened a nursery school here for working mothers.

54 Before 1857. 1½ stories; flank gable; clapboard; set into hill with full basement on street front with center entrance; windows greatly altered throughout; cape shape with 3 bays and central dormer.

This house was probably built for African American coachman Lorin Jackson and his family between 1850 and 1860, though it may be earlier. Jackson was living here with his wife Mehitable Finch Smith Jackson by 1860 but had apparently moved to 56 Pratt Street by 1865 (see below). It was a rental property occupied by African American families in the early 20th century.

56 [Mehitable Finch Smith Jackson House], 1857-75 [ca. 1860]; 2-1/2 stories; end gable; clapboard; set into hill so full basement on street front; entrance on north side; greenhouse room on south side; some paired windows; attached garage.

By 1865 Lorin Jackson, an African American, was working as a church sexton, and it appears that he and his family were living in the house at 56 Pratt Street. (A map published in that year attaches his wife's name to the house.) Lorin Jackson died in 1888, and his widow Mehitable Finch Smith Jackson remained here with their son George and various African American boarders until she died in 1906.

PROSPECT STREET

125 Nightingale House, 1857-75, et seq. Italianate; 3-1/2 stories; hip with monitor; clapboard; 3 bay block with bracketed window caps; enclosed porch across front; modillion cornice; 2 story L on rear; 2 story townhouse outbuildings with hipped roofs and center entrances. Rear additions also 1 Barnes Street. New additions (NC).

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Iron and steel merchant Horatio Rogers Nightingale Sr. employed an African American coachman, William Henry Johnson, at his home at 125 Prospect Street. Johnson was born enslaved in Virginia in 1851 and moved with his parents to Providence by 1870. He probably began working for Nightingale in the late 1870s and remained there until Nightingale's death in 1885.⁴⁰

150 Ruth T. Scott House, 1867. Italianate; 2-1/2 stories; end gable; clapboard; 3 bay with recessed
Photo 32 and hooded entrance with double doors and transom, molded window caps, corner boards; modillion cornice.

African American dentist Andrew L. Jackson, one of the founders of the Providence chapter of the NAACP (est. 1913), acquired this house around 1919 and was living here by the mid-1930s. After he died in 1949, his widow Constance and son Andrew L. Jr., also a dentist, remained in the house.

164 Charles H. Jefferds House, 1886. Queen Anne; 2-1/2 stories; shingle with patterned shingles on second story; cross-gabled and hipped roof with pilastered chimney and iron cresting; regularly spaced double windows on asymmetrical plan; one story entrance porch runs across most of front with turned posts, shed roof and circular northern extension.

In 1944 the property at 164 Prospect Street was purchased by Ida Hairston Bynum who lived there with her husband, Clarence. The Bynumns were African Americans who moved to Rhode Island from North Carolina, finding work in domestic service – Clarence as, at various times, a butler, houseman and chauffeur and Ida as a cook. The Bynumns ran a boardinghouse or lodging house at this address in the late 1940s.

SHELDON STREET

20 Abraham and Isaac Wilkinson House, "half house", ca. 1825. Federal; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof; 3 bay facade with off-center elliptical fan doorway flanked by side lights, reached by a double flight of stone steps.

The dwelling at 20 Sheldon Street was purchased by African American Robert J. Craig around 1904. Born in the District of Columbia around 1853, Craig had come to Providence by 1870. He and his wife, a Norwegian immigrant named Georgine Hansen, lived at 20 Sheldon Street with their five children. As of 1910, Craig was working as a janitor and his eldest son Roscoe was a

⁴⁰ Johnson might not have begun work there until after 1875, when the state census show Nightingale's coachman as George W. Peters, an African American native of Westerly.

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chauffeur; the family also had income from renting part of their house to African American chauffeur Frank Hall and his wife. Members of the Craig family continued to live at 20 Sheldon Street until at least 1940.

51
Photo 35 [Central Congregational Church Mission/Portuguese Chapel, 1904. Queen Anne; 1-story; hip roof; brick and asphalt shingle; entrance and small porch on east end of façade, five-part window in center, pent roof surmounted by triple-window dormer; wall dormers on side elevations.]

The Portuguese Chapel is reputed to be the first Cape Verdean Protestant church in America. It grew out of a mission founded in 1886 in the home of Cape Verdean immigrant Manuel Martin (1837-1905), which was brought under the wing of the Central Congregational Church in 1891. The Church built this structure in 1904 to serve Fox Point's growing Cape Verdean population. The mission remained active until 1949, when it became the independent Sheldon Street Congregational Church. It merged with the Union Baptist Church in 1967 and operates as the Sheldon Street Church today.

57
Photo 25 John Justin House, 1828. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof; 5 bay façade with central doorway in classical enframement.

John and Justina Sant Ana Delgado, who emigrated from Cape Verde, were living at 57 Sheldon Street with their three children by 1935 and remained here until at least 1962. They often shared the residence with boarders, typically also of Cape Verdean descent.

SOUTH COURT STREET

24 House, ca. 1765, and ca. 1865. Colonial; 3-1/2 stories; flank gambrel; clapboard; 5 bay with center entrance on west in 2-story vestibule addition; later bracketed window caps on 1st floor. Moved to site ca. 1865.

The house at 24 South Court Street became a rental property in the early 20th century. In 1920, there were eleven tenants, including African American chauffeur Richard James Loudon (who lived here until about 1935) and Virginia-born black freight handler William Smith. In 1940 three African American families were living in the house, those of teamster Chester Jackson, pipe layer Joseph Wilcox, and street laborer Howard Russell.

28 Duty Greene, 2nd House, 1847. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; asphalt shingles (probably over clapboard) [clapboard restored]; gable roof set end-to-street; paneled corner pilasters; 3 bay façade with off-center entry in classical enframement.

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The house at 28 South Court Street became a rental property in the early 20th century. By 1930 part of the house was being leased to African Americans William C. and Ida L. Foster and their two sons, William and Andrew. Widowed by 1940, Ida Foster had left South Court Street by 1945.

SOUTH MAIN STREET

50
Photo 4 Joseph Brown House, Joseph Brown, 1774. Colonial; 2-1/2 stories (plus exposed basement); brick; unusual ogee gable roof end-to-street with double balustrade, finials, modillion cornice; 5 bay façade; entrance is now in basement story; pedimented and flanked with paired Ionic columns.

Joseph Brown (1733-85) was a member of Providence's most prominent 18th-century merchant family. He enslaved at least one woman, named Phillis, whom his heirs freed in 1799.

THAYER STREET

6
Photo 19 [Luther Pearson House, 1825-29. Federal; 1-1/2 stories; gable roof end-to-street; clapboard; 5 bay with center entrance on south, center chimney.]

African American laborer Armstead Johnson lived in this house from 1903 until the mid-1940s. He and his wife, Laura Jones Johnson, hailed from Virginia. In 1910 Nathaniel L. Morgan, a steamship porter who had previously worked in domestic service, was lodging with them.

10
Photo 12 [Harding Stoddard House, 1817-25. Federal; 2 stories; gable roof end-to-street; clapboard; 3 bay with center entrance on south, center chimney.]

In 1835 African American mariner William S. Nichols bought the dwelling at 10 Thayer Street. Nichols died in 1840, but his widow Anstis and then their children, Benjamin and Harriet, retained ownership of the house until 1885. As of 1897, the house was rented to African American Robert J. Craig and his wife, Georgine Hansen. From 1909 through at least 1925, the house was occupied by African American Caroline Hall Johnson, along with another black family.

307 [Washington & Harriet Jackson House], 1857-75. 2-1/2 stories; end gable; asphalt shingle; 3 bay house with transom and sidelight entry; simple. [Asphalt shingle siding has been replaced with clapboard; transom and sidelight entry has been replaced with steel-and-glass door with one

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sidelight; plate-glass window on façade, next to entry; secondary entry on south elevation, comprised of steel-and-glass door.]

Washington Jackson, born about 1830 in Virginia, began living here with his wife Harriet and their son, George, around 1874. Jackson worked as a laborer and later as a nurse, while Harriet was a laundress. By 1900 the Jacksons owned the property, renting space to other people of color. Washington Jackson died in 1907, his widow Harriet in 1920.

TRANSIT STREET

43
Photo 24 William Blodget House, 1840-1845. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof set end-to-street; corner pilasters; 4 bay entrance façade on west with Doric portico; ell on rear.

The property at 43 Transit Street was consistently occupied by people of color in the 1930s and 1940s. Joseph Santos, who was of Cape Verdean descent, lived here with his wife Rose and their eight children beginning around 1935. They shared the house with the family of longshoreman Alfred Augustus Walker, who was from Jamaica, from 1935 to 1940, when the Lopes family moved in. William Manuel Lopes and his wife Antonia had emigrated from Cape Verde in the 1910s. They had seven children.

47 William Blodget House, 1840-1845. Greek Revival; 2-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable roof set end-to-street; paneled corner pilasters; 3 bay façade with off-center entry in classical enframing.

From 1932 to 1943, the house at 47 Transit Street was home to Manuel Querino Ledo and his wife, Rose. Manuel Q. Ledo, also known as "Chief" or "the Rooster," was born in 1894 on the island of Brava. In 1900, he came to the United States with his father, who had worked on whaling ships, and his sister. Ledo was a co-founder of Local Chapter 1329 of the International Longshoremen's Association, which received its charter in 1933. It was the first union in New England to have a predominantly Cape Verdean membership.⁴¹

53 Daniel Pearce House ("Lightning Splitter House"), 1781. Originally a 1-1/2 story gambrel-roofed house, converted to a "lightning splitter" house by Samuel Guild ca. 1850; set end-to-street.

By 1922 the house at 53 Transit Street had been acquired by janitor and watchman William O'Connor, who is shown as a man of color in censuses. The 1940 census shows him in the house

⁴¹ Beck, *Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge*, 29, 48-53. Coli and Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island*, 9-12, 25.

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with his sons Thomas, a lumber boat longshoreman, and James, a National Youth Administration project carpenter. His family owned the property into the early 1950s.

183-185 [Nathan C. Case House/Salvation Army Social Settlement and Day Nursery, before 1857. Greek Revival; 2 stories; clapboard; side-gable roof with cornice returns; corner pilasters; 6 bay façade with two entrances paired with transoms and sidelights in center bays, beneath 2nd-floor box-bay window with brackets.]

This building served as the Salvation Army Social Settlement and Day Nursery, an important source of support to the Cape Verdean community of Fox Point, from 1926 to 1960, when the mission moved to South Providence.

TRAVERSE STREET

21 Holy Rosary Church, 1905. Gothic Revival; 2-story, gable nave fronted by two 3-story, crenellated towers; random ashlar; three pointed-arch entrances surmounted by colossal, pointed-arch window on east front.

Our Lady of the Rosary Church, also known as Holy Rosary Church, served the local Catholic Portuguese-speaking community at large, including some people of Cape Verdean descent.

WICKENDEN STREET

244 [Before 1875. 3 stories; clapboard; side-gable roof; 6 bay façade; entries in first, third and sixth bays; originally a 2-story house that was raised at an unknown date to insert commercial space at street level.]

From 1964 to 1980, Manny Almeida, who operated a gym in Fox Point (just outside the district), also ran a bar that served as a gathering place for Cape Verdeans. Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge was a landmark for Cape Verdeans living in Fox Point, as well as those residing elsewhere.⁴²

⁴² See Beck, *Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge*.

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WILLIAMS STREET

66 Edward Carrington House, 1810, 1811-2. Federal; 3 stories; brick; low hipped roof with balustrade and modillion cornice; 5 bay façade; 2 story entrance porch composed of superimposed Corinthian and Doric orders; central elliptical fanlight doorway; set behind retaining wall; fine stable complex and paved courtyard at rear. House built for John Corliss in 1810; its third story and front porch were added by Carrington after he purchased the property in 1811. Edward Carrington was one of Providence's most successful China trade merchants and served as U.S. consul in Canton from 1808 to 1811.

Edward Carrington (1775-1843) employed George Waterman as his coachman for decades, beginning around 1821. Waterman was born into slavery and is said to have come to Providence from New Bedford specifically to work in Carrington's household. The 1850 census shows the property occupied by Carrington's namesake son, his wife, mother, infant daughter, and eight domestic servants, six of them African American. Waterman is listed among the servants in the 1850 census and again in 1860 and 1870, though there is evidence that he was maintaining his own household on Benevolent Street (not extant) by that time. In his 1882 obituary, Waterman is described as the "body servant" of Edward Carrington Jr. His wife Lucy (1801-1880) was a well-known cake maker.

123 Israel Wood House, before 1857. Early Victorian cottage; 1-1/2 stories; clapboard; steep gable roof set end-to-street with large dormers; one story bay window flanked with simple pedimented doorway.

Barber Edward B. Hebrew, who was born in Maryland around 1826, purchased the house at 123 Williams Street in 1886. He died in 1897, leaving the house to his son William and the rest of his estate to his widow, Annie, who died in 1903. African American clergyman Solomon Hammond and his family rented a part of the house in 1900.

125 Israel Wood House, ca. 1838. Greek Revival; 1-1/2 stories; clapboard; pedimented gable roof set end-to-street; 3 bay façade; corner pilasters; off-center entry with classical enframement; extension on east.

Joseph Dunn, a cofounder of the Providence chapter of the NAACP (est. 1913), was a lodger here from around 1909 to 1912.

242 [George Henry House, ca. 1865. 2-1/2 stories; vinyl siding; side-gable roof with cornice
Photo 14 returns; 3 bay façade with center entry with transom and sidelights; alterations include one-story entrance porch and large, shed-roof dormers on front and rear roof slopes.]

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The house at 242 Williams Street was occupied by George Henry from around 1872 until his death in 1900; his widow continued to live there until she died eleven years later. Henry had been born enslaved in Virginia in 1819, escaped to Philadelphia, shipped on another vessel to Providence, and decided to settle in the city about 1840. For some years Henry did maritime work (as he had in the south) and, in winter, served as sexton for St. Stephen's Church at 400 Benefit Street. Henry repeatedly tried and failed to organize men of color into cooperative business ventures. He was a member of various African American benefit societies and fought school segregation. At his death in 1900 a Boston newspaper referred to Henry as "the richest colored man in Rhode Island."⁴³

247 [251] Sherman S. Mars House, 1847. 1-1/2 stories; clapboard; gable roof; plain three bay façade with Photo 13 central capped doorway reached by a double flight of steps.

The house at 247 Williams Street was built by African American laborer and engineer Sherman Sanford Mars. Mars, who married Hannah Sampson in 1841, was one of the men of color who organized the Rhode Island Committee of Vigilance in 1848 and was elected secretary of the group. On his 1841 seaman's protection paper Sherman Mars claimed to have been born about 1790 in Litchfield, Connecticut; in the 1860 census he stated that he was born about 1810 in Africa. He may have been a son of Jupiter Mars, whose life story – including fleeing from slavery – is recounted in *Life of James Mars, A Slave Born and Sold in Connecticut, Written by Himself* (1864). Sherman Mars died in 1860, and his widow remained in the Williams Street house until her own death in 1883. The house at 247 Williams continued to be occupied by people of color through at least 1947.

265 [John E. Church House, 1867. 2 stories; clapboard; gable roof set end-to-street; 2 bay façade; Photo 22 off-center entry with ornate hood, balustrade added.]

John E. Church, born in Maryland, and his wife Catherine Waterman, daughter of George Waterman, built the house at 265 Williams Street in 1867. The 1870 census shows the family in the house, then valued at three thousand dollars, with boarder Ann M. Morris, a dressmaker from New York. Church was working as the janitor at Providence Institution for Savings. He died in 1894, and his widow and daughter Lucy, a music teacher, remained at 265 Williams Street until they died. (Catherine Church's date of death is unknown; Lucy died in 1924.)

⁴³ George Henry, *Life of George Henry: Together with a Brief History of the Colored People in America* (Providence: H. I. Gould and Co., 1894); "George Henry's Will," *Providence Journal*, 17 February 1900; "Wealth Estimated at \$100,000," *Boston Herald*, 25 January 1900, 3.

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SECTION 8: NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The National Register nomination for the College Hill Historic District identifies several areas of significance, including but not limited to Architecture, Community Planning, and Exploration/Settlement. This Additional Documentation adds another area of significance: Ethnic Heritage–Black. College Hill was the site of a notable African American settlement in the city’s early history and continued to serve as a residential, religious, institutional, social, and cultural focus for people of African descent into the latter half of the 20th century. The history of the district, as manifest in its buildings, reflects national themes in African American history, including: enslavement as well as freedom through manumission and escape; the creation of community institutions; entrepreneurship and education in the face of limited opportunities and discrimination; achievements in arts and design; the migration of African Americans from the south and of people from the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa; displacement due to urban renewal and gentrification; and the struggle for equal rights. By analyzing the district’s historic resources through the lens of African American history, this Additional Documentation presents a more inclusive and historically accurate interpretation of the College Hill Historic District’s significance.

Introduction

The College Hill Historic District in Providence has a long and rich association with the city’s African American community. For the two centuries between 1770 and 1970, the College Hill neighborhood had a proportionately greater concentration of African Americans in its population than prevailed in the city as a whole. The oldest extant properties on College Hill have strong associations with people of African descent, both enslaved and free. Beginning in the late 18th century, Providence’s rapid urban and industrial growth attracted African American migrants from the declining commercial and maritime center of Newport, from the increasingly less viable agricultural communities in southern Rhode Island, and from the American South and the Caribbean. People of African descent within the district formed families, established religious and mutual aid organizations, and rented and owned their own properties. They worked in a range of jobs, including self-employment, though their presence as servants in the homes of College Hill’s well-to-do white residents was remarkably long-lived, coupled as it has historically been with a lack of industrial opportunity for people of color in a heavily industrialized city. Despite the recurring encroachment on historic African American settlement areas, buildings survive in the College Hill Historic District that attest to their domestic and working lives, as well as their spiritual and civic engagement, from the mid-18th century forward.

People of African descent have lived and worked on College Hill since at least 1730, when the state’s first census documented 128 in the city of Providence. They were almost certainly in the city before 1730, though no firm statistics exist to document it. There must have been people of color in either perpetual or indentured servitude in Rhode Island by 1652, when the colonial assembly passed a never-enforced law that all servants, white or black, be freed after ten years of their arrival in Rhode Island. Though early 18th century records indicate greater numbers on the plantations of the so-called

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Narragansett Country and in Newport than in Providence, it is likely that Providence merchants also enslaved Africans.¹

By the last quarter of the 18th century, College Hill had become a center of African American life in Providence. As of 1776, people of African descent comprised 7.7% of the city's overall population, and 9.5% of the population on the East Side—which substantially conforms to what is now delineated as College Hill. By 1830, more than 70% of the city's African American population lived east of the Providence River. Though over time the center of black residence and property ownership shifted both to the west side of the river and to the Lippitt Hill area north of Olney Street (the northern boundary of College Hill), people of color continued to live both in a handful of residential enclaves and dispersed in both white- and black-headed households throughout the district. By the late 1960s the number of “nonwhite” College Hill residents was estimated at roughly two thousand, and they composed more than 15% of the district's population.²

While numerous properties associated with the city's African Americans are extant on College Hill, many have not survived. The expansion of Brown University and the development of its Women's College (Pembroke), highway construction and urban renewal, displacement by other ethnic populations, and waves of gentrification undermined – and in some cases erased evidence of – the African American presence on College Hill. Still, buildings associated in significant ways with people of African descent over the entire historic period exist on College Hill. Houses have survived in which both enslaved and free African Americans lived and worked as cooks, maids, nurses, coachmen, and gardeners from the late 18th century to the mid-20th century. The homes that African American and Cape Verdean people built, owned, and occupied and many more consistently rented to people of color are also relatively prevalent in the district. In fewer numbers are buildings in which African American entrepreneurs worked; they include the 1773 Market House and the houses and businesses that welcomed tourists of color in the 1930s and 1940s. Buildings related to the development of African American institutions, including the Brick Schoolhouse at 24 Meeting Street (1769-70), the Congdon Street Baptist Church (1874-75) and the Portuguese Chapel and Parish House/Sheldon Street Mission (1904), still stand on College Hill. As a group, these properties are a testament to the enduring presence of people of African descent in the neighborhood, and their contributions to its historical development.

¹ Robert J. Cottrol, *The Afro-Yankeers: Providence's Black Community in the Antebellum Era* (Westport, CT, and London: Greenwood Press, 1982): 16; Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942): 30 n., 129, cited in Douglas Harper, “Slavery in the North” website, <http://slavenorth.com/rhodeisland.htm>.

² Providence City Plan Commission with Providence Preservation Society and Department of Housing and Urban Development, *College Hill: A Demonstration Study of Historic Area Renewal*, 2d ed. (Providence: City Plan Commission, 1967): 86 (hereafter cited as *College Hill*).

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African Americans on College Hill before 1800

Rhode Islanders engaged extensively in the economy built around slavery, participating in the slave trade, profiting from plantation-based slavery, and, later, manufacturing goods that sourced materials produced by slaves and that catered to slave markets. Rhode Island merchants had engaged in the triangular trade since the early years of the 18th century: after learning that rum distilled in Rhode Island was valuable currency on the African coast, they sent vessels laden with it to Africa, exchanged rum for Africans, and sold them into slavery in the Caribbean in exchange for slave-produced molasses, the chief ingredient of rum. Rhode Island vessels undertook nearly six hundred slaving voyages between 1709 and 1807, constituting about 60% of all such voyages from North American ports. The trade from Rhode Island peaked between 1797 and 1807, when the U.S. Congress abolished the transatlantic slave trade; of 202 slaving voyages in that decade, fifty-nine left from Bristol, Newport, and Providence.³

Rhode Island not only supplied enslaved Africans to the West Indies but also served as “the commissary of the Atlantic plantation complex.” The massive plantations of the Narragansett region, including North Kingstown, South Kingstown, and Charlestown, supplied all manner of commodities to planters in the Caribbean and the American South, in particular livestock, hay, dairy products, beef, barrel parts, and salt cod, “the staple protein sources of West Indian slaves.”⁴ Within this coastal region up to thirty-five families operated at least twenty-five plantations that ranged up to 5,760 acres, all of which were worked by enslaved Africans and Native Americans. At least twenty-two Rhode Island planters had ten or more enslaved persons each.⁵ Because of this provisioning economy, people of African descent were more prevalent in Rhode Island than anywhere else in the region: while they were 2% to 3% of the population of other New England states between 1730 and 1750, they were 10% of Rhode Island’s population. The 1784 passage of Rhode Island’s gradual emancipation act and the Revolutionary War’s effect on coastal trade combined to trigger a decline in enslaved people in the Narragansett region from a peak of 703 in 1774 to 283 by 1790.⁶ Many newly freed people and fugitives moved north to Providence, either to work in the urbanizing economy or on whaling or trading vessels. Moreover, through the colonial period Newport had been not only a hub of the slave trade but the favorite summer resort of planters from the American South. Through these economic and social connections, Providence merchants forged an intimacy with the southern plantation economy that persisted in the industrial era as cotton textile manufacturing came to dominate Rhode Island business activity.

