



JANE LANCASTER

Christiana Carteaux Bannister. Portrait, oil on canvas, by Edward Bannister, n.d. Courtesy of the Bannister Nursing Care Center and the Newport Art Museum.

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“I Would Have Made Out Very Poorly Had It Not Been For Her”: The Life and Work of Christianna Bannister, Hair Doctress and Philanthropist

Behind every successful man there is a woman: this truism was never more apt than in the case of Edward and Christiana Bannister. He became one of the best-known African American artists of the Gilded Age, while she made his career possible and provided the social and political framework for his life.

“I would have made out very poorly had it not been for her,” he acknowledged in his old age; “. . . my greatest successes have come through her, either through her criticisms of my pictures, or the advice she would give me in the matter of placing them in public.”¹ But Christiana’s influence extended beyond financial support and artistic criticism. By her activities within networks of abolitionists, black and white, and her contacts within the post-Civil War philanthropic community, Christiana Bannister provided her husband with clients and patrons while working for “racial uplift” and the betterment of other African Americans as well.

Christiana’s life was far from easy, and she died, alone and poor, in the Rhode Island State Hospital for the Insane. The vicissitudes of her life provide an insight into the precarious world of the black middle class in New England before and after the Civil War, and especially into the world of black middle-class women, the “talented tenth,” long before W. E. B. DuBois coined that phrase.

In Christiana Bannister’s life, race, class, and gender intersect with art, benevolence, and commerce to create a complicated whole. Telling her story is not easy, for she left no diary, no letters, no papers; and few traces of her long and busy life survive. Nevertheless, the pages of the abolitionist newspaper *Liberator*, where Christiana advertised for many years, the records of the Providence Home for Aged Colored Women, which Christiana helped to found, and numerous other records, such as census returns and city directories, reveal a fascinating saga of black self-help, solidarity, and pride.



In the mid-nineteenth-century, when “true” (white) womanhood centered on domestic virtues, few middle-class white women worked for pay outside the home, though many such women were heavily involved in charity work. Most black women, on the other hand, had to work outside the home in order to support their families, as racial discrimination seriously limited opportunities for black men to rise above the rank of unskilled laborers. Most of these black women were domestic servants, but a small minority became entrepreneurs. Christiana Bannister was one of these.

Black middle-class women also felt that they had duties to their race. This “race work” had two main elements. One was connected with black pride (a term coined by Dr. John Rock, a black Boston physician and a friend of the Bannisters, before the Civil War); the other involved racial uplift, and charitable and benevolent work for less fortunate members of the black community.²

Christiana Babcock Carteaux Bannister—to give her all of her names—was born to a mixed African American-Narragansett Indian family in North Kingstown in 1819 or 1820. Very little is known of Christiana's early life, though it is clear that she had energy and ability. Her appearance was that of a Native American; but since most members of the Narragansetts were intermarried with African Americans, she had a toe in both communities. Those of Christiana's grandparents who were African American most likely lived and died as slaves. Her parents were probably born after Rhode Island's gradual emancipation act of 1784 was passed, and so gained complete freedom at the age of twenty-one.

The years of Christiana's childhood and adolescence were difficult times for both blacks and Native Americans, nationally as well as locally within Rhode Island. In 1819 America was in the grip of a serious depression, and depressions then, as now, most affected people living on the edges of society. Race relations were deteriorating; in 1822, when she was three years old, black men in Rhode Island lost the vote, and 1824 saw the first serious racial disturbance in Providence. On the national level, a series of Indian Removal Acts had decimated the Cherokee and other Indian nations. By the time Christiana was eleven years old, the antislavery movement was starting to gain momentum; William Lloyd Garrison began publishing his uncompromising newspaper, the *Liberator*, in Boston in 1831, and both women and men were hard at work organizing antislavery groups in eastern cities. But these efforts were not to go unchallenged; the same year that the Underground Railroad started smuggling slaves to safety in Canada, antiabolitionist riots erupted in Philadelphia.

The early 1830s were also the tumultuous years of Prudence Crandall's ill-fated and short-lived school in Canterbury, just over the Connecticut border. When Crandall, a Rhode Island Quaker, decided to admit Sarah Harris, a light-skinned African American girl, to her school, the white parents of other girls enrolled there promptly withdrew their daughters. With the backing of abolitionists, black and white, Crandall then decided to reopen her school for "Young Ladies and Little Misses of Color." For this she was harassed by Connecticut's state legislature, which passed an act forbidding schools to teach out-of-state blacks (one of her earliest students was Ann Eliza Hammond of Providence). Crandall was briefly imprisoned for her defiance, and locals joined in the harassment, contaminating her well with manure, breaking windows, and hanging a dead cat from her gatepost. There is no evidence that Christiana Babcock attended Crandall's school (whose records are incomplete), so unless she attended a private school such as the Reverend John W. Lewis's New England Union Academy in Providence, intended for the children of "genteel people of color," it is unlikely she got anything beyond a grammar school education.³ Nevertheless, she did acquire education and polish at some stage in her life, and she was remembered, according to a 1916 magazine article, as "highly cultivated and a good conversationalist."⁴

The 1840s were little more peaceful. In 1842 