³ William H. Robinson Jr., “Blacks in Rhode Island: A Brief Historical Record” (manuscript prepared for Ethnic Rhode Island pamphlet series): 4; Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade, 1700-1807* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981): 89, 241-85.

⁴ *Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice* (Providence: Brown University, 2006): 11.

⁵ Robert K. Fitts, *Inventing New England’s Slave Paradise: Master/Slave Relations in Eighteenth-Century Narragansett, Rhode Island* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998): 13, 25, 73, 85.

⁶ Cottrol, *Afro-Yankees*: 16; Christian M. McBurney, “Cato Pearce’s Memoir: A Rhode Island Slave Narrative,” *Rhode Island History* 67, 1 (Winter/Spring 2009): 4. See also Joanne Pope Melish, introduction to William J. Brown, *The Life of William J. Brown of Providence, R. I., with Personal Recollections of Incidents in Rhode Island* (1883; reprint, Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2006): xix.

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By 1774, when the population of people of color in the Narragansett region began to drop, Providence was home to 303 people of African descent and sixty-eight Native Americans. Only forty-six of the 303 African Americans lived in households of their own; the rest lived in the households of whites.⁷ In 1776, people of African descent were 9.5% of the total population of the East Side of Providence and 5.0% of the West Side population. Almost a quarter of all East Side families (101 of 431, or 23.4%) had people of color in their households, almost certainly working as enslaved, indentured, or free domestic servants. Providence’s 1776 census counted eleven households headed by African Americans and one Native American household.⁸ The 1800 census lists 117 African American households and 173 white households in which people of color were living in Providence; at least 107 of those white households were on College Hill.

Of the seventy-four surviving dwellings on College Hill built before 1800, at least twenty-two are associated with the city’s African American population, and these twenty-two were all households headed by whites. Thus, for most of the colonial and early Federal periods, the presence of African Americans on College Hill is manifest largely in the households of whites for whom they worked. The earliest known record of African Americans in white Providence households dates to around 1740, by which time Stephen Hopkins—ten-time governor of Rhode Island, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and chief justice of the colonial superior court in the 1750s—had begun to acquire people for slaves. When he manumitted “a certain Negro Man named Saint Jago” in 1772, Hopkins stated that the 33-year-old man had lived with him “in the Quality of a Servant, or Slave, from his infancy til now.” Saint Jago was probably living with Hopkins in 1742-43 when he bought and moved into a home at the base of Hopkins Street. Built in 1707 and the oldest surviving dwelling in the district, the house was moved twice after Hopkins’s death and now stands at 15 Hopkins Street (1707, 1743; Photo 1). Saint Jago was one of five enslaved people in Hopkins’s household when he made his first will, in 1760. He was freed by 1772, yet in 1774 six other enslaved people were living in Hopkins’s household. Among them were Primus, Adam, Prince, Bonner, and Fibbo. (Fibbo was probably the Phebe Hopkins who married Bonner Brown, enslaved to Moses Brown, in 1762. Bonner was their son.) A birthright Quaker, Hopkins was disowned by his Smithfield Monthly Meeting after he refused to manumit an unnamed African American woman in his household, and his second will of 1781 calls for freeing the people he enslaved when they came of age. Hopkins died in 1785, and his heirs freed Bonner and Primus in 1788.⁹

⁷ Cottrol, *Afro-Yankees*: 18, 28.

⁸ The location of only one of these households is known, that of William Cesar. A free man of color in 1774, Cesar lived in a house at the corner of Hewes and North Main Street, just west of the College Hill district; it has not survived. An unattributed drawing of the gambrel-roofed frame house is included in *Creative Survival: The Providence Black Community in the 19th Century* (Providence: Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, n.d.): 38. Cesar’s house is listed with at least four others owned by people of color in *Houses of Providence, 1779* (Mss 9001-H), Rhode Island Historical Society (hereafter cited as RIHS).

⁹ Cherry Fletcher Bamberg and Donald R. Hopkins, “The Slaves of Gov. Stephen Hopkins,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 166 (January 2012): 11-27 and (April 2012): 135-48. St. Jago often went by Sant or Santealger Hopkins.

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The second oldest house on College Hill, 8 Burr's Lane (ca. 1720; Photo 2), stood on the north side of Star Street until it was moved to its current site at some point in the mid-20th century. The house was built for Joseph Whipple (1662-1746) and ultimately descended to his grandson Joseph (ca. 1734-1816), whose household in 1790 included one slave. (Whipple's wife, Susan Mawney, had inherited an enslaved girl named Rhoda.) By 1798, according to Providence historian Henry Chace, Joseph Whipple owned a house on the north side of Star Street that was tenanted by unnamed "Negroes."¹⁰

The third oldest surviving dwelling in the district, the Benjamin Cushing Sr. house at 40 North Court Street (ca. 1737), also had African American occupants. Cushing (1706-85) bought a lot at the corner of North Main and North Court Streets in 1737, three years after his marriage to Elizabeth Antrum (1708-61), and built his house soon after; the dwelling was moved a short distance to its current location around 1869.¹¹ In 1770 Cushing manumitted his enslaved man Cesar, and the 1776 census shows him with two people of African descent in his home. Cushing's 1773 will bequeathed the property to his son Nathaniel. His namesake son, Benjamin Cushing Jr. (1735-86), had probably just completed his house next door at 38 North Court Street (ca. 1771). Cushing willed to his married daughter Ann Rawson "my Negro Woman that now lives with her" and to his son Benjamin an enslaved man named Prince. In 1778 Benjamin Cushing Jr. freed an enslaved man named Prime, possibly the same man his father left to him, and his 1790s account book documents payments to at least three men of color—including William Cesar, who may have been the Cesar his father had freed in 1770. In 1790 Nathaniel Cushing is shown with one person of color in his household, and the 1800 census shows Benjamin Jr.'s widow next door with one person of color in her household.¹² African Americans also lived in the house of physician Jabez Bowen (1696-1770) at 39 Bowen Street (1739; Photo 3). In his 1767 will Bowen left to his second wife Hannah "one Cow, also my Negroe Woman Named Jenny, with her Child named Dina" but bequeathed "Full and compleat freedom" to his "faithful Negroe Man named Fortune," to whom he also left a twenty-acre tract on Bowen's farm in Gloucester, Rhode Island.¹³

There were conflicting views of slavery among whites in 18th-century Providence, however, as illustrated by the prominent Brown family. In 1736, James Brown (1698-1739) became the first Providence merchant to undertake an African slaving voyage, and at the time of his death, four enslaved

¹⁰ Henry R. Chace, *Owners and Occupants of the Lots, Houses and Shops in the Town of Providence Rhode Island in 1798 Located on the Maps of the Highways of that Date / Also Owners or Occupants of Houses in the Compact Part of Providence in 1759 Showing the Location and in Whose Names They are to be Found on the Map of 1798* (Providence: Livermore & Knight Co. for the author, 1914).

¹¹ On the house at 40 North Court Street see the Mary A. Gowdey Library of House Histories, Providence Preservation Society website, <http://gowdey.ppsri.org>.

¹² Cushing's manumissions are in Providence Town Records 19:181, 19:329, and the Benjamin Cushing Jr. account book is in Mss 9001-C, RIHS. His will is online at Ancestry.com. The estate administration accounts for his widow list payments of two months to Amariah Lilly for boarding "Mingo," who might have been the sole African American occupant of the house shown in the 1800 census; Mingo was a common name among both enslaved and free African Americans in the colonial era.

¹³ This Jabez Bowen was the great-uncle of jurist and lieutenant governor Jabez Bowen (1739-1815), whose Market Square house has not survived.

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people were part of his household on Main Street (not extant).¹⁴ James Brown's sons Nicholas (1729-91), Joseph (1733-85), John (1736-1803) and Moses (1738-1836), were business partners and through their firm, Nicholas Brown & Company, jointly owned three enslaved Africans, who were named Yarrow, Tom and Newport. Joseph, who lived at 50 South Main Street (1774; Photo 4), enslaved at least one woman, named Phillis, whom his heirs freed in 1799. John had two people of color in his household in 1776, ten years before his 52 Power Street house (1786-88; Photo 5) was built, two in his 1790 household, and four in his 1800 household. While the censuses show that these people of color were not enslaved by Brown, it is nonetheless true that he adamantly supported the slave trade and slavery. In 1795, a year after the passage of the Slave Trade Act, which outlawed the transport of slaves from the United States to any foreign country and made it illegal for American citizens to outfit a ship for the purpose of importing slaves, John Brown sent a ship, the *Hope*, to West Africa, to pick up human cargo. The *Hope* then sailed to Cuba, where all 198 Africans who survived the journey were sold. John Brown was tried for the crime; the ship was impounded, but Brown was acquitted.¹⁵ He was also accused of illegally holding men in bondage, though no evidence has been found that charges were ever brought.¹⁶

In 1773, after the death of his wife, a deeply mournful Moses Brown began attending Quaker meeting and changed his view of servitude. From his uncle Obadiah he had inherited the enslaved man Benno (probably Bonner), and his household included Cudge (or Cudjo, also once in his uncle's household), Cesar, and Eve, whom Obadiah had left to his daughter Mary, Moses Brown's sister-in-law and a resident of his Main Street home (not extant). In November 1773, Moses Brown manumitted Bonner, Cudge, and Cesar as well as Prime, Pero, Pegg, and Phillis, the last "born in my family," and he surrendered his share of the three enslaved people whom he jointly owned with his brothers. At the same time Mary Brown freed Eve.¹⁷ In 1789, Moses Brown helped found the Providence Abolition Society.¹⁸

Moses Brown's slaves Cudge and Phillis had married in 1768, and lived in a house "towards the north end of Olney Street, owned by Mr. Brown, where he kept his teams." After Cudge was freed he bought land on Olney Street from Brown and another man and began to build a house that was destroyed in a gale before it was finished. When Cudge Brown died about 1810, Moses Brown had not made out or recorded the deed for the land and subsequently sold almost all of it to another party. Cudge Brown's son Noah prevailed upon Moses Brown, who gave a strip of land ten feet wide between what he sold and

¹⁴ Charles Rappleye, *Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006): 10.

¹⁵ John Brown's venture with the slaving ship *Hope* is amply documented in numerous sources. For a brief summary, see *Slavery and Justice: 22*.

¹⁶See David Howell to Moses Brown, 14 May 1789: "Liverpool, claimed as a slave by your Brother John will hand you this He says he was taken & carried into Bedford in a prize & from there brought into this State as a Slave Since the Law prohibiting the importation of slaves. If this be true he is entitled to his freedom. I pray you to write to your Brother & enquire why he hold him & to inform him of the complaint[.]" Moses Brown Papers, ser. 1, Mss 313, RIHS. The 1790 census shows a Liverpool Brown in Providence with one white and seven people of color in his household.

¹⁷ See John Wood Sweet, *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003): 73-74; Rappleye, *Sons of Providence*: 131-33.

¹⁸ The organization's full name was the Providence Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, for the relief of Persons unlawfully held in Bondage, and for Improving the Conditions of the African Race. *Slavery and Justice*: 21.

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the second parcel Cudge had acquired. Here, at 62 (later 74) Olney Street (not extant), Noah Brown and his sons William J. and George U. Brown lived until both sons died, in 1885 and 1889 respectively.¹⁹

Other manumissions came after the war. In his 1790 will, John Jenckes, who lived on College Street, freed “my black Servant Woman, named Sophia,” who had been enslaved by Jenckes since at least 1776; at that time Jenckes had six people of color in his household of seventeen persons. The 1790 census shows one enslaved person, probably Sophia, in Jenckes’s household. In his will Jenckes left his son Joseph the lot and house at 43 Benefit Street (1774; Photo 6), which John had built and in which Joseph was then living. Joseph Jenckes had people of color in his household through 1810.²⁰

In 1789, during the same week that the Providence Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was formally organized, printer and *Providence Gazette* publisher John Carter, who had issued antislavery pamphlets at the behest of Moses Brown and had aired the slavery dispute between Moses and his brother John in his newspaper, manumitted Ingow and Fanny, who lived and worked in his household and print shop at 21 Meeting Street (1772; Photo 7).²¹ Nonetheless, according to census records, one enslaved person remained in the Carter household in 1790.

By 1790, 475 people of color lived Providence, 427 of them free people and 48 enslaved, the majority living in two census districts on the East Side: the district north of present-day College Street included 93 free and 11 enslaved people of color, while the district to the south included 208 free and 20 enslaved people. Throughout Providence, 278 people of color lived in households headed by black people in 1790, while 148 lived in households headed by white people.²² Clearly many more free than enslaved people were living in white households. Their names are largely lost to researchers—censuses provided names only for heads of household before 1850—though wills and family histories identify some of these live-in domestic servants. Many free people of color whom censuses show in their own households may well have begun their working lives as residents in the households of whites. Richard Cozzens (ca. 1749-1829) may have acquired property on the south side of Benevolent Street around 1790; Chace’s map of householders shows him there in 1798. Cozzens is known to have worked as a cook for Thomas Poynton Ives around this time; it is possible he lived in the Ives household for some years before acquiring his own home. Cozzens was free when he enlisted for Revolutionary service in 1778; he served as a drummer and fifer in the First, Eighth, and Fifth Rhode Island Regiments until he was mustered out at Saratoga in 1783.²³ Soon after returning to Providence Cozzens married Hannah Robinson, who had previously been enslaved.²⁴ By 1801, Hannah had died, and Cozzens married Julia

¹⁹ *Life of William J. Brown*: 2, 16.

²⁰ William B. Browne, comp., *Genealogy of the Jenks Family of America* (Concord, NH: Rumford Press, 1952): 61-62, 119.

²¹ Rappleye, *Sons of Providence*: 260; Sweet, *Bodies Politic*: 444 n. 24.

²² The count of people of color undertaken for this survey totaled 426; Snow’s count was 428.

²³ See *An Historical Inquiry Concerning the Attempt to Raise a Regiment of Slaves in Rhode Island during the War of the Revolution*. Rhode Island Historical Tracts No. 10 (Providence: Sidney S. Rider, 1880): ix-xix, v, 63-64, 68; Robinson, “Blacks in Rhode Island”: 20-25; and Sweet, *Bodies Politic*: 208, 220.

²⁴ Ruth Wallis Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001): 125-29.

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Kinnicutt Spears. At his death Cozzens left his 57 Benevolent Street property (not extant) to his five sons and to the use of his wife, who lived there until she died in 1859.

Other people of color—Anthony Kinnicutt (the father of Julia Cozzens), Bristol Olney, London Spear, Henry Taber, and Prime Hopkins among them—owned property on College Hill by the end of the 18th century. Olney was taxed on property on the south side of Olney Street in 1782 and, according to Chace, rented a house on the north side of the same street in 1798. Spear and Taber lived on Benevolent Street, and Kinnicutt is said to have owned a house and lot on Power Street in 1764. None of these early houses has survived.²⁵ The 117 black households listed in the 1800 census contained 406 persons, about 62% of the 656 African Americans in the city.

Before 1800, people of African descent were employed not only in and around the homes of Providence's white elite but also on the wharves, ships, and businesses they owned. In the 1770s, Joseph Congdon hired men of color for his saltworks, while Stephen Hopkins hired men to work in his shipyard and paid African American women for boarding some of these workers. Both Obadiah Brown and Edward White employed black men in their spermaceti works in the 1760s and 1770s. Beginning in the early 1790s, the firm of Almy and Brown hired people of color to spin yarn and make baskets.²⁶ Anthony Kinnicutt managed an eating establishment on an unnamed wharf, while Lucy McKenzie ran a catering shop on Meeting Street between Canal and North Main Streets (not extant).²⁷ In 1770 at least five men—Pero, enslaved to Henry Paget; “Mary Young’s Negro Man,” “Earle’s Negro,” “Abraham,” and “Mingow Negro,” probably all but the last held in servitude—helped build the College Edifice (1770) (now University Hall), the first building of what became Brown University.²⁸ The only other known African American work site that has survived from this period is the Market House (1773 et seq.; Photo 8), though their presence cannot be documented before 1815, when stall licenses were first issued.²⁹

African Americans in late-18th-century Providence created institutions to serve their community. The Providence Free African Union Society, a mutual aid organization, was organized in 1794, and at least five men who lived on College Hill—London Spear, William Stober, Bonner Brown, Cudge Brown, and Bristol Olney—were members. The society’s effort to finance an expedition to resettle people of color in Sierra Leone failed because the Providence Abolition Society declined to provide the requisite letters of

²⁵ See Henry C. Dorr, “The Planting and Growth of Providence,” *Rhode Island Historical Tracts* 15 (Providence: Stanley S. Rider, 1882): 177-78. On Bonner Brown’s house, see Nicholas Brown to Moses Brown, 7 August 1809, Moses Brown Papers, Box 8C, RIHS. On Kinnicutt see *Creative Survival*: 29.

²⁶ See Joseph Congdon Accounts (Mss 9001-C); Obadiah Brown Papers (Mss 315); and Almy and Brown Records (Mss 29), RIHS; *Slavery and Justice*: 12-13.

²⁷ McKenzie is said to have specialized in oyster stew and making cakes for Brown students and the city’s elite; her shop was at what was called Vinton’s Corner, the granite block at the corner of Market Square and North Main Street. Chace stated that her house and shop were owned by Patience Page. See “Report of Librarian and Cabinet Keeper,” in *Proceedings of the Rhode Island Historical Society, 1892-93* (Providence, 1893): 68, and *Providence Journal*, 3 January 1870, 2.

²⁸ *Slavery and Justice*: 25.

²⁹ *Creative Survival*: 47. See also Accounts with African Americans, 1774-1805, Moses Brown Papers (Mss 930), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, Amherst, MA.

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endorsement.³⁰ No building associated with the Providence Free African Union Society is known to survive. Similarly, no building associated with the 1797 founding of Providence’s Hiram Lodge Number Three, the second oldest African American Masonic chapter in the nation, founded with the assistance of Boston’s Prince Hall Masons, is known to survive (though the residence at 132 Benefit Street [1853], which is extant, was occupied by the group from 1927 to 1938).

Two early Providence churches, founded and patronized principally by white people yet also associated with African Americans, survive on College Hill. One is the First Baptist Meetinghouse at 75 North Main Street (1774-75). First Baptist might have been unusual in the extent to which it welcomed African American congregants and members, though, as in most churches organized by whites, black congregants sat in a separate area until 1818, when the church dismantled its “Negroes Gallery.”³¹ First Baptist records document African American members in 1764, the year its first membership roll was compiled, and after a religious revival in 1774-75 seventeen of the 123 new members of the church were of African descent. During the pastorate of Stephen Gano (1792-1828), First Baptist helped fund the construction of the African Union Meeting House and School, built between 1819 and 1821 at the northeast corner of Congdon and Meeting Streets (not extant), provided Sunday School teachers for the new church, and later supported the ministry of black Freewill Baptist John W. Lewis. Another church, the Episcopal King’s Church, later St. John’s Church and the Cathedral of St. John, at 265 North Main Street (1810), also carries an association with people of color: slaveholders and enslaved people worshipped here, and its burial ground contains a slate marker “in memory of three respectable Black Persons, Phillis, Rose and Fannie Chace, who served in the Family of Samuel Chace Esq.” No dates of death are inscribed on the marker, but Rose, “negro servant of Samuel Chace,” is shown in vital records as having died on 19 December 1801. Their enslaver was probably the Samuel Chace (1722-1802) buried in the same cemetery, who is shown with five people of color in his household in 1774, three enslaved persons in 1790, and one person of color in 1800.

Another colonial building with an institutional association to Providence African Americans is the former State House at 150 Benefit Street (1760-62, 1850-51, 1867-68, 1906). This building was the site of numerous debates among the General Assembly on the moral and practical questions about ending slavery and the slave trade. It was in this building that legislators passed the 1784 act “authorizing the manumission of negroes, mulattoes, and others, and for the gradual abolition of slavery.” The act freed enslaved people of color born on or after 1 March 1784 but obliged town councils to reimburse those who enslaved the mothers of these children for their support and education until they came of age—women at eighteen, according to the law, and men at twenty-one. The act also permitted enslavers to free any person up to the age of forty if town councils certified that they were healthy. In the same building, legislators convened in October 1785 to amend the gradual abolition law by absolving town councils of financial responsibility, thereby placing the obligation of support of newly freed children on those who enslaved their mothers; increasing the age of females’ ultimate freedom to twenty-one; and

³⁰ *Creative Survival*: 53; James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997): 180-81.

³¹ Sweet, *Bodies Politic*: 347.

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lowering the age at which enslavers might manumit enslaved people to thirty. Only by freeing enslaved mothers could an enslaver remove his financial responsibility, and the amendment effectively ended oversight of the disposition of the children seemingly freed by the 1784 act. Manumissions of enslaved people of color are believed to have increased because of the complex legislation.³²

Late Federal and Antebellum College Hill

In the first half of the 19th century, the institution of slavery remained intertwined with Rhode Island's economy, despite the passage of the Gradual Emancipation Act in 1784. African Americans on College Hill continued to be employed in large numbers in white households, due in part to employment discrimination, though there were notable examples of entrepreneurship. Three African American residential enclaves emerged on College Hill in this period, and numerous households headed by black people – some property owners, some renters – were scattered throughout the district. Between 1825 and 1855 the population of color in Providence remained about the same in terms of absolute numbers, but fell in terms of share of population; there were 1,414 African Americans in the city in 1825 (8.9% of the city's population) and 1,390 in 1855 (2.9%). Between 1855 and 1865, though, the number of African Americans counted in the city rose from 1,390 to 1,711.³³ Many African Americans born in southern states moved to College Hill in this period, marking the beginnings of the so-called Great Migration. As in the 18th century, African Americans on College Hill founded organizations, established churches, and created institutions to support their community.

In the early 1800s, the Providence economy shifted away from trade with the East and West Indies, irreparably hurt by the embargo of 1809 and the ensuing War of 1812, toward the production of textiles, mostly of cotton. By 1815, there were 100 mills in the State; while few were located in Providence, which lacked water privileges, Providence investors provided capital, technical knowledge, and managerial oversight.³⁴ The city continued to carry on a robust coastal trade – and, through the success of the mills, continued to benefit economically from slavery. According to at least one account, Moses Brown founded the cotton goods firm of Almy and Brown in 1789 to “wean” Rhode Island merchants from the slave trade,³⁵ but the firm used slave-produced cotton first from Surinam and then from the American South, an irony not lost on Brown's brother John. “In effect, Moses Brown, in seeking to disentangle Rhode Islanders from one aspect of slavery, ensured their more thorough entanglement in another,” John wrote in a newspaper that year. “. . . I can recollect no one place at present from whence the cotton can come, but from the labour of the slaves.”³⁶ Moreover, most of the cotton purchased for

³² Cottrol, *Afro-Yankees*: 31-33; Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and “Race” in New England, 1780-1860* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1998): 71-73.

³³ In 1855 Snow stated that 431 of Providence's 33,682 native-born residents had been born in the South, 193 in Maryland, 70 in Virginia, 46 in Delaware, 39 in Georgia, and 29 in the District of Columbia. He did not analyze these figures by race.

³⁴ Wm McKenzie Woodward and Edward F. Sanderson, *Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources* (Providence, RI: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1986): 49.

³⁵ *Slavery and Justice*: 26.

³⁶ *Slavery and Justice*: 32.

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Rhode Island mills was made into “negro cloth,” a coarse and inexpensive cotton or cotton-wool fabric that plantation owners made into pants, coats, and gowns to clothe enslaved people.³⁷ By the time Frederick Law Olmsted visited the South in 1853, he noted that the cloth was “mostly made, especially for this purpose, in Providence, R. I.”³⁸ Rhode Island textile mills also produced blankets for enslaved people and bags to hold the cotton they picked. By 1850, nearly 80% of all Rhode Island woolen production was negro cloth, and between 1800 and 1870 nearly a third of all textile mills that ever operated in the state manufactured it. This persistent reliance on slavery, abolitionist Theodore Weld argued, was reason enough to form an antislavery society in Rhode Island, which might “cleanse” its past connection to “the guilt and infamy of the African slave trade,” the use of slave-grown cotton, and the customary welcome it extended to southern slaveholders each summer.³⁹

Rhode Island’s economy was transformed by industrialization in the 19th century, but African Americans were largely excluded from factory work both before and after the Civil War. Consequently, the same occupations open to them in the colonial and early Federal periods were the ones they occupied in large measure in the antebellum decades—barbering, teaming, catering and cooking, laboring on the wharves, shipping as crew on coastal vessels, and service in homes, stores, and eating establishments.

There were some notable exceptions, including the people of color who had stalls inside, outside, and around the Market House (1773 et seq.; Photo 8). In May 1815, George McCarty (1774-1863), a native of Montserrat, placed an advertisement in the *Rhode-Island American* thanking those who had patronized his refreshment stand “since he had resided here” and those who intervened to restore to him “his former stand in the Market-Place,” in the northwest corner of the Market House. McCarty, who lived on Meeting Street from 1832 to about 1841, was among the most prominent people of color in antebellum Providence.⁴⁰ He petitioned for the right of property-owning people of color to vote and of children of color to attend integrated public schools.⁴¹ McCarty was not the only African American managing a business in this area: African American butcher George Thomas – said to have been manumitted before 1800 by Jeremiah Olney, commander of the African American companies of the First Rhode Island Regiment during the Revolution – kept a stall,⁴² and Charles G. Brown ran a

³⁷ The production of negro cloth is believed to have begun at Peace Dale Manufacturing Company in South Kingstown, owned by the Quaker and abolitionist Hazard family.

³⁸ Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States; with Remarks on Their Economy* (London: Sampson Low, Son and Co.; New York: Dix and Edwards, 1856): 112.

³⁹ *Slavery and Justice: 27-28*; Myron O. Stachiw, “‘For the Sake of Commerce’: Slavery, Antislavery, and Northern Industry,” in David Roediger and Martin H. Blatt, eds., *The Meaning of Slavery in the North* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998): 35-36, 39.

⁴⁰ In 1844 McCarty lived in an unnumbered house on Star Street.

⁴¹ *Rhode-Island American*, 2 May 1815: 3; *Creative Survival*: 47, 63; *Providence Republican Herald*, 25 January 1840: 3, and 10 February 1841: 3; *Liberator*, 27 April and 11 May 1833 and 15 August 1835; see also Julian S. Rammelkamp, “The Providence Negro Community, 1820-1842,” *Rhode Island History* 7, 1 (January 1948): 23. What McCarty meant by having been restored to the Market House is unclear, but in 1832 his “shop,” where he then sold second-hand clothing, was vandalized. Both incidents hint at racial animus. See *Rhode-Island American*: 28 December 1832, 1.

⁴² *Creative Survival*: 47. Thomas married Hannah Hammond in Providence in 1811; she had been a member of First Baptist Church at various times since 1805. Both had died by 1830. Less is known about other African Americans with Market

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confectionary and bathing-house out of his residence at 11 College Street (not extant), just east of the market, from 1852 to 1863. In August 1862, he hosted a meeting at his home at which men of color discussed recruiting African Americans to serve in the Sixth Regiment of Rhode Island Volunteers.⁴³

Most men and women of color on College Hill in this period, however, did domestic work in white households. Some lived in those households while others maintained their own homes, in some cases acquiring property after years of domestic work. In 1855, 2,194 servants worked in the City of Providence, the largest number of them—633, or 28.8%—in Ward 2, which included the area east of the Providence River and south of Church and Lloyd Streets. Statistician Edwin Snow determined that a total of 1,510 Providence households included servants: more than 76% of those had one servant, almost 15% employed two, and 9% employed three or more. Snow counted 309 families in Ward 2 and 163 families in Ward 1 (east of the Providence River and north of Church and Lloyd Streets) with servants—cooks, maids, nurses, coachmen, gardeners, and housemen—in their households. Most, he stated, were “of foreign parentage,” but an appreciable number were African American, some of whom remained in certain families for remarkably long periods.⁴⁴

The longest record of service among free African Americans on College Hill was surely that compiled by three generations of the Lippitt family—Dorcas, Patience, and Ann Celia—who worked alongside other African American servants at cotton manufacturer Sullivan Dorr’s 109 Benefit Street (1809; Photo 9) home. According to her obituary, Dorcas Lippitt (1758-1845) came to Providence around 1808 to work for a family in whose service she remained for thirty-seven years.⁴⁵ The obituary does not name the family, but it was almost certainly that of Sullivan Dorr. Sullivan Dorr Jr. and Thomas Wilson Dorr witnessed Dorcas’s will; when she died, most of her personal estate had been invested in shares of the Blackstone Canal Bank, of which Sullivan Dorr was an owner. Born about 1811, Patience Lippitt (Dorcas’s granddaughter) is shown in the Dorr household in censuses between 1850 and 1880 and was surely working there earlier; an 1884 obituary for Sullivan Dorr Jr. noted that one of the family’s servants was an “old lady” who had come to work there sixty years earlier. In his 1869 will, Sullivan Dorr Jr. left \$1,000 to Patience Lippitt, “now in my service if she shall be living at my decease.” Ann Celia (Patience’s daughter) appears in the Dorr household in census records from 1850 to 1870. By 1867, but possibly as early as 1850, Patience and Ann Celia Lippitt had acquired a house on Vermont

House stalls before the war, including Abraham Gibbs, Simon Manuel, and Peter Waters. Manuel, listed as head of a household of eight people of color in the 1820 census, was among those who incorporated the African American Christ’s Church on the West Side in 1841-42. See Christ Church (Episcopal) Records (Mss 9001-C), RIHS.

⁴³ *Life of Brown*: 109. Born about 1810 in Rhode Island, Charles G. Brown lived on Benevolent Street in the 1830s, in the rear of 94 Benefit Street in 1841, on Arsenal Street in the 1840s, and at 11 College Street from at least 1852 through 1863. He is listed as running a bath-house at an unnumbered location on College Street in the 1836 directory; from 1841 to 1847 he worked as a confectioner and cake maker at his homes at 94 rear Benefit Street and on Arsenal Street and at 63 South Main Street. Directories in 1852 and 1854 show Brown as both a bathing-house proprietor and a cake baker.

⁴⁴ Edwin M. Snow, comp., *Census of the City of Providence Taken in July, 1855*. 2d ed. City Document No. 6 (Providence: Knowles, Anthony & Co., 1856): 5.

⁴⁵ Warwick was the place of origin of most Providence African Americans bearing this surname: in 1774 five white Lippitt households held twenty-nine of the 189 enslaved people living in that town.

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Street, north of College Hill, and lived there at least part of the time.⁴⁶ When she died in 1890, Patience Lippitt left her estate to Ann Celia, but by 1900 Ann Celia was boarding in the family of African American waiter Herbert Ballou, first on Transit Street and then at 424-426 Benefit Street (1829-52), where Lippitt was living when she died in 1916.

Just as the Lippitts managed to become property owners through long-term service to one family, so too did George Waterman (ca. 1799-1882). George Waterman is said to have come to Providence in 1821 to work as a coachman for Edward Carrington (1775-1843) at the recommendation of Carrington's "old colored cook," apparently related to Waterman. Carrington owned more than twenty trading vessels, had been prominent in the China trade since 1801, and was the first American consul in Canton, China. He returned to Providence before the War of 1812, married, and moved into a newly built house at 66 Williams Street (1810, 1811-12). The 1850 census shows Carrington's namesake son in the house with his family and eight domestic servants, six of them African American. George Waterman was listed among them in both 1850 and 1860, as well as in his own household at 56 (earlier 50) Benevolent Street (not extant), a property associated with him from 1832 forward in city directories. Waterman married Lucy Martin about 1825, and a Providence newspaper article asserted that Carrington Jr. built the Benevolent Street house for Waterman at that time. Waterman's obituary described the nature of his work:

He was the body servant of Mr. Carrington; he was even more than that—he was his trusted agent on many important occasions. He was constantly with Mr. Carrington during his herculean labors, lasting through so many years, in building the Blackstone Canal. If Mr. Carrington had a contractor or gang of men to be paid off between here and Worcester, George was started off on horseback with the money in his pocket; if a note was to be paid at bank, George took a check or the funds and did it; if one of Mr. Carrington's ships was signaled down the Bay, George was started off on horseback to Warwick Neck to bring the dispatches; if one of those famous social entertainments was given by Mr. Carrington which his friends enjoyed so much, George's genial face was seen and pleasantly recognized by all the guests, and whenever any hour of trial came to Mr. Carrington, George was sure to be near his person.⁴⁷

One newspaper account states that Waterman retired from Carrington's service in 1862, but the 1870 census still lists him as a coachman with \$1,800 in real property. Lucy Waterman (1801-80) was known in Providence as "the famous cake maker, and it used to be thought that a fashionable wedding could not take place without [her] services."

⁴⁶ In the 1850 census Patience is listed in both the Dorr household and in her own. Comparing the order of enumeration in that census to the 1852 city directory indicates that this second household was in the Nash's Lane/North Main Street section, north of College Hill. Thus the Lippitt house might have been on what was later Vermont Street by 1850, and the two women might have moved to Vermont Street permanently after Sullivan Dorr's death in 1858.

⁴⁷ *Providence Journal* quoted in Jan Armstrong, "A Community of Spirit: People of Color in Providence, Rhode Island, 1870-1950" (Manuscript, RIBHS, 1998), unpaginated. See also Waterman's obituary in *Providence Evening Bulletin*, 4 March 1882.

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The household of Thomas Poynton Ives (1769-1835) also employed people of color. Ives came to Providence in 1782 as a clerk for Nicholas Brown and Company and in 1792 married Nicholas's daughter, Hope. In the same year, he became a partner in the firm, which soon became known as Brown and Ives. In 1806, Ives built a mansion at 66 Power Street (1806; Photo 10) with an outbuilding that housed servants, horses, harness, and a laundry. By 1810 Ives's household included four people of color (in 1880, his widowed daughter-in-law employed and housed seven servants at this home, two of them African American). Among them may have been Revolutionary War veteran Richard Cozzens, a cook in Ives's family in 1799, and Cudge Brown, the grandfather of memoirist William J. Brown. Cozzens and Brown maintained their own households while in Ives's service, as did James W. Gaines, in service as a coachman to Ives's widow and son Moses Brown Ives between 1844 and 1860. Gaines lived at 66 Power Street until about 1857, and by 1860 he had acquired his own house and lot at 54 Benevolent Street (not extant), where he and his family remained until he died in 1898.⁴⁸

Similarly, Francis Jackson was listed in the 1850 census both within a group of black households on Meeting Street (none extant) and as a waiter in the 64 Angell Street (1794; Photo 11) home of Matthew and Abby Wheaton Watson. In 1850 and 1860 the Watson household included three African American domestics. In her 1872 will, Abby Watson directed her estate to provide an annual allowance to Jackson and his wife and left individual bequests to Jackson; to Susan Roberts (another African American domestic in her employ); and to the Providence Association for the Benefit of Colored Children at 20 Olive Street (1849-50; Photo 17) (see below).

Another notable career in service was that of Virginia-born Robert Holloway (about 1819-1877), who worked for General Ambrose E. Burnside (1824-1881) over the course of nearly three decades, including at Burnside's house at 314 Benefit Street (1866). According to one newspaper account, the two men met in New Mexico in 1850, where Burnside, a recent West Point graduate, had been assigned to protect mail routes. Holloway accompanied Burnside when he was sent east in 1852 to serve at Fort Adams in Newport and when he reenlisted after the attack on Fort Sumter in 1861, organizing the First Rhode Island Infantry. Burnside took Holloway with him when he and the regiment moved to the District of Columbia. At the first Battle of Bull Run in late July 1861, Confederate troops captured Holloway and put him to work as a prison cook. Burnside appealed to Confederate officials to release

⁴⁸ A few instances of people of color having been brought from the South to work in Providence have been documented, though the houses in which they lived and worked are not extant. William R. Forrest (ca 1815-1879) is said to have been brought north as a "servant" for Tristram Burges who was married to Mary Arnold (1774-1851). Mary's nephew Richard James Arnold (1798-1826) married the daughter of a Georgia planter in 1823 and became owner of two plantations, and by the eve of the Civil War owned eleven thousand acres and enslaved 175 people. Arnold spent part of the year in Providence and Newport and part in Georgia, and it seems at least possible that Burges had come to know and hire William Forrest through Arnold. Regardless, Forrest was shown as a coachman living in Richard J. Arnold's 124 South Main Street household in 1850, and by 1865 was working as a coachman and living in the household of Richard's son-in-law, at 59 Power Street, though he also maintained households on Cushing, South Court, and Camp Streets through the 1860s. He worked for the Arnolds for thirty years. Frances Rogers Arnold Papers (Mss 862), RIHS. On Richard J. Arnold's Georgia holdings see Richmond Hill Historical Society website, <http://www.richmondhillhistoricalsociety.com>. See also the story of Bethany Veney, later in this narrative.

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him, but they would not until Burnside arranged to return four captured Confederate officers in exchange. Holloway stayed with Burnside, appointed commander of the Army of the Potomac in November 1862, through the end of the war, and they returned together to Providence. Holloway described himself as an engineer in the 1860 Providence census, and the directory for that year shows him and his family at 57 Benevolent Street (not extant). Between 1861 and 1865 the family lived at 93 Sheldon Street (1855-58). Holloway is listed as “Gen. Burnside’s bodyguard” in the 1863 city directory and as a servant in the 1865 state census. Burnside served as governor of Rhode Island from 1866 to 1869; he built his house at 314 Benefit Street in 1866. The 1868 and 1875 city directories show Holloway living there, working as a coachman.⁴⁹

The 19th century saw the emergence of several black enclaves in Providence, as well as racially mixed areas, despite the threat of intimidation and violence. In 1824 and 1831, two racially integrated Providence neighborhoods were substantially damaged in riots whose specific triggers have never been clear. The Hardscrabble riot of 1824 took place northwest of College Hill in a part of town also known as Addison’s Hollow. In 1831, three nights of rioting and police action ended in the loss of four lives and the destruction of or damage to nearly twenty dwellings, eight of them on Olney Street (the northern boundary of the district) and the rest in Snowtown, west of College Hill. Most of these buildings appear to have been owned by whites but tenanted by people of color.⁵⁰ Still, Olney Street continued to be an African American enclave, at least for a time. There were three “coloured” property owners on Olney Street in 1843, though none ten years later; it would become a locus of black settlement again in the early twentieth century.

Research shows there were at least three African American neighborhoods on College Hill in the early 19th century; though little survives of them today, their historical presence illuminates the African American experience in Providence in this period. The earliest appears to have been concentrated along Benevolent Street, where African Americans Richard Cozzens, London Spear, Henry Taber, and others are documented to have lived as early as 1798. The 1830 census (which does not include street addresses) lists sixteen families of color consecutively, all of whom are known from directories to have lived on Benevolent Street.⁵¹ By 1837 the city directory lists eighteen African American heads of family on Benevolent Street, more than on any other street except for North Main Street, where there were twenty-two.⁵² By 1840, twenty-nine families of color and two white families are enumerated consecutively here. Fifteen “coloured” property owners are shown on Benevolent Street in the 1843 tax records, all located between Brown and Hope Streets; this accounted for nearly half of the black-owned properties on College Hill (which totaled thirty-four) and over 20% of the properties owned by African

⁴⁹ Ronald S. Coddington, “The Capture of Ambrose Burnside’s Valet,” *New York Times*: 21 July 2011.

⁵⁰ For more on these riots see *Hardscrabble Calendar: Report of the Trials of Oliver Cummins, Nathaniel G. Metcalf, Gilbert Hines and Arthur Farrier* (Providence, RI, 1824); *History of the Providence Riots, from Sept. 21 to Sept. 24, 1831* (Providence: H. H. Brown, 1831), Cottrol, *Afro-Yankees*: 51-57; Melish, *Disowning Slavery*: xxvii; *Creative Survival*: 59; *Life of William J. Brown*: 50-54.

⁵¹ This strongly suggests that the fifteen householders of color listed consecutively in the 1810 census were also located on Benevolent Street, though this could not be corroborated through directory research.

⁵² <https://www.netris.org/RIToolmakers/1836-37ProvDir/1836-37ProvDir-A-A.html>.

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Americans throughout Providence (which totaled seventy-one).⁵³ By 1853 exactly half of the city's sixty-six property owners of color were on College Hill, twelve of whom lived on Benevolent Street. Black residents of Benevolent Street included George Waterman, who, according to directories, lived at number 56 (earlier 50; not extant) beginning in 1832. In 1882, his eulogist stated, "I presume to say that for fifty years no dwelling in Providence was more universally known or resorted to by our best people than that of Mr. Waterman."⁵⁴ African Americans remained in this area, though in lesser numbers, into the 1940s.⁵⁵ The mid-20th-century expansion of Brown University destroyed much of this historically African American neighborhood.

In his 1883 memoir, William J. Brown stated that "the area near the intersection of Meeting and Congdon Streets served as one of the town's first black neighborhoods." The African Union Meeting House and School (1819-21) was set back from that intersection; its presence likely reflected the neighborhood's demographics and/or encouraged blacks to settle nearby. In 1850, the families of Ichabod Northup (1794-1884), John Allen, Benjamin Manning, John Henson, William H. Murray, John Brown, and Lewis Figurado lived on Cushing Street; Northup's house at 15 Cushing might have been the earliest. Northup, son of the Revolutionary War veteran for whom he was named, had moved to Providence by 1830, working as a porter in a store on South Main Street from 1824 to at least 1840. A leader in the long mid-19th-century fight to desegregate Rhode Island schools, Northup remained at 15 Cushing Street through at least 1865.⁵⁶ Another school-integration advocate, George McCarty, lived in this neighborhood beginning in the early 1830s. He owned houses and house lots on Meeting and Cushing Streets and "in Green-lane, in the rear of the Mansion House" (what is now South Court Street), and advertised his properties in the abolitionist *Liberator* newspaper, suggesting his interest in populating the area with other people of color or, at least, abolitionist-leaning whites.

Probably emerging later than both the Congdon-Meeting and Benevolent Street enclaves was the neighborhood including parts of Meeting and Cushing Streets west of Thayer Street and the block of Thayer between them; however, none of the houses built before the Civil War remain. The neighborhood included the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church (f. 1839) (not extant) on Meeting Street, between Thayer and Brown streets. Daniel N. Morse (ca. 1792-1869), who by 1875 owned five dwellings on two lots at the southwest corner of Meeting and Thayer Streets, just east of the church, was among its fifteen founders; by the time of the Civil War the church had eighty members.⁵⁷

⁵³ Providence Tax Records, Providence City Archives.

⁵⁴ *Providence Evening Bulletin*, 4 March 1882.

⁵⁵ Briann Greenfield, "Marketing the Past: Historic Preservation in Providence, Rhode Island" in Max Page and Randall Mason, ed., *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004): 167. The construction of Wriston and later Keeney Quadrangles by Brown University in the 1950s involved moving or razing more than sixty dwellings, but papers related to the construction of these complexes document the addresses and disposition of only a handful of houses. Wriston and Keeney Quads Photograph Collections (which includes documents), John Hay Library, Brown University.

⁵⁶ In 1859 Northup wrote *An Appeal from a Colored Man Whose Father Fought in the Revolution*, one of numerous tracts published to advance the cause of desegregating schools. See Armstrong, "Community of Spirit."

⁵⁷ *Creative Survival*: 57; Robert Glenn Sherer Jr., "Negro Churches in Rhode Island before 1860," *Rhode Island History* 25, 1 (January 1966): 19.

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Morse was in Providence by 1832 and living on Meeting Street by 1841; the 1861 directory shows him as running a grocery at what was then 115 Meeting Street and living at 117 Meeting, at the corner of Thayer. Francis Jackson (1808-97) owned at least one house and lot to the west, at what was then 111 Meeting, and lived there from about 1850 to his death; as noted above, he worked as a waiter in the Watson household at 64 Angell Street (1794; Photo 11). Ransom Parker (1806-1887) and his family owned and occupied 67 (later 125) Cushing (not extant) from at least 1844 until about 1915. Along with George McCarty, George C. Willis, and Alfred Niger, Parker was among the most politically active of Providence's 19th-century people of color. He was prominent in the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society, the colored people's temperance movement, the fight for African American suffrage during the 1840s Dorr Rebellion, and school integration. Parker's tenants included artist Edward Bannister and hairdresser Christiana Bannister, the budding African American architect William Augustus Hazel, and the daughter of black activist George T. Downing.⁵⁸ The neighborhood remained African American in some measure into the 1940s, though the gradual development of the Pembroke College campus caused the demolition of houses on Cushing Street beginning about 1910, and the block of Meeting Street between Brown and Thayer is now dominated by Brown University buildings.

African American families lived outside these enclaves, as well. Tax records from 1843 show four black-owned households on Williams Street, three each on Meeting and Olney Streets, two each on North Main and Benefit Streets, and others on South Water, South Main, rear of Congdon, Prospect, and Cushing Streets. By 1853, three black-owned households were on Williams, two each on Cushing and North Main Streets, and single households were located on Congdon, Angell Court, Power, South Main, Thayer, Transit, and Wickenden Streets.⁵⁹ In 1835 African American mariner William S. Nichols (1798-1840) bought the dwelling at 10 Thayer Street (1817-25; Photo 12). The 1860 census shows the property occupied by Nichols's widow, Anstis, and son Benjamin, who was a hairdresser. In 1865 the household also included Anstis's daughter, Harriet, who taught music. In 1885 Anstis and Benjamin sold the Thayer Street property to Hiram S. Read, a white building contractor. The property at 10 Thayer Street was leased to African American Caroline Hall Johnson from 1909 through at least 1925. The 1910 census shows Johnson there with her twenty-one-year-old son Edwin. She worked as a boat stewardess, while he was a boat waiter; they shared the house with another African American family.

In the southern part of the district, Charles Potter leased one of the "Rope Walk lots" on Williams Street to African American laborer and engineer Sherman Sanford Mars on the condition that he construct a "complete dwelling house or other valuable building" on it within two years. Mars built 251 Williams Street (1847; Photo 13) on the lot. He had married Hannah Sampson in Providence in 1841, and they

⁵⁸ Downing lived on Benefit Street in the 1850s, but is more strongly associated with the city of Newport, where he owned the Sea Girt Hotel and ran a successful catering business. From 1865-1877, Downing served as the manager of the Members' Dining Room for the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. He worked with Parker and others to integrate Rhode Island's schools. Richard C. Youngken, *African Americans in Newport: An Introduction to the Heritage of African Americans in Newport, Rhode Island, 1700-1945* (Providence, RI: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission and Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, 1998): 31, 52. May Wijaya, "The World was His Oyster," *Rhode Tour*, <http://rhodetour.org/items/show/41>.

⁵⁹ Providence Tax Records, Providence City Archives.

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lived on John Street before building the Williams Street house. Mars was one of the men of color who organized the Rhode Island Committee of Vigilance in 1848 and was elected secretary of the group. Mars was married a second time in 1851, to Providence native and cook Anna Maria Hannah Lee.⁶⁰ Sherman Mars died in 1860, and his widow remained in the Williams Street house until her own death in 1883. Like 10 Thayer Street, the house at 251 Williams continued to be occupied by people of color—the family of janitor Merity Macklin in the late 1890s and Nelson and Mary Pincham, who rented part of the house to numerous families at different times, from 1900 through at least 1947; Pincham owned the house by 1910.

Across from the Sherman Mars house, the formerly enslaved George Henry resided in a dwelling at 242 Williams Street (ca. 1865; Photo 14) by 1872. Henry worked as a skilled mariner in the southern coastwise trade before he escaped to Philadelphia, shipped on another vessel to Providence, and decided to settle here about 1840. He joined the Bethel AME Church on Meeting Street, but soon left to join St. Stephen's Church at 400 Benefit Street (1840). For some years Henry continued in maritime work and, in winter, served as sexton for St. Stephen's, a position he held for twenty-five years. He also worked watering the streets, as a gardener and a whitewasher, and for twenty years (1847-67) as a general laborer for the 46 Williams Street household of Harriet Brown. Henry repeatedly tried and failed to organize men of color in various trades—grocers, caterers, waiters, street waterers—into cooperative business ventures. He was a member of various African American benefit societies, formed the Burnside National Guards with Leonard Phenix, fought school segregation, and after the war was elected a juror for a case before the state Supreme Court. At his death in 1900 a Boston newspaper referred to Henry as “the richest colored man in Rhode Island.” He left 242 Williams Street to the Home for Aged Colored Women (just outside the district) on the condition that they admit men, which the home evidently declined to do. His widow, Martha, lived at 242 Williams Street until she died in February 1911.⁶¹

The house at 54 Pratt Street (before 1857), a bit south of the intersection of Pratt and Jenckes Streets, was probably built for African American coachman Lorin Jackson and his family by 1860. Born in 1808 in Connecticut, Jackson was living in Providence by 1841, when he was listed in the city directory as a laborer living on Jenckes Street; this Pratt Street house was very likely the one described as 17 Jenckes

⁶⁰ Mars stated that his father was Jupiter Mars, probably the same Jupiter Mars who had been enslaved by Henry Kiliaen Van Rensselaer in New York and fought with him in the Revolution. Jupiter Mars was afterwards sold into Connecticut, ultimately to Presbyterian cleric Amos Thompson of North Canaan. Around 1791, Jupiter Mars and his family escaped, though two sons, Joseph and James, were sold back into service until they came of age. James recounted his family's life in *Life of James Mars, A Slave Born and Sold in Connecticut, Written by Himself*, published in 1864. No son named Sherman is mentioned in any account of the family; it is possible that he had escaped further—to maritime service—at some point after the family went into hiding at Norfolk. On the Mars family see Joseph Eldridge, *History of Norfolk, Litchfield County, Connecticut, 1744-1900* (Everett, MA: Massachusetts Publishing Co., 1900): 370-71; Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, eds., *African American Lives* (Oxford, Eng., and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): 557-58; *Proceedings of the North and South Consociations of Litchfield County, Ct., in Convention at Litchfield, July 7 and 8, 1852* (Hartford: Case, Tiffany and Co., 1852): 18; and *Life of James Mars, A Slave Born and Sold in Connecticut, Written by Himself* (Hartford, CT: Case, Lockwood & Co., 1864).

⁶¹ *Life of George Henry* (Providence: H. I. Gould and Co., 1894); “George Henry's Will,” *Providence Journal*, 17 February 1900; “Wealth Estimated at \$100,000,” *Boston Herald*, 25 January 1900, 3.

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in the 1847 city directory and “opposite 18 Jenckes” in the 1860 directory. In 1850 the census shows Jackson living in the home of municipal court judge Thomas Burgess (1778-1856), located around the corner at 33 (later 63) Benefit Street, but by 1860 he and his wife Mehitable Finch Smith Jackson were living in the 54 Pratt Street house. By 1865 Lorin Jackson was a church sexton, and he and his family appear to have moved next door to 56 Pratt Street (1857-75) by 1875. Lorin Jackson died in 1888, and his widow Mehitable remained at 56 Pratt with their son George and various African American boarders until she died in 1906. The 54 Pratt Street house, owned in 1875 by Thomas Burgess’s widow Anne Eliza Burgess (who lived just to the east at 130 Prospect Street [1852]), was rented to African American families until about 1912.⁶² The Burgess family had other servants of color. The 1850 census shows the household with a live-in servant, Maria Robinson; Anne Burgess also had a black female domestic servant (first Mary Casey, then Sophia Wilcox) in her Prospect Street household in 1860 and 1865. Their son Thomas Mackie Burgess, the mayor of Providence from 1841 to 1852, left cash to his African American servants John E. Church and Mary Freeman upon his death in 1856; the two went to work for Burgess’s married sister Elizabeth and her husband Ezra W. Howard at 108 South Main Street by 1860.

In the antebellum years African Americans in Providence created fraternal groups and mutual aid societies, established organizations to combat inequality, and formed congregations. These included a United African Society to commemorate the abolition of the slave trade (1810); the African Union Meeting House and School (1819); Harmony Lodge Number 1, the second African American Masonic lodge in Providence (1826); the Providence Temperance Society (1832); and New England Union Academy, a tuition-based private school founded by Freewill Baptist minister John W. Lewis in 1835. Three African Methodist Episcopal congregations—Bethel, Zion, and Abyssinian—were offshoots of the original African Union congregation by 1840. None of the buildings in which these organizations were formed, if they have been identified at all, are known to have survived.

College Hill’s African American community was actively engaged in the protection of people who had escaped enslavement. In 1848, the Rhode Island Committee of Vigilance was established; across the North, vigilance committees assisted fugitives from slavery with money, goods, fares, and protection from agents hired to capture them. In 1851, forty-one Providence people of color signed a petition urging state legislators to work for the immediate repeal of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act and to establish “safeguards of our rights and liberties” to thwart the act’s intention. Among the petitioners was Julianna Freeman, who was born in 1803 and lived and worked in the household of *Providence Journal* editor Henry B. Anthony at 5 Benevolent Street (1844; Photo 15) from at least 1850 until she died in 1872. Other signatories from College Hill included James Johnson, born about 1804 in Virginia, who owned property and was living on Defoe Place by mid-century; Henry Brown, born in Maryland, who lived for a time in Ransom Parker’s home on Cushing Street; John Walker, a Maryland-born boot and shoe maker who lived at 21 Olney Street; William Jefferson, born in Maryland in 1818, who lived at 105 Meeting Street; and Anna Jackson, who claimed a New Jersey birthplace and lived at 105 Meeting Street with her

⁶² Thomas Burgess built 78 Benefit Street (1844) but did not live there; in the year he bought the lot he deeded half of the property to his son-in-law, naval officer Amasa Paine, and deeded the other half in 1846 in to his daughter Sarah Ann Paine, who are shown at this address (then 68 Benefit) from 1847.

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husband Charles; and three native Rhode Islanders—Samuel Tweedy, a longtime Benevolent Street resident; Nancy Nokey, who lived in the 47 College Street home of Brown University president Francis Wayland; and Angeline Richmond, who also lived at 105 Meeting Street. Another, Thomas P. Chambers lived on Meeting Street at that time.⁶³

College Hill was also home to whites who were active in the abolition movement or other efforts to improve the lives of African Americans. The home at 64 Angell Street (1794; Photo 11) was built in the 1790s and occupied until 1825 by George Benson (1752-1836) who, along with Moses Brown, was among the founders of the Providence Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Benson may also have had a hand in founding the African Union Meetinghouse and School in 1819: a pamphlet issued at the building's 1821 dedication noted, "It is a tribute of respect due to Messrs. Obadiah Brown and George Benson, to remark, that for a number of years, this degraded people have been accustomed to look to them, for aid and directions, and always found that they were willing and anxious to relieve and advise them."⁶⁴ One of George Benson's daughters, Helen Eliza (1811-76), heard abolitionist and *Liberator* editor William Lloyd Garrison speak at the African Union Meeting House in 1832, and married him in September 1834.⁶⁵ One of his sons, Henry Egbert (1814-37), was a frequent contributor to and one of two subscription agents in Providence for the *Liberator* (African American Alfred Niger was the other) from its early years and attended the founding convention of the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society in February 1836.

George J. Adams (1813-89) moved to 10 Cushing Street (1845) around 1865. Adams was a cotton broker but also a major figure in antislavery work; he had been secretary of the Union (Fiskeville) Anti-Slavery Society in central Rhode Island, an officer and director of the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society, and a *Liberator* supporter in the 1830s. On a trip to Virginia in 1858, Adams met Bethany Veney, a forty-three-year-old African American enslaved by David McCoy. Veney confided to Adams her fear that she was soon to be sold to cover McCoy's gambling debts. After consulting with his wife, Mary Hodges Brown Adams (1814-73) and her sister Sarah, Adams purchased the freedom of Veney and her son Joseph for \$775 on 27 December 1858. Veney is shown as a domestic servant in the Adams's home on Charlesfield Street (not extant) in 1860. After relocating to Worcester, Massachusetts, the family returned to Providence around 1865, living at 10 Cushing Street. Veney remained in

⁶³ *Creative Survival*: 66.

⁶⁴ *A Short History of the African Union Meeting and School-House, Erected in Providence (R.I.) in the Years 1819, '20, '21; with Rules for its Future Government* (Providence: Brown & Danforth, 1821): 28.

⁶⁵ This encounter probably occurred on 16 September 1832. See "Tour of the Editor. Letter II," *Liberator*, 13 October 1832, 2. Garrison noted here that he was in Providence on 13 September 1832 and that he visited Moses Brown and then, on Sunday afternoon, gave an address "to the colored inhabitants of this place, on the motives which should induce them to strive after knowledge, and particularly urging them to be industrial, economical and temperate in their habits. Their meeting house is large and commodious, but unhappily was built in such a manner as to create division which prevent the settlement of a minister, and which probably will never be healed until it is owned by a particular denomination. The audience was large, and highly respectable in appearance." Garrison meant that it was a "union," or nondenominational, meeting house and was bound to experience division on that account, a prediction realized numerous times. Garrison also met with the men of color in Providence then forming a temperance society.

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Worcester, but returned to Providence in 1873 to care for Mary Adams.⁶⁶ Veney later returned to Worcester, where she died in 1916.⁶⁷

Two buildings that housed institutions for people of color during the antebellum period survive on College Hill. The Brick Schoolhouse at 24 Meeting Street (1769-70; Photo 16) served as a school for African American children from 1828 to 1865, when the city's public schools were integrated. The school apparently continued to serve a primarily black population even after integration; according to a school committee report, due to "the considerable number of colored people living in the vicinity of Meeting Street" the school was "practically given over to colored children by the withdrawal of the white children."⁶⁸

The Providence Shelter for Colored Children at 20 Olive Street (1849-50; Photo 17) was founded in 1839, by one account in a house at the corner of Benefit and Wickenden Streets (not extant). The shelter was the brainchild of Anna A. Jenkins "and other Quaker women with abolitionist ties" including Rebecca C. Pitman, Phebe Jackson, Rebecca Wild, and Lydia Congdon.⁶⁹ Widely known as a preacher within the Society of Friends, Anna Almy Jenkins (1790-1849) was the wife of Quaker merchant William Jenkins and the granddaughter of Moses Brown. She had either acquired the property at 20 Olive Street as a new site for the shelter before she died, or the executors of her estate used the income from the \$20,000 she left to the Providence Association for the Benefit of Colored Children to buy the lot and build the shelter.

Admissions records exist for the shelter from 1839; coupled with census and directory data, they make clear that many of the children housed there were not orphans but instead young children whose parents were temporarily unable to care for them but often returned for them when their situations improved. Mothers who worked as live-in domestics were especially in need of such a shelter, as most white households were disinclined to support servants' children. African American Baptist minister Jacob

⁶⁶ See *Aunt Betty's Story: The Narrative of Bethany Veney A Slave Woman* (Worcester, Mass., 1889); *Liberator*, 17 November 1837, 3; 24 June 1842, 19 January 1855, 17 June 1864. Veney's narrative states that she returned to Providence in 1873 to care for George Adams until he died, but she must have meant Mary; Mary died in 1873, while George lived until 1889.

⁶⁷ Veazie (1788-1863) was an elector from Rhode Island to the national Free Soil Party convention in 1848 and received attention in numerous newspapers across the country for proposing to contribute \$1000 "if nineteen others will subscribe a like sum, to try the experiment of raising cotton in Central America" on the eve of the Civil War; see *Baltimore Sun*, 2 October 1848, 1; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 19 February 1861, 4; *Cincinnati Daily Press*, 21 February 1861. See Gowdey house histories. The College Hill homes of other documented abolitionists—among them Joseph and Eliza Gano Rogers at 1 George Street, Isaac Hale at 37 Bowen Street, George James Adams at 39 Charlesfield Street, and Joseph Veazie at 413 North Main Street—have not survived.

⁶⁸ *Report of the School Committee for the Year 1899-1900* (Providence, RI: Snow & Farnham, 1901): 131-133.

⁶⁹ Finding Aid, Providence Shelter for Colored Children (Mss 653), RIHS. The statement about the Taplin home as the original site is in the "Records of the Family at the 'Shelter,'" which lists and describes admissions between 1839 and 1844; Folder 2, Providence Shelter records. The Providence Shelter website states that the shelter opened first on North Main Street and moved to 11 Wickenden Street in 1846, the year it was incorporated; the site also states that Jenkins gave the shelter the Olive Street plot before she died. See www.providenceshelter.org.

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Perry enrolled two of his sons at the shelter after his first wife Elizabeth died in 1840. Perry was a Rhode Island native who had taught at the African Union School in Providence, served as minister of the African Christian Church in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and led that town's African American antislavery society. Jacob Perry retrieved his son Edward in 1844 after four years at the shelter and took him to Newport, where Jacob might have been preaching. Edward later returned to Providence and worked as a servant in the George Street home of tailor John F. Jolls in 1860.

By 1850, when the facility moved to 20 Olive Street, the "colored orphans shelter," as it was sometimes called, housed twenty-nine children between the ages of two and twelve and was staffed by white matron Sophia Van Doorn, two assistants, and an Irish-born domestic. Twenty-six children lived at the shelter in 1865, and while the children were all shown as Rhode Island natives in 1850 and 1860, fourteen of the children there in 1865 had been born in Virginia.

African Americans and Cape Verdeans on College Hill, 1865-1940

The African American population in Providence increased significantly in the years following the Civil War, due principally to migration from the South; the rate of growth slowed in the early 20th century. The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the arrival of a new immigrant group in Providence: people from the Cape Verde Islands. The Cape Verde Islands had been a Portuguese colony since the 15th century (Cape Verde became an independent nation in 1975), and due to Portuguese involvement in the African slave trade, many of its residents had West African ancestry. While College Hill continued to be a locus of settlement for Providence's existing African American community and for African Americans newly arrived from the South, it also became as a destination for immigrants from the Cape Verde Islands, and several institutions serving these populations were established during this time. Homeownership rates among African Americans in Providence declined in these years, though there were notable exceptions and some families, whether owners or renters, occupied their College Hill homes for generations. Domestic service remained a common form of labor well into the 20th century, while other lines of work – notably industry – were largely unavailable to people of color.

In the decade following the Civil War, the number of African Americans in Providence more than doubled, from 1,711 in 1865 to 3,487 in 1875. By 1900, 4,817 people of African descent lived in Providence. At the time, Providence was the twentieth largest city in the United States, with a population of 175,597 people, and the city continued to grow through 1940, when its population peaked at 253,504. The black population grew more slowly than the population as a whole, though, over the course of these four decades and its rate of growth was less than it had been in the post-Civil War years; between 1860 and 1900, the African American population of Providence grew by 213% while between 1900 and 1940, it grew by 33%.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ For data on Providence's population by race over time, see Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, *Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1900* (U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, February 2005): Table 40.

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Most contemporary and later analysts credited migration from the American South with forming the greatest part of the post-Civil War increase in Providence’s black population. Nineteenth-century statistician Edwin Snow attributed the increase to “immigration from other States, and mostly from the southern States, and not to natural increase.” Deaths among the African American population of the state had slightly outpaced births between 1853 and 1875, and the death rate was more than twice as high among them as among the state’s white population. Snow observed that migration from the south had begun before the end of the Civil War; antebellum censuses document clearly that it had begun decades before that time. In 1860, according to historian Julian Rammelkamp, 300 of the 1,500 African Americans in Providence were born in the South, or 20%. No such citywide analysis has been compiled for postwar censuses, but in one enumeration district in Ward 2 that included parts of Meeting, Cushing, and Benevolent Streets, 107 of 262 people of color claimed southern birthplaces, or 40.8% of the district.⁷¹ It seems likely that this proportion applied to the city’s population of color generally. One sample of 643 African American adults who moved to Rhode Island later in the period, between 1890 and 1900, found 358, or more than 55%, had come from Maryland and Virginia alone.⁷² The move to the North represents the relatively unnoticed beginnings of the so-called Great Migration, the first notable transfer of African American populations between regions in the nation’s history. Historians tend to date the origin of this movement to 1915-16, when the First World War demanded more laborers in northern factories; by the time it subsided about 1970, more than six million African Americans had left the South for the North, the Midwest, and the West.⁷³

Among those who came from the South to Providence after the Civil War was Robert J. Craig, who hailed from the District of Columbia. He was working as a coachman as of 1870 and living with his family at 10 Thayer Street (1817-25; Photo 12), the former home of William and Anstis Nichols, as of 1897. By 1904, the Craigs had purchased the home at 20 Sheldon Street (ca. 1825). In 1886, Maryland-born barber Edward B. Hebrew purchased the Israel Wood House at 123 Williams Street (before 1857). Washington Jackson, who was from Virginia, came to Providence about 1866. In 1870 he was boarding at 113 Meeting Street (not extant), a multifamily dwelling, and working as a laborer, but by 1874 Jackson had work as a mason, and he and his wife, Harriet, and their son, George, had moved to 307 Thayer Street (1857-75). By 1900, they owned the property, renting space to three other people of color.

⁷¹ Rammelkamp, “Providence Negro Community”: 21. Our birthplace analysis of enumeration district 011 found 98 of 262 people of color (37.4 percent) to be Rhode Island natives (many of them children) and 107 from southern states—54 of them from Virginia, 27 from Maryland, ten from the District of Columbia, four each from Delaware and North Carolina, and eight from South Carolina, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Georgia. Three birthplaces were shown only as “U.S.” Four were African-born, three of them the children of Ransom Parker’s daughter Anna Laing; one was West Indian, and two were from the Canadian maritime provinces.

⁷² Edward K. Hooks, *The Formation of the NAACP Providence Branch* (Providence: Rhode Island Black Historical Society, 5 November 2013): 2-3.

⁷³ Much has been written about this migration. See in particular Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), and Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration* (New York: Random House, 2010).

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African Americans living in and moving to Providence found limited employment opportunities, despite the city's generally booming economy. Jobs in industry continued to be mostly closed to people of color. In 1900, Providence was home to the largest textile manufacturer, the largest precision tool factory, the largest producers of steam engines and silverware, and the largest screw factory in the United States.⁷⁴ African Americans here, as in other northern cities, were systematically excluded from almost all factory jobs, however, except as janitors. In 1910, one survey found, only thirty-six of the seventeen thousand women employed in Rhode Island textile mills were African American; of 1,276 male carpenters and machinists, only three were people of color. In 1918, six African American women were refused employment at the Gorham Company silverware factories on Eddy Street in Providence and at Phillipsdale in East Providence because of their race.⁷⁵ The few exceptions that existed proved the rule: one Providence department store, the Outlet, and the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company chain hired people of color, and at least one of the city's many jewelry manufacturers hired African Americans. Indeed, 20th-century census data suggest that far more people of color worked in Providence jewelry firms than in all other industrial jobs combined.

Well into the 20th century, employment among African American men remained profoundly restricted to janitorial work; barbering; teaming, delivering, and later driving both for companies and residents; working as porters in stores and hotels; working on commercial vessels; and working as stevedores and longshoremen on the Providence wharves and dockside warehouses. Dockside jobs were particularly common among recent immigrants from the Cape Verde Islands. Most black women during this period worked as dressmakers, laundresses, housekeepers, and cooks. In 1910, almost three-quarters of all employed African American women in Providence were laundresses (1,526 of 2,059 women).⁷⁶ By 1920, almost 80% of 1,745 African American women in the Providence labor force were in domestic or service jobs. 697 of these 1,383 women were household servants, and 411 were laundresses in their own homes. In 1920, 14% of the city's 3,009 domestic servants aged ten and older and 58.3% of its laundresses were people of color.⁷⁷

In late-19th-century College Hill, African Americans continued to live and work in well-to-do white households, though in smaller numbers than before the Civil War, due in part to increasing competition not only from the continuing immigration of Irish people but also from newer immigrants, in particular Scandinavians and Canadians. The family of David Offee lived and worked in the household of Joseph and Eliza Gano Rogers at 1 George Street (not extant) from 1850 until 1878.⁷⁸ Born in Africa, David

⁷⁴ These were, respectively, B. B. & R. Knight (later Fruit of the Loom), founded in 1851; Brown and Sharpe, founded in 1833; Bancroft, Nightingale and Company (later the Corliss Steam Engine Company), established in 1846; Gorham Silver, founded in 1831; and American Screw, organized in 1860. See Matthew Jerzyk, "Gentrification's Third Way: An Analysis of Housing Policy & Gentrification in Providence" in *Harvard Law and Policy Review* (Summer 2009): 416.

⁷⁵ Armstrong, "Community of Spirit."

⁷⁶ Hooks, *NAACP Providence Branch*: 11.

⁷⁷ Armstrong, "Community of Spirit."

⁷⁸ Eliza Rogers had been a teacher at a "free school for colored youth" founded in the mid-1810s on the city's West Side by the Female Society for the Education of Colored Children (comprised of members of the First Baptist Church). The school operated until the African Union Meeting House and School opened in 1821. Eliza Rogers was also on the board of managers

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Offee (1794-1860) married Rhode Island native Sylvia Church, and they had three daughters. Joseph Rogers died in 1873 and his wife in 1877. Sylvia Offee and her daughter Mary bought and moved to 72 John Street (before 1850; Photo 18), part of which they rented to other people of color. Sylvia Offee died in 1890, and her daughter Mary remained in the house until she died in 1910.⁷⁹

Providence native Nathaniel Long Morgan also spent 1878-1891 in service in the Rogers household on Gano Street. By 1897 he had begun to work as a waiter in the home of Marsden J. Perry (1850-1935), who had purchased the home at 2 George Street (1814-23) in 1880. The 1900 census shows Perry at this address with Nathaniel L. Morgan listed as his “attendant.” Perry bought the John Brown House at 52 Power Street (1786-88; Photo 5) in 1901. The house’s service wing – containing a butler’s pantry, service hall, and servants’ chambers – had been added about 1850. Perry built a carriage house at 33 Power Street (1902) and a coachman’s house at 25 Power Street (ca. 1905), but at 52 Power Street his servants were white.⁸⁰ By 1910 Nathaniel L. Morgan was working as a steamship porter. He lodged at 6 Thayer Street (1825-29; Photo 19) in the household of African American laborer Armstead Johnson.

Twentieth-century censuses document the presence of African Americans in the homes of whites through 1940, the last census schedules publicly accessible. In 1900, Emma Martin and her daughter Mattie were live-in domestics in the home of Mary F. Greene and her daughter Mary, a Providence attorney, at 55 Keene Street (after 1895).⁸¹ In 1920, Albert and Edith Craig worked as the chauffeur and housekeeper in the home of lumber merchant Louis H. Talbot at 67 Congdon Street (1844-47), though both were also shown in the 20 Sheldon Street home of Albert’s parents Robert and Georgina Craig. By 1930, James S. Singleton was living in and working as a cook in the house of manufacturer David C. Scott at 48 Angell Street (1822); he remained there through at least 1942. From about 1920 to 1925, Mary E. Johnson worked and lived in the home of grain merchant Henry Sprague at 100 Prospect Street (1902-5); by 1930 Johnson was living next door at 102 Prospect Street (1903), the home of surgeon Henry Whitmarsh. Priscilla Loring worked as a chamber maid in the home of Harriet W. Harris at 210 Angell Street (ca. 1850) in 1910.⁸²

There were, of course, African Americans who worked outside the jobs to which they had historically been confined. Some African Americans on College Hill ran their own businesses that catered to the black community. John A. Creighton operated an “intelligence office” on South Main Street from about

of the Shelter for Colored Children in the 1860s while her husband served as its auditor, and both had been instrumental in the creation of Congdon Street Baptist Church. *Life of William J. Brown*: 24, 127; *Creative Survival*: 61.

⁷⁹ Maria Benedict’s will did not describe real property. Maria Benedict replaced Eliza Rogers as matron of Providence’s Home for Aged Women.

⁸⁰ Textile manufacturer and *Providence Journal* publisher Stephen O. Metcalf also built a carriage house and servants’ quarters at 38-42 Jenckes Street (1901-2) about this time; his longtime chauffeur Angus W. Jefferson, who was white, lived here through at least 1940.

⁸¹ By 1910 the Martins were living in their own household at 474 North Main Street (not extant); Emma Martin was a laundress there, while Mattie, by then widowed, was a cook in a private household. Another widowed daughter, Josephine, was also a cook for a family, while her eleven-year-old daughter Carrie was working as a private nurse.

⁸² An African American woman of the same age named Priscilla Young was in the household in 1915; possibly Loring had married.

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1865 to about 1885; the office was probably a clearinghouse for African Americans looking for work and employers wishing to hire them. Creighton began his working life as a porter, and in 1862 he was secretary of a committee of African American citizens who met with Governor William Sprague about recruiting the African American Sixth Regiment of Rhode Island Volunteers. By 1875 Creighton, his wife Martha, and their three sons were living at 31-33 Olney Street (before 1857; Photo 20).⁸³ The Creightons' son Thomas Hamilton Creighton ran a barber shop in Market Square probably by 1900.⁸⁴

The postbellum period also saw the rise of three nationally prominent African American artists associated with College Hill. The opera and musical comedy singer Matilda Sissieretta Joyner Jones (1869-1933) was born in Virginia to Jeremiah and Henrietta Joyner. The family moved to Providence in 1876 when her father, a preacher, accepted a position at the Pond Street Baptist Church (outside the district). The 1878 directory shows the family boarding at 20 Congdon Street, a house that once stood across from Congdon Street Baptist Church; her father, who supplemented his income from the church with odd jobs, is listed as a carpenter.⁸⁵ By 1880 Henrietta Joyner had left her husband and was living with Sissieretta. Soon after having been accepted to the Providence School of Music at the age of fifteen, Sissieretta married Narragansett Hotel bellman and gambler David Richard Jones. He began to manage her singing career, and in 1886 she joined the touring African American troupe Bergen Star Concerts. Reviews so often compared her voice to that of Italian diva Adelina Patti that she became known as "the Black Patti." Sissieretta Joyner Jones toured often and performed both for foreign royalty and American presidents; she was the first African American to perform at Carnegie Hall, in 1892. Three years later she founded Black Patti Troubadours, which traveled the country through 1915, when the group disbanded and Jones returned to Providence. By then her mother was living at 7 Wheaton Street (not extant) with her second husband and two boys identified as nephews, John and Arthur Colden, whom Jones and her mother raised. Directories and censuses show her and her mother at 7 Wheaton Street from 1910 through 1920. Jones is said to have owned 94 Benefit Street (1792), the adjacent property at 15 Church Street (1850-54), or both, but directory and census research cannot confirm this claim.

Edward Mitchell Bannister (1828-1901) was born in New Brunswick, Canada, to parents who died when he was young. In 1848 he moved to Boston, worked as a barber, and learned to paint; there he married wigmaker and hairdresser Christiana Babcock Carteaux, a Narragansett Indian born in North Kingstown. In 1870, the couple moved to Providence, where the directory shows them on B Street on the West Side; Bannister's painting studio was at 14 Westminster Street and by 1875 at 2 College Street; a portion of that building was incorporated into the 1936 RISD building currently bearing this address. From about 1875 to 1882 the Bannisters lived in the 67 Cushing Street home of Ransom Parker (not extant); it was during this time that one of Bannister's landscape paintings, "Under the Oaks," won a

⁸³ The 1865 census shows the family at 25 Olney Street, the 1875 census shows them at 33 Olney Street, and the 1880 census at 31 Olney. The 1875 map does not show a house numbered 25 (an outbuilding stands on its lot) and shows John A. Creighton as owning 33 Olney Street, the house now labeled as 31-33 Olney.

⁸⁴ On Creighton's barber shop, see Hooks, *NAACP Providence Branch: 5*.

⁸⁵ Rosalyn M. Story, *And So I Sing: African-American Divas of Opera and Concert* (New York: Warner Books, 1990): 6.

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bronze medal at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876. He quickly became identified as one of the city's leading painters, and in 1880 he and fifteen others founded the Providence Art Club at 9 Thomas Street (1786). In 1883 the Bannisters moved to the house at 93 Benevolent Street (before 1857; Photo 21). Christiana Bannister continued working as a hairdresser, and she is believed to have used her connections with white clients to help found and support the Home for Aged Colored Women at 45 East Transit Street, just outside the district. (The facility moved to Dodge Street in 1977, was renamed Bannister House, and opened to elderly male residents for the first time.) Edward Bannister died in 1901, and Christiana Carteaux Bannister died the following year.⁸⁶

William Augustus Hazel (1854-1929), who was born in Wilmington, North Carolina, moved north with his family in the late 1860s, settling in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Following two years in household service, he was apprenticed to artist John LaFarge, who was designing the stained-glass windows for Boston's Trinity Church, designed by architect Henry Hobson Richardson. By 1875, Hazel had relocated to Providence and was living at Ransom Parker's home at 67 Cushing Street (not extant) and working as a draftsman for Boston architect Samuel F.J. Thayer, who had won the competition to design Providence City Hall (1875-78). Relocated to New York to apprentice with architect Charles Dexter Gambrill (Richardson's business partner), Hazel married Rosa Elizabeth Grosvenor Hazard (1852-1932) of Providence in 1882.⁸⁷ William Augustus Hazel achieved success as a designer of stained glass windows, first at Tiffany & Company of New York and then in private practice in Saint Paul, Minnesota. In 1909, he was hired to teach at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. A decade later, Howard University invited him to organize their new architecture program. While in Washington, D.C., Hazel designed buildings at Howard and restored Cedar Hill, Frederick Douglass's home; this reputed to be the first historic preservation project completed by a black architect. Hazel died in Maryland in 1929.⁸⁸

The painter and sculptor Nancy Elizabeth Prophet (1890-1960) lived at 62 Benefit Street (ca. 1773) in 1920, where the census shows her with her then-husband, Francis Ford (they later divorced) and her father William H. Prophet. Born in Warwick to an African American mother and a Narragansett Indian father, Prophet graduated from RISD in 1918, the school's first graduate of color. She moved to Paris in 1922, where she studied at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts; she did not permanently return to the United States until 1932, when she was invited by John Hope, president of Atlanta University (and a Brown graduate; see below) to teach sculpture at Spelman College. Prophet experienced some success in France and in the United States; she exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art's Sculpture Biennial in 1935 and 1937, she was one of the first African American artists to be included in the Whitney's permanent

⁸⁶ "Edward Mitchell Bannister," Rhode Island College website, https://www.ric.edu/bannister/about_emb.php

⁸⁷ Rosa was first person of color to graduate from the Rhode Island Normal School (now Rhode Island College) in 1872, and she had a distinguished career in education, as the first African American to teach at the Hampton Institute's Butler School, as a public school teacher in New York City, and in other endeavors. Census records indicate that Rosa's family lived in the 6th ward of Providence, outside the district.

⁸⁸ Louise Daniel Hutchinson, "William Augustus Hazel (1854-1929)," in *African American Architects: A Biographical Dictionary 1865-1945*, ed. Dreck Spurlock Wilson (New York: Routledge, 2004): 195-98; *New York Age*, 3 December 1932: 1.

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collection, and her work was acquired by private collectors, as well.⁸⁹ According to art historian Lisa E. Farrington, “By the early 1940s, however, the dwindling of private fortunes and changing attitudes toward minority artists” harmed Prophet’s career. She returned to Providence in the mid-1940s, where she was forced to obtain work as a housekeeper and is said to have died in poverty.⁹⁰

As before the war, it was possible to work one’s way into property ownership from a beginning in domestic service. John E. Church (1830-1894) lived and worked at 108 South Main Street (not extant) for Providence mayor Thomas M. Burgess in 1850 and for his brother-in-law Ezra W. Howard at 110 South Main (1828) in 1860. By 1855 Church had married Catherine Waterman, a daughter of George Waterman of Benevolent Street. Ten years later, the couple was living at 134 Williams Street (not extant) with their children Sarah Maria and Lucy, and Church was working as a sexton. In 1867, they bought an empty lot and built the house at 265 Williams Street (1867; Photo 22). William Henry Johnson (1851-1936) was born enslaved in Virginia and moved with his parents to Providence by 1870. He worked as a coachman for iron and steel merchant Horatio Rogers Nightingale Sr. at 125 Prospect Street (1857-75).⁹¹ By 1900 Johnson, his wife Rebecca, and their son William were living in the Warwick household of Horatio R. Nightingale Jr., whose family spent part of the year in Warwick and part in Providence—in 1895 at 19 George Street (before 1857) and by the 1910s at 134 Meeting Street (not extant). The 1910 census shows Johnson, still a coachman, and his wife living at 54 Pratt Street (before 1857), the property once occupied by Lorin Jackson and owned by Ann Eliza Burgess, who was the maternal grandmother of Horatio Nightingale Jr. Though not documented, the younger Nightingale is said to have built 131 Congdon Street (ca. 1920) for Johnson and his family before he died in 1927 and to have left Johnson an income in his will. Johnson, his wife, and their son Robert are shown at that address in the 1930 census. He died six years later, and his widow appears to have sold the house and moved to 91 Prospect Street (not extant).⁹²

The houses at 287 Brook Street (ca. 1890; Photo 23) and 291 Brook Street (ca. 1890; Photo 23), located side-by-side at the southeast corner of Brook and Benevolent Streets, were built between 1882 and 1895 by Alexander Gorham (1836-1914), a successful African American real estate developer. His father, William J. Gorham (1810-78), had lived on nearby Benevolent Street since the mid-1830s and appears to have owned the lot on which these two houses were constructed.⁹³ According to his obituary, Alexander Gorham was born in Providence and eventually moved to New York City, where he

⁸⁹ Lisa E. Farrington, *Creating Their Own Image: The History of African-American Women Artists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005): 110-115. Steven Otfinoski, *African Americans in the Visual Arts* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2001): 161.

⁹⁰ Farrington, *Creating Their Own Image*: 114.

⁹¹ Johnson might not have begun work there until after 1875, when the state census show Nightingale’s coachman as George W. Peters, an African American native of Westerly.

⁹² See William Henry Johnson’s obituary in the *Providence Journal*, 25 June 1936.

⁹³ The 1875 *City Atlas of Providence, by Wards* shows two earlier houses on the lot, labeled William J. Graham (presumably a misspelling), and Alexander Gorham’s obituary states that he built the houses “on the Gorham estate, Brook and Benevolent streets, in the heart of the aristocratic East Side.” “Wealthy R.I. Negro Landlord is Dead,” *The New York Age* (24 December 1914): 5.

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“conducted a successful business...amassed a competence and retired” around 1900, living out his final days at 287 Brook Street, where he died in 1914. Gorham also had a summer residence in Oak Bluffs, a noted African American summer resort on Martha’s Vineyard.⁹⁴ His widow, Caroline, remained at 287 Brook Street with roomers or boarders until her own death in 1925. By 1930, the house was leased to Townsend Derrick Solomon, a jewelry factory shipping clerk, who had grown up on College Hill. The Solomon family remained at 287 Brook Street for decades; Solomon’s widow Ella Louise Johnson Solomon ran her dressmaking business from the house until at least 1964 and died in 1970.

Despite the examples above, home ownership among African Americans in Providence became less prevalent after the Civil War than it had been before it, probably due to the influx of new migrants from the South. While city tax records from 1853 documented sixty-six African American property owners, by 1872 and 1873 there were just forty-two. Of these, twenty-three were living on College Hill. Most people of color, whether native to or newly arrived in the city, rented either houses or tenements. A cluster of dwellings on Thayer Street, near Cushing and Meeting Streets, provided homes for many African American families at the turn of the 20th century, a holdover from the mid-19th century black enclave in this area. For instance, as of 1895, Virginia-born Lucinda and Jane Derrick, probably sisters, were renting at number 292 Thayer Street with eight other African American adults, all but one of whom was from the South. As of 1900, the family of William and Edith Reese lived at 266 Thayer Street; from 1900 to about 1915, William Reese and Lewis W. Williams, another black man, ran a newsstand at 268 Thayer Street. The family of Maryland-born Walter Calvert Occomy, who worked as a waiter and butler for Providence families, rented at 275 Thayer Street from 1895 to about 1915. All of these homes were razed as Thayer Street became a commercial corridor.⁹⁵

The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the arrival of significant numbers of emigrants from the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa. For centuries, whaling, slaving, and commercial vessels from many countries, including the United States, had been provisioning and recruiting crew at Cape Verde. By the late 1880s, enterprising Cape Verdeans had begun to acquire these aging vessels and put them to work as packets, ferrying immigrants to the United States and supplies to Cape Verde. The emigration peaked between 1900 and 1921, when between eighteen and nineteen thousand Cape Verdeans immigrated to this country. One 1980 study of Cape Verdeans living in Providence’s Fox Point neighborhood found that nearly all of their parents or grandparents had entered the country through New Bedford, Massachusetts.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ “Wealthy R.I. Negro Landlord is Dead.”

⁹⁵ Very few residences survive on this part of Thayer Street. Exceptions include the house at 307 Thayer Street (1857-75), owned by Washington Jackson at the turn-of-the-20th-century, and two houses located on Plat 13, Lot 28. The one on the rear of the lot appears to have been occupied by Alexander and Lucy Jones, African Americans from Virginia, from about 1910 through 1925.

⁹⁶ Marilyn Halter, *Between Race and Ethnicity: Cape Verdean American Immigrants, 1860-1965* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993): 1-5, 37, 39-41. Armstrong, “Community of Spirit,” cited the second installment of a twelve-part *Providence Journal* series on migration published 16 November 1920, which stated that Rhode Island was home to ten thousand people of African descent, most of them from the South but increasing numbers from the Cape Verde Islands. Author Bessie Blom Wessel, a social worker, noted that several vessels still ran between the islands and New Bedford,

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In Providence, many Cape Verdean immigrants settled in the district, especially in the southern part, known as Fox Point, a mixed-ethnic neighborhood that included people of Irish and Syrian descent, as well as Portuguese people from the Azores and Madeira.⁹⁷ Fox Point's proximity to the waterfront was key to it becoming a Cape Verdean enclave; many men who emigrated from the Cape Verde Islands had experience on whaling ships and other vessels, and found work in America as stevedores, longshoremen, riggers, sailors, or as crew on fishing boats. Dockwork was not always steady, working conditions were dangerous, and there were few protections for workers. Manuel Querino Ledo, John F. Lopez and John "Toi" Fernandes – all of Cape Verdean heritage – worked to organize Providence's dock laborers into Local Chapter 1329 of the International Longshoremen's Association, which received its charter in 1933. It was the first union in New England to have a predominantly Cape Verdean membership.⁹⁸ Ledo, who was born in 1894 on the island of Brava and came to the United States in 1900, served as the business agent for Local Chapter 1329; he lived with his wife, Rose, at 47 Transit Street (1840-45) from 1932 to 1943. Lopez, born in 1888 in New Bedford, helped organize the union despite not working on the docks himself (he ran a funeral parlor on South Main Street [not extant]). He was also active in the Democratic Party and was president of the Providence chapter of the NAACP in the 1940s.⁹⁹

A review of census records and directories reinforces how many Cape Verdeans and other men of color who lived in the district worked on the wharves. William Manuel Lopes and his wife Antonia were both from Sao Antao; she was living in Providence by 1917, when she married Lopes, who had entered the country four years earlier. By 1940, the Lopeses and their seven children were living at 43 Transit Street (1840-45; Photo 24). William Lopes was then working as a longshoreman and the three oldest of his children also worked – John as a freight dock jitney driver, Anna as a WPA sewing project seamstress, and seventeen-year-old Manuel as a cleaner on a National Youth Administration school project. The Lopeses shared the house with the family of Cape Verdean native Joseph Santos, a mate on a coal steamer who had lived there since at least 1935 with his wife Rose and their eight children.¹⁰⁰ In 1935 the family of longshoreman Alfred Augustus Walker had lived at 43 Transit Street with the Santoses. Born in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1902, Walker came to the United States through Philadelphia in 1929. In 1935, he was a single laborer, but the next year he married Ardelia F. Grandy in Providence. Walker worked mostly as a longshoreman and stevedore, though during World War II he was briefly employed in a Providence screw factory; he and his wife and two children lived at 80 Sheldon Street (before 1857) from about 1940 to 1945 and at 75 Benefit Street (1825-28) in 1946.

"which is the location of the immigration station that serves this group." On Cape Verdeans see also William Kirk, *A Modern City: Providence, Rhode Island, and Its Activities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909): 29, 41-44.

⁹⁷ Sam Beck, *Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge: The Cape Verdeans' Struggle for Their Neighborhood* (Providence, RI: Gavea-Brown, 1992): 32. Waltraud Berger Coli and Richard A. Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island: A Brief History* (Providence, RI: The Rhode Island Heritage Commission and the Rhode Island Publications Society, 1990): 9.

⁹⁸ Beck, *Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge*: 29, 48-53. Coli and Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island*: 9-12, 25.

⁹⁹ Norma LaSalle Daoust, "Building the Democratic Party: Black Voting in Providence in the 1930s. (*Rhode Island History* vol. 44, no. 3): 81-88.

¹⁰⁰ Joseph and Rose Santos ultimately had a total of nine children, one of whom was born after 1940 and thus not enumerated in the census from that year. Matt Santos, personal communication, 15 May 2018.

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John Francisco Delgado and Justina Sant Ana's experiences provide another example of the Cape Verdean immigration story. Delgado, who was born in 1889 on the Cape Verdean island of Sao Nicolau, came aboard the old whaling schooner *John R. Manta* to New Bedford in 1911. Delgado had come to Providence by 1915, was drafted, and served in the Army during World War I; by 1919, when he was naturalized, he was working as a textile mill spinner and living at 395 North Main Street (not extant). Sant Ana was born on the island of Sao Vicente in 1903 and came directly to Providence in 1921. The two were married in 1928 and lived at 12 Traverse Street (before 1857) in the early 1930s, but by 1935 they and their three children had moved to 57 Sheldon Street (1828; Photo 25). The family shared the house with two porters, a laborer, and the widowed Maria Ribeiro, all of Cape Verdean descent.

Some Cape Verdean families in the district shared dwellings with people of color from the American North, the American South, and the West Indies. African American William Heath, born in Virginia, arrived in Providence with his wife Josephine about 1878; they boarded for a short time in a cottage at the rear of 42 John Street (ca. 1875). Their daughter Daisy, widowed by 1939, worked as a seamstress on the WPA sewing project in 1940 and lived at 214-218 Wickenden Street (before 1882) with two other households. One was comprised of Francisco Fernandes, a Cape Verdean American longshoreman; a housekeeper, Mildred Ashton, and her daughter Mary, both born in Virginia; and an elderly widowed African American lodger. The other included Corinna Lopes, a Rhode Island native, and her Cape Verdean husband Vicente Lopes, who worked as a paint mixer. This and other Wickenden Street dwellings in the district had been occupied by mostly first- and second-generation Irish Americans in 1900; by 1935, most were occupied by Cape Verdeans, Azoreans and African Americans. Sheldon and Transit Streets underwent a similar shift at a somewhat earlier point. Sheldon Street houses had been occupied largely by people of Irish descent in 1895, but by 1905 Portuguese families, including people from the Azores, were living on the street, and by the 1930s it was heavily Cape Verdean and African American.

At the turn of the 20th century, the northern end of College Hill included significant pockets of African American residents, along with people from the Cape Verde Islands. Beginning in the late 1890s and continuing at least through 1940, Burr's Lane had become an enclave of people of color. Coachman Doctor B. Jones might have been the first African American on the block-long street: he lived at 5 Burr's Lane (ca. 1855; Photo 26) by 1895, his widow Jennie remained there for some years after his death in 1904, and by 1930 the families of Howard Lewis and James Viall occupied the property. In 1940, the family of Cape Verdean immigrant dock laborer Richard Morris and of Virginia-born longshoreman John D. Hill lived at 5 Burr's Lane. By 1897, Virginia-born laundress Emily Dyer and her brother, longshoreman Collin Cox, lived at number 4 of 4-6 Burr's Lane (ca. 1882) and by 1900 they owned the property. Virginia native and longshoreman Robert Diggs rented 6 Burr's Lane and lived there with his wife and two daughters in 1900.

African Americans began to occupy the 18th-century and 19th-century houses at the northern end of Benefit Street soon after 1900. African American teamster and driver Walter Williams rented the house

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at 50 Benefit Street (ca. 1805; Photo 27) from about 1903 until about 1935. Williams worked for several city caterers, including Henry W. Potter at 16 College Street (not extant) in the first decade of the 1900s and the L. M. Carr Company at 107 Angell Street (1850) through at least the early 1940s. George Mitchell, a porter and library janitor, occupied the 50 Benefit Street house from the late 1940s through 1959. In 1915, realtor Israel Levy rented part of the 18th-century house at 43 Benefit Street (1774; Photo 6) to hotel maid Annie Moore, her mother Lucy Henry, and two black male boarders. By 1935, Levy rented that part of the house to laundress Catherine Fuqua, who had earlier lived at 74 Olney Street (not extant), William J. Brown's longtime home. Fuqua lived at 43 Benefit Street through at least 1940. In 1930 the house at 1-5 Benefit Street (1820-40) was occupied by African American housekeeper Annie E. Crum, her daughter and grandson, and the family of African American junk shop proprietor Harold H. Fisher.

In many cases, the College Hill homes occupied by African Americans were older dwellings – formerly owner-occupied properties that had been acquired by absentee landlords and were often poorly maintained. The Samuel Staples Jr. House at 24 Benefit Street (1828) had a history of stable ownership in the 19th century, including nearly 60 years in one family, but turned over several times in the 20th century when it appears to have been used mostly as a rental property. By 1917, the house was rented to African American carpenter James A. Cooper. One of his daughters, Jessie B. Cooper, purchased the property in 1920 and by 1930 was living there with her father, renting part of the house to Georgia-born furniture mover Henry M. Aiken and his wife Dora. Jessie Cooper, who did domestic work, remained at 24 Benefit through the late 1950s.¹⁰¹

In 1914, the house at 24 South Court Street (ca. 1765, ca. 1865) was sold to Sofie Greenspan. By 1920 Greenspan rented the house to three families—Austrian Jew Solomon Morganstein, African American chauffeur Richard James Loudon, and Virginia-born black freight handler William Smith. By 1925 all three units at 24 South Court were let to people of color. By 1940 three new African American families were in the house, those of teamster Chester Jackson, pipe layer Joseph Wilcox, and street laborer Howard Russell. The house at 28 South Court Street (1847) was sold to Hyman and Anna Koretsky (later Koret) in 1919, and by 1930 Koret leased part of the house to African Americans William C. and Ida L. Foster and their two sons. According to the census of that year, William worked as “helper” in “chemistry,” perhaps at Brown University. At that time Ida Foster worked as a cook in a private club, and sons William and Andrew were both waiters.

In 1901 the house built by Nicholas Brown at 8 Jenckes Street (ca. 1838) was sold to Ida Zuribowitz, whose family owned it until the 1950s. By 1935 it was rented to Mary L. Diggs, an African American laundress and housekeeper, and African American cook Edward F. Queen. Between 1935 and 1940 Samuel Silverstein, who had acquired 10 Jenckes Street (1830-32; Photo 28) in 1904, rented part of that dwelling to African American seamstress Bertha Milbourne and the other part to the family of Archibald

¹⁰¹ Jessie Cooper was the founder of the Providence chapter of the Mu-So-Lit Club, founded by “representatives of the educated class of blacks in Washington, D.C.” in 1905. Documentation of the club’s existence in Providence has not yet been located. The club’s papers are in the collections of Howard University.

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and Dolly Green Royster. Archie Royster had moved to Providence in 1918, living with his mother Malinda at 18 Olney Street (not extant) and working as a driver for a fruit market. By 1920 he had married Dorothy (Dolly) Green. Archie Royster died in 1937, but his widow and six children remained at 10 Jenckes Street to at least 1960.

In 1916, Providence social scientist John Ihlder noted that African Americans “are finding it more and more difficult even to earn a livelihood” and “almost impossible to secure for their families such homes as they desire.”¹⁰² Indeed, by the 1920s much of the housing stock on College Hill was aged,¹⁰³ and an untold portion had passed into the hands of absentee owners who rented them to lower-income families and failed to upgrade or maintain them adequately. In 1941, one analyst described the dwellings on North Main Street north of about Star Street, which included the two-hundred-year-old William Antram House at 294 North Main Street (1738), then occupied in large part by “Portuguese and American Negroes”:

Dilapidated houses which should have been condemned long ago, lean against one another on both sides of the street. Here occasionally a gaudy wholesale store or a bakery with a ‘vitrolite’ glass front pokes its head out of line, looking like a dirty neck in a clean collar. Most of the houses have neither electricity nor bathtubs. The floors are rickety with rat-holes seemingly spaced at intervals of three along the walls. Huge cockroaches run all over the dishes. The stairs are so warped that it is apparently safer to climb up the drainpipes of those houses that have any. Each house contains about 20 rooms. If one family should live in more than four rooms, it is considered well-to-do. If they have enough beds so that no more than two people would have to sleep in one, they are aristocrats.¹⁰⁴

The depreciation in values no doubt made property ownership in the district possible for some. In 1919, Thomas Crowder (about 1865-1956) bought two of the rowhouses in the four-unit Edward P. Knowles Block at 149-155 Benefit Street (1862; Photo 29). Arriving in Providence in 1900, Crowder found work as a butler in East Providence. By 1910, both Crowder and African American cook Annie Ashton had moved with the Wilson family to 183-185 Brown Street (1905). By 1920, Crowder was living in the rowhouse at 153 Benefit Street with his children Hope and Thomas and four African American lodgers. The 1925 state census shows him with his second wife Jane and thirteen lodgers, all African American, in the rowhouse at 155 Benefit. By this time Crowder had become a janitor and watchman at the

¹⁰² John Ihlder, *The Houses of Providence: A Study of Present Conditions and Tendencies with Notes on the Surrounding Communities and Some Mill Villages* (Providence: Snow and Farnham Co., 1916): 20. It should be noted that Ihlder’s writing was filled with broad generalizations about ethnic groups and immigrants, whom he characterizes as “invading” the neighborhoods of native-born Americans.

¹⁰³ Of 1700 structures on College Hill in the mid-1960s, 300 had been built in the 18th or early 19th centuries. See *College Hill*: 86.

¹⁰⁴ Frederick Irving quoted in Ernest T. Attwell, “A Study of Recreational Opportunities for Negroes in Providence, Rhode Island” (Bureau of Colored Work, National Recreation Association, for Providence Council of Social Agencies, June 1941): 54-55, cited in Armstrong, “Community of Spirit.”

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hardware and sheet metal firm Congdon and Carpenter Company. He died in 1956, and his wife Jane continued to run the Benefit Street lodging house until her death two years later.

Clarence Bynum of North Carolina moved to Providence by 1934, where he lived in the household of Mrs. Alice Eddy and worked as her butler. His wife Ida Hairston Bynum bought 164 Prospect Street (1886) in 1944. That same year, James Ellington arrived in Providence with his wife Mary Hairston Ellington (probably Ida Bynum's sister), and they joined the Bynums at 164 Prospect Street. By 1950, Clarence and Ida Bynum ran a rooming house at this address,¹⁰⁵ and Clarence also worked as a houseman and chauffeur in Providence and Attleboro, Massachusetts. By 1957, Ellington was working for Brown University in maintenance, a job he held for twenty-two years; his wife Mary taught at the Rhode Island School for the Deaf for two decades.

William Gross, who worked as a janitor, had acquired 7 Thayer Street (ca. 1840) by 1900, where he lived with his wife Lena and their four children. In 1916, the Grosses purchased and moved to the double-house at 49-51 Olney Street (1853; Photo 30). In 1920, they rented part of the house to African American chauffeur Denard James (often James D.) Pinderhughes. Pinderhughes, his wife Florence, and their four children remained at 49-51 Olney until they bought 77 Olney Street (1857-75) in 1927. The Gross family lived in 49 Olney Street for several decades, while son Carl, a physician, had his office in the other half of the dwelling. Carl R. Gross (1888-1971) graduated from the Howard University School of Medicine in Washington, D.C. in 1913, returning to Providence to open his practice that same year. He joined the Providence Medical Association in 1917, served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps from 1917 to 1919, was elected a fellow of the Rhode Island Medical Society in 1943, and was appointed to the Rhode Island Committee to the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1950. In the 1930s, Gross had been denied positions at Rhode Island hospitals due to his race, and in 1942 he resigned from the district draft board of medical examiners in protest, after being sent only black draftees. Gross delivered over 1,500 babies over the course of his career.¹⁰⁶ Gross's office remained at 51 Olney Street until 1942, when he moved to 102 Olney Street (not extant).

The racial composition of Olney Street, which emerged as an area of African American settlement by 1800, had changed several times in the intervening years. By 1880, it was a largely white neighborhood: only 62, 74, and 76 Olney, none of them extant, were owned and occupied by people of color. "My parents bought their house on Olney Street in 1927," son Alfred Pinderhughes later recalled. "There were only two colored families there at the time. In World War II, the neighborhood went from all white to mostly black. Then, as the 60s and 70s came on, it started to go back to all white. I'm the last black family living in our original house on Olney Street."¹⁰⁷ The house at 77 Olney Street had earlier been occupied by people of color. In 1925, watchman Philip C. Coleman lived there with his wife Henrietta,

¹⁰⁵ "List of Negro Owned Businesses in Lippitt Hill, 1949-50," Rhode Island Black Heritage Society Collections, Providence, RI.

¹⁰⁶ "Biographical Outline," in "Register of the Papers of Dr. Carl Russell Gross," James P. Adams Library, Rhode Island College; Carl R. Gross, M.D., "Notes on the 'Negro' in Rhode Island Medicine," 1963, republished 2005, available at James P. Adams Library, Rhode Island College.

¹⁰⁷ *African Americans on College Hill: 1950-1979* (Providence, RI: Urban League of Rhode Island, 1999): 7.

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several of their children, and two other African American families. Daughter Beatrice Elizabeth Coleman was one of three women of color to have graduated from Brown's Women's College in 1925.¹⁰⁸ The Pinderhughes family rented half of the house to African American chauffeur Walter E. Gladding, whose family remained there through 1949.

By the mid-20th century both northern Benefit Street and the Meeting-Congdon Street area were notable as the sites of businesses geared to African American tourists. The 1938 edition of *The Negro Motorist Green Book* listed two hotels in Providence, both on College Hill—the Bertha, at 54 Meeting Street (not extant), and the Hill Top, at 72 Meeting Street (before 1857). The Hill Top must have been operated by Milton H. Phillips, a porter for fruit dealer J. H. Preston Company and later at Weybossett Market. Phillips lived at 72 Meeting Street from at least 1903 through at least 1946; censuses often showed lodgers in his household.¹⁰⁹ The 1947 edition of *The Negro Motorist Green Book* directed travelers to the Marie Wells Beauty Shop at 18 Benefit Street (1864-67). The city directory from that year gives the name of the business at this location as the Marinello Beauty Shop, with Mary Ingham Young its proprietor; the similarity between the two names suggests the businesses were one and the same. Marinello Beauty Shop remained in business at 18 Benefit Street until at least 1964. Thel-Mars Beauty Shop occupied the property at 51 Olney Street (1853) around 1950.¹¹⁰ Four Providence tourist homes are listed in the 1947 *Green Book*, all within or just outside the district; two are extant. One was at 12 Benefit Street (1889-93; Photo 31) and was operated by Walter W. Joyce. Another was at 58 Meeting Street (before 1857), where Frank W. Greene and his wife Martha welcomed African American travelers from at least 1940 through 1947. Providence NAACP branch founder William H. P. Freeman boarded there during these years.

The most significant civil rights group of the period, the Providence branch of the NAACP was organized in 1913. The Providence chapter was organized largely by African American migrants from the South, many of whom lived on College Hill. Attorney Julius L. Mitchell had come from Georgetown, South Carolina, to Newport by 1905 and moved to Providence by 1909 when he and his wife Martha lived at 13 Arnold Street (before 1840). The 1910 city directory lists him across the street at 12 Arnold Street (1850). Mitchell was cited in newspapers as a prominent member of the Rhode Island bar, often argued cases involving racial discrimination, and was a delegate to the Bull Moose Progressive party convention in 1912; when the party's presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt came to Providence in August that year, Mitchell dined with him at the Hotel Narragansett.¹¹¹ At the time the

¹⁰⁸ Coleman became a public school teacher in Providence after her graduation.

¹⁰⁹ Founded by Victor H. Green, the *Negro Motorist Green Book* began publication in 1936, its stated aim being "to give the Negro traveler information that will keep him from running into difficulties, embarrassments and to make his trips more enjoyable." It continued through 1966. See *The Negro Motorist Green Book 1948 Edition* (New York: Victor H. Green, 1948). The New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture has, of this writing, digitized 21 Green Books, online at <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/the-green-book>. See also Catherine W. Zipf, "A Haven for African-Americans in R. I.," *Providence Journal*, 25 February 2016.

¹¹⁰ "List of Negro Owned Businesses in Lippitt Hill, 1949-50."

¹¹¹ "T. R. Dines with Negroes," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 17 August 1912: 1. See also *Colored American*, 23 January 1904: 9, and "Ovletrea at Cambridge Forum," *New York Age*, 25 Nov 1909: 3.

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Providence NAACP chapter was formed, Mitchell had moved to 101 Forest Street (outside the district). Cofounder Joseph Dunn, who worked as an upholsterer in a Providence furniture store, lived at 125 Williams Street (ca. 1838). Dunn attended NAACP meetings in 1913 and spoke before the Tenth Annual Conference of the New England Suffrage League at Providence in October of that year. Another NAACP founder was dentist Andrew L. Jackson who boarded at 206 Meeting Street (not extant) in 1912 and later owned 150 Prospect Street (1867; Photo 32).

African Americans and Cape Verdeans also formed religious congregations and established social service and civil rights organizations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, some of which endure on College Hill. The most significant surviving African American institution of the postwar period is Congdon Street Baptist Church at 17 Congdon Street (1874-75; Photo 33). The oldest surviving African American church in the city, Congdon Street Baptist grew out of the African Union Meeting, Providence's first African American church. After a schism in the church, the remaining nine parishioners formed the Meeting Street Baptist Society in 1840. By 1842, under Rev. Jeremiah Asher, membership had risen to thirty-three people. By the end of the Civil War, though, the church building was in disrepair and the congregation so small that upkeep had become difficult. Grocer George Hail offered to exchange a lot he owned at the northeast corner of Congdon Street and Angell Court for the church's lot; the former lot already had a basement excavated on it. Acting on behalf of the Meeting Street congregation, William J. Brown persuaded Hail also to provide one thousand dollars, to be held in trust by Joseph Rogers, so that the old church might be moved to the new site or a new one built. In December 1869 Brown advertised the Meeting Street church for sale on the condition that it be moved by 1 May 1870. Yet, according to a church history, the building burned to "kindling wood" before that time.¹¹² Brown and others raised funds in both the black and white communities for the new church, the cornerstone of which was laid on 3 October 1871.¹¹³ Members first used the building on 2 April 1874, and it appears to have been dedicated formally in early July 1875.¹¹⁴ In 1880, after a debate about paying the mortgage on the Congdon Street building, forty members left and organized Ebenezer Baptist Church on the West Side, and in the 1890s it split in two over the pastorate of J. H. Presley, who left with his followers to form Olney Street Baptist Church, originally at the former Olney Street Congregational Church at 28 Olney Street and later at its new building at 100 Olney Street (1962-63);

¹¹² Brown's detailed account of the lot exchange and the effort to raise funds for the move or new construction fails to mention this fire, however, and no newspaper account has yet been found of it.

¹¹³ In her 24 September 1867 will, Jane Congdon (1779-1873) left to the Baptist society, "meaning the Society that now worship in the wooden building on Meeting Street near to Congdon Street," her entire estate. A daughter of George Waterman, she married mariner Hodge Congdon; they lived at what was then 25 Benevolent Street (later 60 Benevolent Street) since at least 1830. She left the Meeting Street Baptist Society her real estate "only on this condition, that the Real Estate (the old house excepted when the lot on which it stands is needed for improvement) shall never be sold or conveyed or mortgaged; and shall never be leased either by original lease or renewals at any one time for longer than ten years." In 1880 both the meetinghouse and Congdon's Benevolent Street property were conveyed to the Rhode Island Baptist State Convention as trustee for the Congdon Street Baptist Church.

¹¹⁴ *The Friendly Church on the Hill: Congdon Street Baptist Church* (undated pamphlet); see also Advertisement in *Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal*, 2 December 1869: 5; "Laying of a Corner Stone," *Providence Evening Press*, 4 October 1871: 2; "Congdon Street Baptist Church Dedication," *Providence Evening Press*, 3 April 1874: 2; "Dedication," *Rhode Island Press*, 10 July 1875: 4.

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Photo 34). The Congdon Street Baptist Church has endured into the current day, and its sanctuary and congregation figured into the city's modern history in the 1960s.

Several missionary organizations emerged in this part of the district in the early 20th century, to help meet the needs of new immigrants of African descent. The Central Congregational Church Mission/Portuguese Chapel at 51 Sheldon Street (1904; Photo 35), reputed to be the first Cape Verdean Protestant church in America, traces its origins to a mission founded by Manuel Ricardo Martin (1837-1905). Martin was born in 1837 on the Isle of Maio in Cape Verde. He arrived in Providence in 1886 and began his missionary work that year, initially out of his home. In 1891, Martin's missionary work was brought under the wing of the Central Congregational Church and by 1904, the Church had raised \$10,000 to build the Central Congregational Church Mission/Portuguese Chapel on Sheldon Street, which was becoming a residential nucleus for Cape Verdeans and other Portuguese people. The Chapel not only provided Bible study and Sunday school, but also sponsored Americanization classes, a summer school for children, an industrial school for women, art classes, sports teams and a racially-integrated Boy Scout troop. The mission remained active until 1949, when it became the independent Sheldon Street Congregational Church. It operates as the Sheldon Street Church today.¹¹⁵ In 1913, St. Augustine's Episcopal Mission was organized for African American Episcopalians in a building on Broad and Fenner Streets (outside the district) and then moved to St. Stephen's Church at 400 Benefit Street (1840). The mission may have ceased to operate in 1932, when Barker Playhouse bought the 400 Benefit Street property. In 1926, grocer Dudley Case bequeathed the house his father Nathan had built at 183-185 Transit Street (before 1857) to the Salvation Army, and it became the Salvation Army Social Settlement and Day Nursery, an important source of support to the Cape Verdean community of Fox Point. The mission operated at this address through 1960 and then moved to South Providence.¹¹⁶

In the northern part of the district, African Americans formed the Crispus Attucks Community Association to raise funds for a community center in the area; in 1939 the name was changed to the John Hope Community Center in honor of John Hope (1868-1936), an 1894 graduate of Brown University. Born in Georgia, Hope met Reverend Daniel Webster Abercrombie, a trustee of Brown, while studying at Worcester Academy; Abercrombie encouraged Hope to attend college and arranged for a scholarship to Brown. Hope went on to become president of Morehouse College in 1906 and, in 1929, of Atlanta University.¹¹⁷ In 1905, Hope was among the founders of the Niagara Movement, a precursor to the NAACP (established 1909).¹¹⁸ In 1941, the John Hope Community Center bought 15 Pratt Street (1849-52; Photo 36) and began instructing neighborhood residents in various sports, arts and crafts, mechanical

¹¹⁵ Central Congregational Church, *Manuel Ricardo Martin: In Memoriam, 1837-1905* (Providence, RI: Central Congregational Church, 1907). Coli and Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island*: 21-23.

¹¹⁶ The Salvation Army also operated the Army Hotel and Industrial Home for Men at 483-487 South Main Street and a second-hand store at 485 South Main Street in 1930. See also *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Commissioner of Industrial Statistics, made to the General Assembly at its January Session, 1910* (Providence: E. L. Freeman Co., 1910): 139, which lists the day nursery as partly self-supporting and entirely dependent upon private donations.

¹¹⁷ "John Hope" in Martha Mitchell, *Encyclopedia Brunoniana* (Providence, RI: Brown University Library, 1993).

¹¹⁸ Leroy Davis, *A Clashing of the Soul: John Hope and the Dilemma of African American Leadership and Black Higher Education in the Early Twentieth Century* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998: 152-153.

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arts, metal and woodworking, clerical skills, and citizenship. The WPA opened a nursery school here for working mothers in 1942, and the center ran a USO (United Service Organizations) club during the war. The community center remained at 15 Pratt Street until 1946, when the building was judged unsafe and the organization moved to a building on Knight Street in the Federal Hill neighborhood. The Hiram Lodge No. 3 of Prince Hall Masons, in existence in Providence since 1797, used 132 Benefit Street (1853) as its lodge between 1927 and 1938.

By the early 1900s, the black community was firmly rooted on College Hill – living, working, worshipping and organizing in the neighborhood. At the same time, this period saw the beginnings of the displacement of College Hill’s black community, a trend that would characterize the district in the second half of the 20th century. In 1909, historian William Kirk identified two “small negro colonies” in Providence, one on Federal Hill and the other on “Meeting and Cushing Streets,” meaning to indicate the neighborhood just west of Thayer Street, which had been a black enclave since before the Civil War. In 1912 the *Providence Journal* noted the growth after the Civil War of now “well defined negro settlements,” including “Meeting street, which expanded until it took in a part of Thayer” as well as “colonies” on Benevolent Street and lower Thayer Street. Yet by 1912 some of these neighborhoods had “been done away with by the march of improvement.”¹¹⁹

The development of a separate campus for Brown University Women’s College—founded in 1891, and renamed Pembroke College in 1928—began to intrude on this neighborhood. The first campus building was Pembroke Hall (1896-97), which was built on two empty lots on the north side of Meeting Street between Brown and Thayer Streets. Initially, students at the Women’s College lived in more than twenty dwellings on or near College Hill that the university acquired or leased, including a residence at 66 Benefit Street (1828). In 1910 the University built Miller Hall (1910) at 118 Cushing Street to house fifty students, and nine years later it built another dormitory, Metcalf Hall (1919), immediately to the west. In 1907, Sayles Gymnasium (renovated into Smith-Buonanno Hall in 2000) was built on the south side of Cushing Street, as was Alumnae Hall (1926) about twenty years later. These five buildings formed the beginnings of the Pembroke College campus, which ultimately covered two blocks between Bowen, Meeting, Brown and Thayer Streets and interrupted the historic path of Cushing Street.

Mid-20th Century College Hill

The demographics of Providence began to change in the mid-20th century; as the city’s overall population declined its African American population increased, both in terms of absolute number and share of total population – a reversal from the previous period. African American enclaves on College Hill persisted into the second half of the 20th century, but also faced threats from institutional expansion, gentrification, urban renewal and other forces. Nevertheless, many black families remained on College Hill, and the district continued to be a focus of African American life.

¹¹⁹ *Providence Journal*, 8 September 1912, quoted in Armstrong, “Community of Spirit.”

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In the mid-20th century, as a greatly improved system of superhighways made it possible for industry and population to relocate on cheaper suburban land and as the textile industry moved to the American South,¹²⁰ the population of Providence fell dramatically, going from a high of 253,504 in 1940 to 207,498 in 1960, a loss of over 46,000 people. By 1980, the city had lost an additional 50,000 people. Over this same period, the African American population in Providence increased, growing from 6,388 in 1940 (2.5% of the total) to 11,153 in 1960 (5.4%). By 1980, the number of African Americans had grown so significantly that they composed 11.9% of the local population—a share unprecedented in Providence history. And even as the city’s overall population rebounded between 1980 and 1990, its black population grew faster. It stood at 23,828 persons by 1990 and composed almost 15% of the city’s total population of 160,728.

Parts of College Hill were transformed in the mid-20th century, as highways were built, “slums” became a focus of redevelopment, and institutions in the district – notably Brown University – expanded. In the late 1940s Brown, which together with Pembroke had already constructed twenty new buildings since 1900, proposed razing fifty-one dwellings and other buildings, a number of which it had already acquired, for new dormitories and a dining hall on the two blocks bound by Brown, Thayer, George, and Charlesfield Streets; a one-block stretch of Benevolent Street (a historically black residential area) would be eliminated in the process. The college committee formed to consider the disposition of the housing concerned itself largely with eight houses considered to possess architectural merit. The committee judged five of the eight—four on Benevolent Street and one on Charlesfield Street—to have “no historic value whatsoever” and advised saving and moving them “only if economically practicable.” Another, the Webster house on George Street, would cost five thousand dollars to move and restore, and the committee decided that because the house “was not sufficiently distinguished to warrant the sacrifice” the university should advertise for a private party to move it. The committee recommended moving the other two houses, at 39 Benevolent and 135 George, because of the weight of “public sentiment” and the need to retain “good will with the community.” All told, seven houses were either moved or slated to be moved by late July 1949.¹²¹ Construction began in 1950, and Wriston Quadrangle was dedicated in 1952. Three years later construction began on a second dormitory complex, initially called West and now Keeney Quadrangle, occupying the eastern half of the block bounded by Brown, Benevolent, and Charlesfield Streets. To create space for it, the university razed eleven houses. Keeney Quadrangle opened in 1957. The demolition of historic buildings for the construction of Wriston and Keeney Quads was a catalyst for the creation of the Providence Preservation Society in 1956, now located in the Brick Schoolhouse at 24 Meeting Street (1769-70; Photo 16).

Concurrent with Brown’s expansion were efforts to ameliorate the condition of housing judged to be substandard throughout the city, sometimes through removal. In 1935 the Rhode Island State Planning Board proposed two “slum” clearance projects to the federal Public Works Administration, one at the

¹²⁰ Gary Kulik found that 44 R.I. textile mills closed between 1948 and 1958; see Greenfield, “Marketing the Past”: 166.

¹²¹ “Report of the Committee for the Study of the Disposition of Houses on the Quadrangle Site, to the Advisory and Executive Committee of the Corporation and to the Student Housing Board,” 11 February 1949, and “Further Notes on July 27, 1949,” Wriston and Keeney Quads, Photograph Collections, John Hay Library, Brown University.

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intersection of Wickenden and South Main Streets and the other north of the College Hill district at Randall Square, northwest of Olney Street and just north of an early African American settlement area on Stampers and Hewes Streets. Neither proposal was implemented. In 1946, the City Plan Commission published its “Master Plan for Redevelopment of Residential Areas,” identifying seventeen areas with blighted housing conditions; two were for the most part on College Hill, and, had they been carried out, they would have cleared or rehabilitated 35% of the neighborhood’s area. Planners continued to propose redevelopment projects that would have affected College Hill into the 1950s.¹²²

In the mid-1950s, a highway project had a major impact on the southern part of the district. In 1953, public works officials from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York announced a plan to replace U.S. Route 6, described as a “long, winding route of poor alignment and many narrow bridges,” with an expressway, I-195. In 1954 the city began to raze buildings in the area south of Wickenden Street for the “Providence Connection” of this new highway, which two years later qualified for 90% federal funding. Construction began in 1958, and the first section – stretching from the west end of what had been Fox Point (later George M. Cohan) Boulevard, heading north along the path of South Main and South Water streets and then west over the Providence River – opened in November of that year. The highway sliced through Fox Point, destroying scores of housing units and creating a barrier between neighborhood residents and the waterfront where many of them worked.¹²³ Many residents were forced to relocate, and the Cape Verdean stronghold in Fox Point was permanently disrupted; some families stayed in the district, but others moved, many to South Providence or across the river, to the City of East Providence.¹²⁴

In 1959, the Providence City Plan Commission, in cooperation with the Providence Preservation Society and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), published *College Hill: A Demonstration Study of Historic Area Renewal*, the first urban planning study in the country to use HUD Urban Renewal Administration funds for the purposes of preservation. One historian termed the plan a “program of planned gentrification for northern Benefit Street” that would encourage individuals to buy and restore houses in that section.¹²⁵ The study determined that on College Hill,

the worst housing conditions exist along North Main, Benefit, and Olney Streets and in three blocks between Pratt and Benefit Streets. The map of historic architecture shows that, unfortunately, the areas of extreme blight coincide with those containing some of the earlier specimens of architecture on the Hill. This is particularly true along the northern

¹²² *College Hill*: 101.

¹²³ On Interstate 195 see *College Hill*: 35; Jennifer Sutton, “The People Next Door,” *Brown Alumni Monthly* 96, 8 (May 1996): 21-29; Boston Roads website, http://www.bostonroads.com/roads/I-195_MA/.

¹²⁴ Despite displacement, Fox Point remains strongly associated with the Cape Verdean immigrant experience in Rhode Island. From 1964 to 1980, Manny Almeida’s Ringside Lounge at 244 Wickenden Street (before 1875) was a gathering place for Cape Verdean Americans – not only for those who remained in Fox Point, but also for people who had dispersed to other locations. Coli and Lobban, *The Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island*: 10; Beck, *Manny Almeida’s Ringside Lounge*: 77-80.

¹²⁵ Greenfield, “Marketing the Past”: 168, 170.

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end of Benefit Street, where there is an almost uninterrupted row of late 18th century and early 19th century houses.¹²⁶

About half of the population of this deteriorated area was nonwhite, the study noted, “related to the larger nonwhite community in Lippitt Hill to the north.” The four blocks bounded by North Main Street on the west, Benefit Street on the east, Church Street on the north, and North Court Street on the south included thirty-nine residential buildings and five commercial structures; many of the houses lacked modern plumbing and heating and were judged to be in “poor condition.”¹²⁷ These sections of College Hill became a focus of gentrification in the 1950s and 1960s; by 1967, more than 150 buildings in the area and to the east and south had been restored, for the most part by “middle-class white families” aided by several real estate entities. In 1956 – the same year in which she co-founded the Providence Preservation Society – Beatrice “Happy” Chace established the Burnside Company to buy and restore houses along Benefit Street. With her brokers Roger Brassard and Robert Prescott Hall, Chace bought thirty-seven houses in the area, most of which were restored by Brassard’s firm, Colonial Homes. Chace’s company bought houses for as little as \$5,000; the restored properties sold for as much as \$125,000. The project, successful as it was at restoring the integrity of historic houses, effectively priced earlier residents, many of them people of color, out of the neighborhood.¹²⁸

Many African Americans remember Roger Brassard. Virginia Benzard (possibly Beuzard) Williams, born in 1927, moved to 17 Benefit Street (1882-89) in 1934 with her mother Margaret, a dressmaker, her grandmother Sarah V. Profitt Young, and her older brother Bruce. Margaret Benzard bought the property in 1945, and by 1957 Virginia’s husband Arthur E. Williams joined the household. Williams said of Brassard, “My door was pounded on; he would yell over the fence to my mother to buy her property.” Clifford Montiero (b. 1938), who lived at 102 Benefit Street (1784; Photo 37) as a young child, later recalled, “Redevelopment panicked black people. It was about fear.” Montiero continued:

They scared my mother, a good, religious person. Roger Brassard was the friendliest folk you ever met! He told my mother that redevelopment had certain standards, was going to make so many improvements that we couldn’t afford. He said our house wasn’t worth \$5,600, but he’s going to give us the money anyway. My mother bought the line.¹²⁹

Some occupants were told that once restoration was completed they would be permitted to move back to their former homes, a pledge evidently not fulfilled.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ *College Hill*: 151.

¹²⁷ *College Hill*: 101, 133.

¹²⁸ Greenfield, “Marketing the Past”: 164, 170-71.

¹²⁹ *African Americans on College Hill*: 5, 11. It is here stated that Montiero lived at 5 Benefit Street as a child, but recent communication with Mr. Montiero confirms the home was at 102 Benefit.

¹³⁰ Edith Russell Crump, who lived at 24 South Court Street in the early 1940s, stated, “It seems as though that revitalization was coming in . . . we got a letter saying they were going to renovate and we had to move, and once they got through, we could move back.” See *African Americans on College Hill*: 6.

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In 1960, the family of Paul Cardoza, a Cape Verdean immigrant who worked as a bakery company porter and a city sewer department laborer, moved to 3-5 Jenckes Street (1895) and over the next five years saw five African American families leave the neighborhood, most because they could not afford rents in renovated properties. A 1962 *Providence Evening Bulletin* article stated, “The purchase of much property along Benefit Street by well-to-do whites interested in restoring the area has made living there by nearly all nonwhites an economic impossibility and thus has moved the color line both North (almost to Olney Street) and South (to Sheldon Street).” Mary Santos Lima moved into the triple-decker at 7-9 Jenckes Street (after 1895) in 1962 after her marriage to Providence firefighter Sidney A. Lima but less than a year later was told they had to move; both were of Cape Verdean descent, and they were unable to find anyone willing to sell a home to them. Moreover, Lima stated, “Blacks could not go to a bank and get mortgages; it was that simple.” Anita Edmonds Turner stated that her parents owned property on College Hill and “were called monthly and asked to sell, and finally they acquiesced.” In her estimation “red-lining, no access to information, and outright discrimination” afterward reduced the African American population of College Hill. Penii Williams, the daughter of Arthur and Virginia Williams, stated, “I found, on the books, in black and white, that in the 1950s and 1960s there was money available for families to get their houses fixed up. But nobody ever came around. Families whose houses had fallen into disrepair did not know about the funds, and would sell out to Roger Brassard.”¹³¹

Not all African American families moved from College Hill during the renewal years. Jesse and Willie Edwards Chapman, who had moved to Providence by 1938, rented part of 31-33 Olney Street (before 1857; Photo 20). By 1940 the Chapmans had moved to 81 Benefit Street (1786; Photo 38), and they bought the property in 1944. By this time Jesse was working as a houseman for Brown’s Phi Delta Theta fraternity. The Chapmans rented part of the house at 81 Benefit Street, as well as the house at the rear of the lot (built between 1857 and 1875), to other African American families. Willie Chapman recalled that in the late 1950s realtors offered her about twenty thousand dollars for the lot and both houses. “One agent sat out there all day and evening waiting to see my husband,” Chapman told a reporter in 1981. She continued,

I told him there was no need to wait because my husband and I had the same idea. We didn’t want to sell. Jesse told him that when he got home. A lot of people who sold their houses in those days didn’t know what was going to happen to the street. They didn’t see the value in the houses. They saw them as old, and figured they might as well get out. But I didn’t sell. My father was a buyer and seller of property down in North Carolina, so I could see what was going to happen.¹³²

¹³¹ Greenfield, “Marketing the Past”: 176. See also Karen Davis, “Reunion on College Hill,” *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, 9 September 1999, quoted in Jerzyk, “Gentrification’s Third Way”: 419; *African Americans on College Hill*: 5, 6, 8. Sidney A. Lima’s parents had come from the Cape Verde Islands in the 1910s. In 1930 the family lived at 10 Wickenden Street but had moved to 77½ Benevolent Street by 1949, which had been consistently rented to people of color since the late 19th century. Neither house survives. The 1962 city directory shows Sidney A. Lima as a fire department ladderman living in his parents’ Benevolent Street household; the 1964 shows him and his wife Mary at 7 Jenckes Street.

¹³² “Willie’s Glad She Stayed,” unidentified newspaper clipping hand-dated 3 May 1981, folder 5, box GB6, Congdon Street Baptist Church Records, RIHS.

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By 1964, the displacement of African American residents from College Hill inspired the formation of the Benefit Street Association, which urged city officials to keep “the existing population characteristics with a minimum discomfort to and displacement of present inhabitants.”¹³³

While the northern end of Benefit Street and other parts of College Hill were the focus of restoration, the Providence Redevelopment Authority carried out a significant urban renewal project on Lippitt Hill, mostly outside the district but including the north side of Olney Street. The project took hundreds of houses and displaced five thousand people in this historically African American neighborhood to create University Heights, a “superblock” development that included a shopping center and a garden apartment complex. Constructed between 1962 and 1968 to designs by Los Angeles-based Victor Gruen Associates, University Heights was intended to be economically and racially integrated.¹³⁴ Two types of FHA mortgages were available to residents, as a way to promote income diversity, and the exterior design of the low-income blocks matched that of the higher-income housing units.¹³⁵

Many houses in Fox Point in the southern end of the district were rehabilitated during this period; as was the case on Benefit Street, rents often became unaffordable after restoration. According to one account:

As a result, the Cape Verdean presence on South Main Street vanished by the 1960s. Over the next twenty-five years, multi-family houses on Sheldon, Transit, Arnold, and John streets became single-family homes for Brown and RISD faculty and for executives attracted by Fox Point’s proximity to downtown. Once-residential Wickenden Street gradually turned into a thoroughfare of restaurants and shops, many of which catered to the new breed of Fox Point resident.¹³⁶

The 1960s also brought considerable debate about racial inequity to Brown University and Pembroke College. African American men were first admitted to Brown in the 1870s, and the first to graduate were Inman E. Page and George W. Milford, in 1877. Between that year and 1947, Brown graduated an average of less than one African American man a year. The first African American Pembroke graduate was Ethel Tremaine Robinson in 1905. Unlike Page and Milford, Robinson was from Providence; she had come to the city with her mother Julia from the District of Columbia when she was a child.

¹³³ Greenfield, “Marketing the Past”: 177. According to Greenfield, in 1964 this group, renamed North Benefit Neighborhood Association, combined with the Providence Preservation Society to press the city to rezone the area from multifamily to two-family occupancy, which increased rents and displaced more families.

¹³⁴ *Mount Hope: Neighborhood Analysis* (Providence: Department of Planning and Urban Development, 1977); Woodward and Sanderson, *Providence: A Citywide Survey*; Lucy Boltz, “Grafting Memory,” 46, cited in Armstrong, “Community of Spirit.” The authority had not developed a relocation plan for displaced occupants, and the city expected the area around the intersection of North Main and Benefit Streets and northern Pratt Street to feel immediate pressure from people seeking new housing.

¹³⁵ For more on University Heights, see Joseph Conforti, “Irving Fain and the Fair Housing Movement in Rhode Island, 1958-1970,” *Rhode Island History* 45, 1 (February 1986): 23-35.

¹³⁶ Sutton, “The People Next Door.”

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Robinson had become an English instructor at Howard University by 1908 and helped found Alpha Kappa Alpha, the first African American sorority in the country, while there; her sister Cora Collette Robinson graduated from Pembroke in 1909 and taught at Tuskegee Institute.¹³⁷ Although in many years there was at least one African American graduate of Pembroke, twenty-two of the graduating classes between 1914 and 1953 included no women of color.¹³⁸

Early in 1968, sixty-two African American students at Brown and Pembroke formally requested changes in staffing, curriculum, and the composition of the student body to reflect more accurately the history and presence of African Americans. “The University has been laboring under the mistaken impression that we are happy here because we have been quiet,” the Brown Afro-American Student Society stated in a letter to Brown president Ray L. Heffner. “We cannot afford to be quiet any longer. Brown is a stifling, frustrating, degrading place for black students. This situation is especially intolerable in a university which professes to be a bulwark of American liberalism.” The Afro-American Student Society sought an African American studies major, an African American admissions officer at Pembroke, new admissions and financial aid policies, and representation of people of color in the student and staff population equaling 11%, the share of African Americans in the nation’s population. Heffner agreed to admit more students of color but opposed the proposed quotas, which prompted the colleges’ African American students to walk out on 5 December 1968. They went to Congdon Street Baptist Church at 17 Congdon Street (1874-75; Photo 33), where the congregation fed and sheltered them as they waited for a more satisfactory response from Brown’s administration. Heffner submitted a proposal to them pledging to seek applications “from all economic and social levels including the urban ghettos” and to bring about a “very significant” increase in African American enrollment through more active recruitment. The students returned to campus on the evening of 8 December.¹³⁹

The students’ activism mirrored calls for change in the broader community. In 1965, a University of Rhode Island survey found that residential segregation in Providence was high compared to other New England cities; the population of color in nine of the city’s thirty-seven census tracts stood 15% or higher, while twenty-four of those tracts had virtually no African American residents. Providence, the

¹³⁷ See *Slavery and Justice*: 69. Cora Robinson married Hendrick Van Leesten of Dutch Guiana and by 1920 had returned to Providence with her son, Hendrick; she worked in Providence as a laundry checker in 1920 and a rooming house proprietor in 1930.

¹³⁸ These figures come from a review of Pembroke’s Brun-Mael yearbooks over this period. We have been unable to document the claim that Pembroke African American women lived in houses on Pratt Street because they could not live in Pembroke dorms. Photographs and known student addresses suggest that black residents were living in these dormitories in the 1950s.

¹³⁹ Though African Americans may have composed 11% of the student body at some point after 1968, they were 6.7% of the undergraduate population in 2014. In 2010 African Americans were 12.2 percent of the national population. Afro-American Student Society at Brown University to Ray L. Heffner, 17 May 1968, folder 17-31, Box GB2, Congdon Street Baptist Church Records (Mss 936), RIHS; Memo, Brown University, 8 December 1968, and undated press release (probably 5 December 1968), Folder 20, Box GBs, Congdon Street Baptist Church Records. “Brown University Study Body Diversity for Fall 2014,” Office of Institutional Research, Brown University website, <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-research/sites/brown.edu.about.administration.institutional-research/files/uploads/StudentDiversityFall2014.pdf>.

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study’s authors maintained, was “as segregated as many cities of the Deep South.”¹⁴⁰ In the same year two thousand residents protesting race-based housing discrimination marched from Providence City Hall to the State House, which helped impel the Rhode Island General Assembly to pass a long-dormant bill banning the practice. Some Providence residents who were active in the Civil Rights movement had ties to College Hill; Clifford Montiero, who grew up on Benefit Street, participated in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March, registered voters in the South, was a leader in the Rhode Island chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, and was active in the Providence chapter of the NAACP, serving as its President from 2000-2010.¹⁴¹

In recent years, some College Hill institutions have begun to wrestle with their historical ties to slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. In 2003, Brown University’s President, Ruth J. Simmons, appointed a Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, resulting in a report detailing the University’s entanglement with slavery, published in 2006; the creation of The Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, a scholarly research center at Brown, in 2012; and the dedication of a slavery memorial, designed by the sculptor Martin Puryear, near the College Edifice (1770) (now University Hall) in 2014. The Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island is developing a museum focused on the trans-Atlantic slave trade and a center for racial reconciliation at the former Cathedral of St. John at 265 North Main Street (1810).

Over the past few decades, people of African descent have taken steps to document and interpret their own histories. The Rhode Island Black Heritage Society (RIBHS) was founded in 1975, under the auspices of the Rhode Island Historical Society, in order to gather stories, collect artifacts and documents, and share information with the public. The RIBHS mounted its first exhibit, titled “Creative Survival,” in 1985. The Cape Verdean Museum Exhibit was established in 2003, the first museum in the country dedicated to telling the story of the Cape Verdean experience in America, including the Fox Point community. In 1999, the Urban League of Rhode Island sponsored a gathering of College Hill’s black residents, who shared personal reminiscences of the district in the second half of the 20th century; these stories were compiled in a publication, “African Americans on College Hill, 1950-1979” – an important record of both change and continuity in the district.

¹⁴⁰ Leon F. Bouvier and Germaine Denaker, “The Negro in Rhode Island: A Demographic Survey” (University of Rhode Island Occasional Papers in Political Science, 1965), cited in Armstrong, “Community of Spirit.”

¹⁴¹ “An Activist’s Return to Selma,” *The Providence Journal*, 21 March 2015; “Civil Rights Icon Montiero Honored,” *The Providence Journal*, 1 March 2018.

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College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation) Name of Property
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College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation)
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College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation) Name of Property
Providence, Rhode Island County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson, Preservation Consultants; edited by Joanna M. Doherty and Sarah Zurier, Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

organization: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

street & number: 150 Benefit Street

city or town: Providence state: RI zip code: 02903

e-mail: joanna.doherty@preservation.ri.gov

telephone: 401-222-4136

date: June 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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National Park Service

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College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation) ----- Name of Property
Providence, Rhode Island ----- County and State
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation)
 City or Vicinity: Providence
 County: Providence
 State: Rhode Island
 Name of Photographer: Neil Larson (Photos 2, 4-7, 9-12, 16, 18-21, 23-33, 35-36, 38)
 Joanna M. Doherty (Photos 1, 3, 8, 13-15, 17, 22, 34, 37)
 Date of Photographs: May 2016 (Photos 2, 4, 5, 7, 16, 20, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 36)
 December 2016 (Photos 6, 9-12, 18, 19, 21, 23-26, 29, 31, 35, 38)
 April 2018 (Photos 1, 3, 8, 13-15, 17, 22, 34, 37)
 Location of Original Digital Files: Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage
 Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903
 Number of Photographs: 38

- Photo #1 Stephen Hopkins House at 15 Hopkins Street (1707, 1743), view looking southwest showing north (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #2 Joseph Whipple House at 8 Burr's Lane (ca. 1720), view looking southeast showing north (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #3 Dr. Jabez Bowen House at 39 Bowen Street (1739), view looking southeast showing west (front) and north elevations.
- Photo #4 Joseph Brown House at 50 South Main Street (1774), view looking northeast showing west (front) and south elevations.
- Photo #5 John Brown House at 52 Power Street (1786-88), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #6 Joseph Jenckes House at 43 Benefit Street (1774), view looking northeast showing west (front) and south elevations.

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Continuation Sheet

College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property
Providence, Rhode Island
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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- Photo #7 John Carter House at 21 Meeting Street (1772), view looking southwest showing north (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #8 Market House at Market Square (1773, 1797, 1865, 1950), view looking northeast showing south and west elevations.
- Photo #9 Sullivan Dorr House at 109 Benefit Street (1809), view looking north showing south (front) elevation.
- Photo #10 Thomas Poynton Ives House at 66 Power Street (1806), view looking northeast showing south (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #11 Capt. George Benson House at 64 Angell Street (1794), view looking north showing south elevation.
- Photo #12 Harding Stoddard House at 10 Thayer Street (1817-25), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #13 Sherman S. Mars House at 251 Williams Street (1847), view looking southwest showing north (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #14 George Henry House at 242 Williams Street (ca. 1865), view looking northeast showing south (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #15 Henry B. Anthony House at 5 Benevolent Street (1844), view looking southwest showing north (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #16 The Brick Schoolhouse at 24 Meeting Street (1769-70), view looking north showing south (front) elevation.
- Photo #17 Providence Shelter for Colored Children at 20 Olive Street (1849-50), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #18 House at 72 John Street (before 1850), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #19 Luther Pearson House at 6 Thayer Street (1825-29), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #20 House at 31-33 Olney Street (before 1857), view looking southeast showing north (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #21 Edward & Christiana Carteaux Bannister House at 93 Benevolent Street (before 1857), view looking southeast showing north (front) and west elevations.

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College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation) Name of Property
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- Photo #22 John E. Church House at 265 Williams Street (1867), view looking southwest showing north (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #23 Alexander Gorham Houses at 291 Brook Street (ca. 1890; left) and 287 Brook Street (ca. 1890; right), view looking southeast showing west (front) and north elevations.
- Photo #24 William Blodgett House at 43 Transit Street (1840-45), view looking southeast showing west (front) and north elevations.
- Photo #25 John Justin House at 57 Sheldon Street (1828), view looking southeast showing north (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #26 William Rea House at 5 Burr's Lane (ca. 1855), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #27 Samuel Staples House II at 50 Benefit Street (ca. 1805), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #28 Leonard Blodget House at 10 Jenckes Street (1830-32), view looking northeast showing south (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #29 Edward P. Knowles Block at 149-155 Benefit Street (1862), view looking southeast showing west elevation.
- Photo #30 Daniel Y. Stickney House at 49-51 Olney Street (1853), view looking southwest showing north (street) and east elevations.
- Photo #31 Stephen B. Miller House at 12-14 Benefit Street (1889-93), view looking west showing east elevation.
- Photo #32 Ruth T. Scott House at 150 Prospect Street (1867), view looking northwest showing east (front) and south elevations.
- Photo #33 Congdon Street Baptist Church at 17 Congdon Street (1874-75), view looking northeast showing south and west elevations.
- Photo #34 Olney Street Baptist Church at 100 Olney Street (1962-63), view looking northwest showing south (front) and east elevations.
- Photo #35 Portuguese Chapel and Parish House/Sheldon Street Mission at 51 Sheldon Street (1904), view looking southeast showing north (front) and west elevations.
- Photo #36 Albert G. Angell House at 15 Pratt Street (1849-52), view looking northwest showing east (front) and south elevations.

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College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation) ----- Name of Property
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Photo #37 Gershom Jones-John Howland House at 102 Benefit Street (1784), view looking northwest showing east (front) and south elevations.

Photo #38 Seth Wheaton House at 81 Benefit Street (1786), view looking northeast showing west (front) and south elevations. A separate house at 81R Benefit Street, built for Peter Church in 1856, is visible in the rear at right.

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 to amend existing 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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

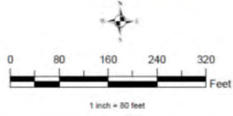


**College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation), Providence, Rhode Island
Photo Key Map No. 1**

Note: Shading does not denote historic district boundaries.

This map was prepared for assessment purposes only. It is not for approval of description of, or conveyance of land. The City of Providence and its mapping contractors assume no legal responsibility for the information contained herein.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Parcel Line | Easement |
| Road | Edge of Pavement |
| Paper Street | Hook |
| Water | Leader |
| Rail Road | Mac |
| City Boundary | Building Footprint |
| Inactive Parcel Line | Parking Lot |
| | Water Bodies |



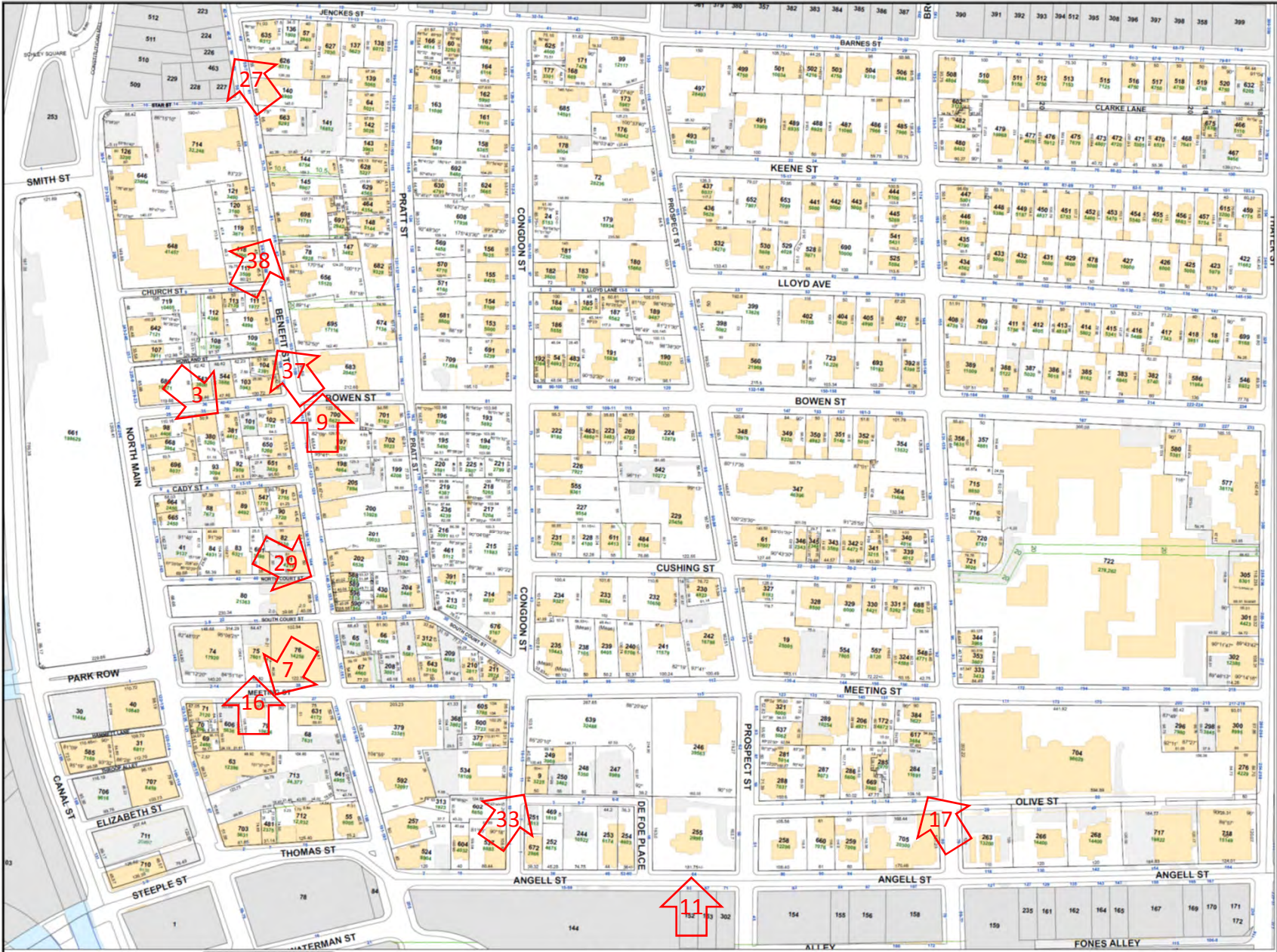
The City of Providence
RHODE ISLAND



Plat No. 009

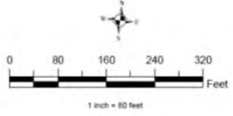


Shading parcels of real estate as assessed Dec. 31, 2018



This map was prepared for assessment purposes only. It is not for appraisal of, description of, or conveyance of land. The City of Providence and its mapping contractors assume no legal responsibility for the information contained herein.

Legend	
Parcel Lines	Easements
— Parcel	— Edge of Pavement
— Road	— Hook
— Paper Street	— Leader
— Water	— Mac
— Rail Road	— Building Footprint
— City Boundary	— Parking Lot
Inactive Parcel Line	— Water Bodies



The City of Providence
RHODE ISLAND



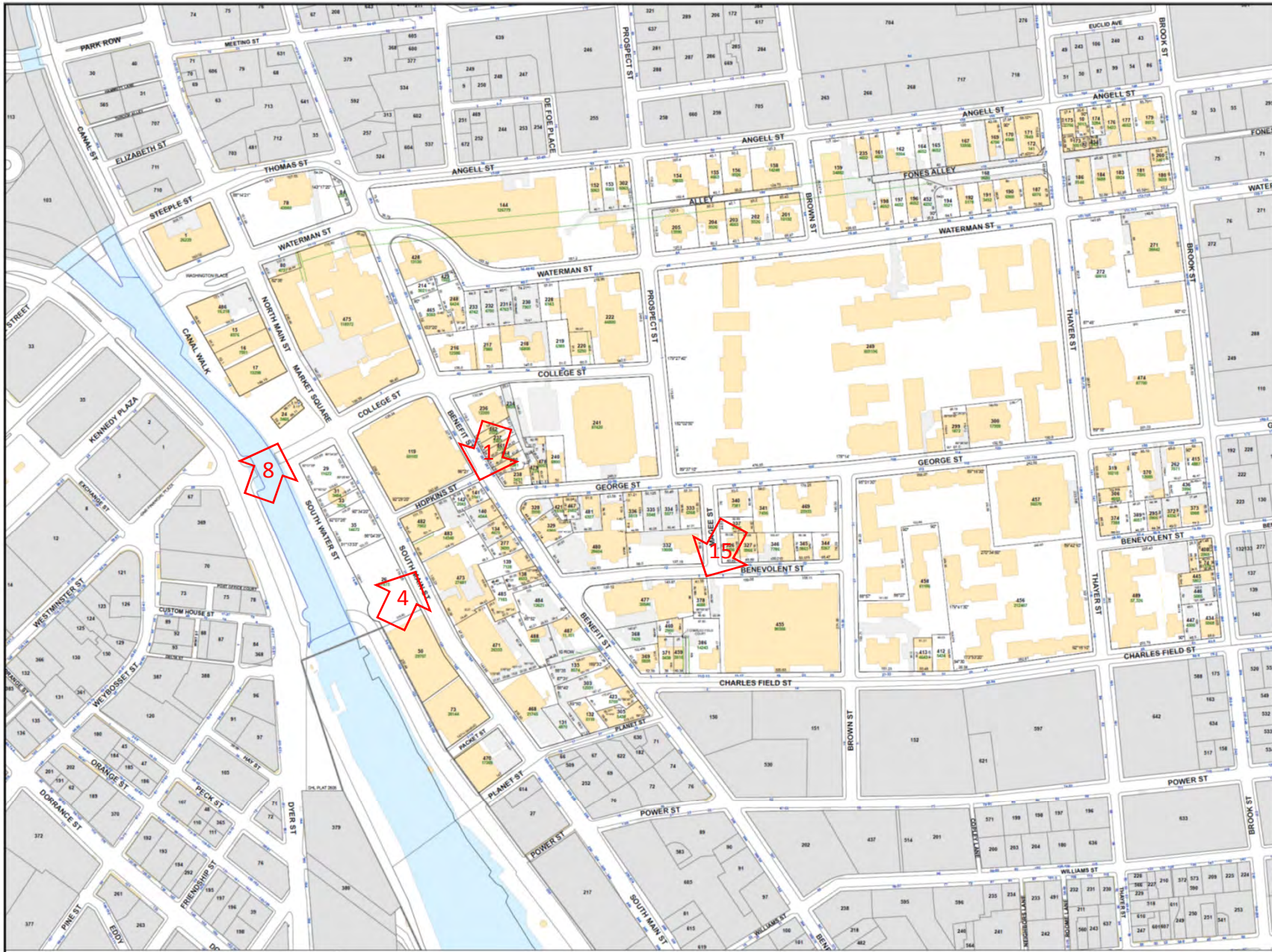
Plat No. 010



Showing parcels of real estate as assessed Dec. 31, 2016

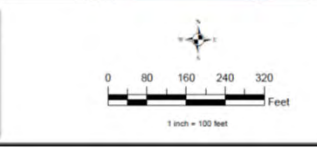
**College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation), Providence, Rhode Island
Photo Key Map No. 2**

Note: Shading does not denote historic district boundaries.

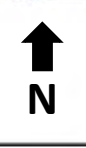


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Legend	
Parcel Lines	Essentials
Road	Edge of Pavement
Paper Street	Hook
Water	Leader
Rail Road	Misc
City Boundary	Building Footprint
Inclusive Parcel Line	Parking Lots
	Water Bodies



The City of Providence
RHODE ISLAND

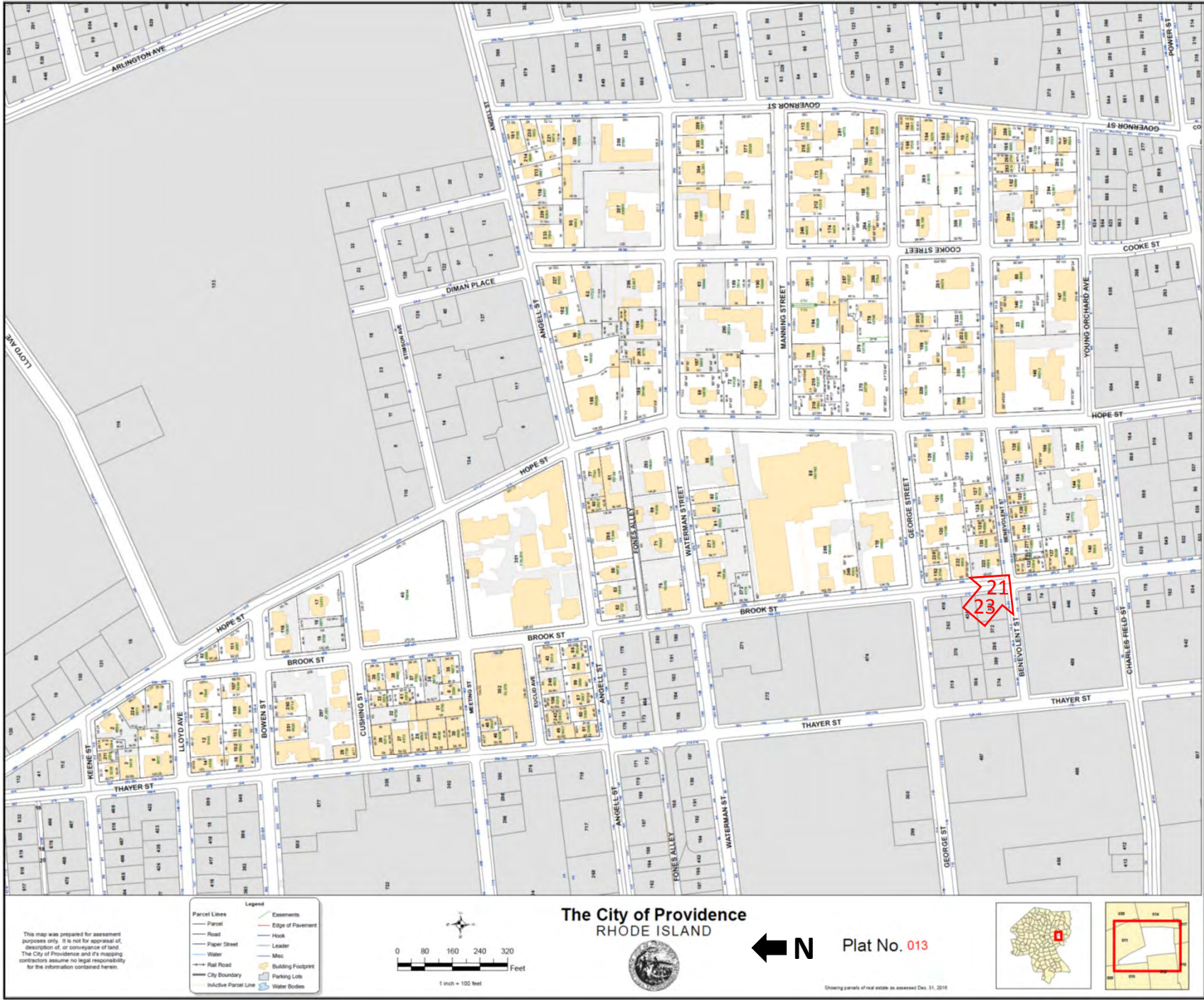


Plat No. 012

Showing parcels of real estate as assessed Dec. 31, 2016

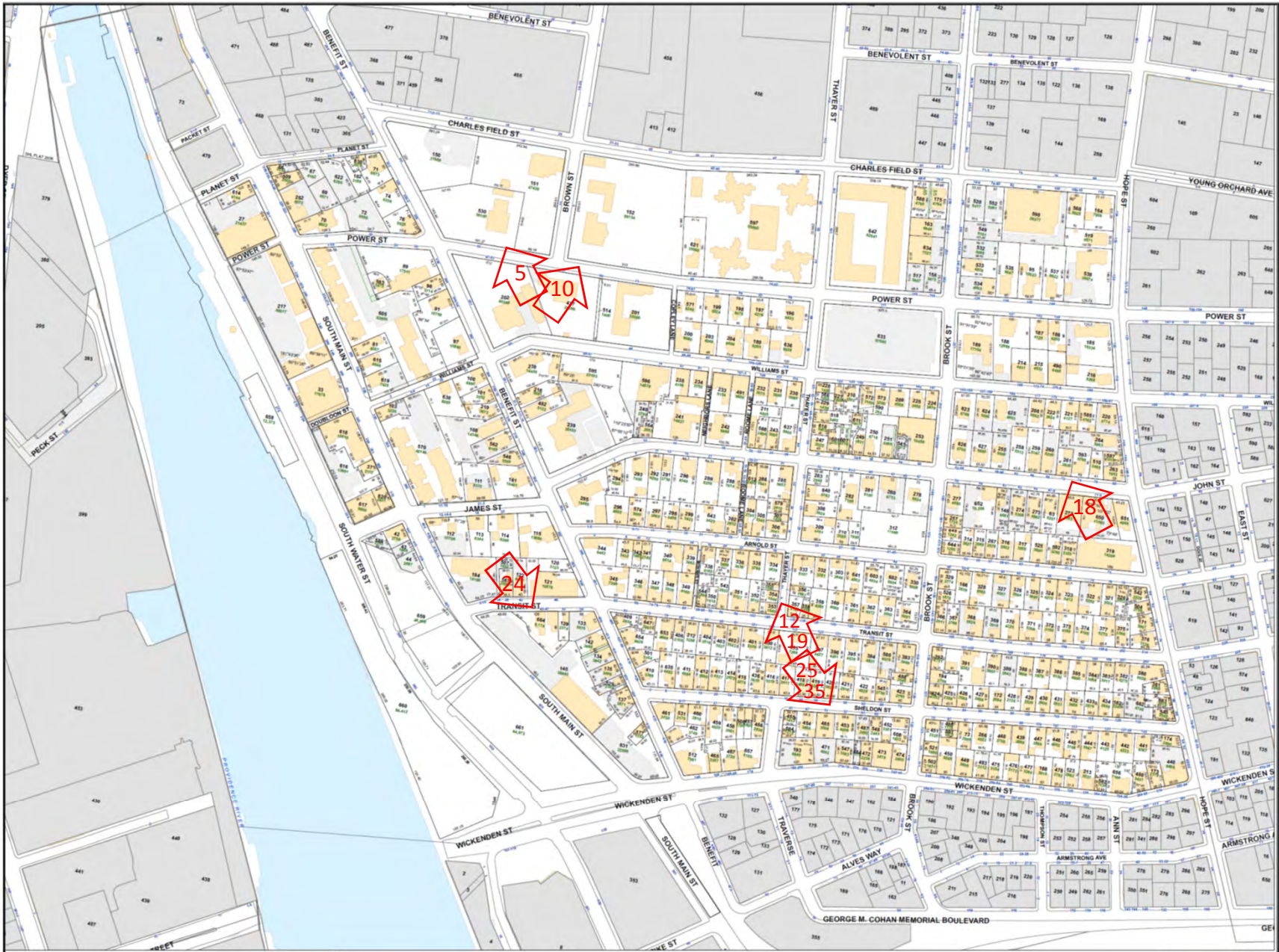


College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation), Providence, Rhode Island
Photo Key Map No. 3
Note: Shading does not denote historic district boundaries.



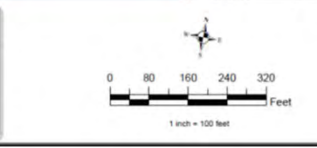
College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation), Providence, Rhode Island
Photo Key Map No. 4

Note: Shading does not denote historic district boundaries.




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Legend	
Parcel Lines	Essentials
Road	Edge of Pavement
Paper Street	Hook
Water	Leader
Rail Road	Mac
City Boundary	Building Footprint
Inclusive Parcel Line	Parking Lots
	Water Bodies



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Plat No. 016



Showing parcels of real estate as assessed Dec. 31, 2016

College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation), Providence, Rhode Island
Photo Key Map No. 5
Note: Shading does not denote historic district boundaries.



College Hill Historic District (Additional Documentation), Providence, Rhode Island
 Photo Key Map No. 6

Note: Shading does not denote historic district boundaries.







ANY
TIME







NO
PARKING
ANY
TIME



EGE STREET



CANAL









PROPERTY AVAILABLE

10

NO PARKING
EXCEPT FOR
LOADING AND
UNLOADING
←



251







UPS
Meeting
Hall
1000
1000

ESSEO
WHATC
STORAGE







EILEY BROWN
HOUSE
1848



JEFFREY GARDEN
SQUARE

OLNEY ST

OLNEY ST
PRATT ST

51

NO PARKING
ANY TIME



NO PARKING
ANY TIME



GOVERNOR

243



A three-story, light-colored wooden building with a dark mansard roof and dormer windows. The building is situated at a street corner. It features a small porch over the entrance and several windows on each floor. The building is surrounded by other residential structures and utility poles.

A utility pole with multiple power lines. A street sign is visible on the pole, indicating the street name. The pole is located at the corner of the street.

STREET NAME

100

A silver sedan parked on the street to the left of the main building.

A row of residential buildings along the street, including a white building with a porch and a blue building. The buildings are situated behind trees and utility poles.

A street with a crosswalk and a manhole cover. The street is paved and has a clear view of the buildings and utility poles.



43

43

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5



50

50

Blue street sign







61 49









AHEAD





Sheldon Street
Church
SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICES
SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:00 AM
SERMONS BY REV. DR.
WILLIAMSON
... PASTOR IN CHARGE ...
... REV. DR. WILLIAMSON ...

MVC
←





1000
1000

HE-560

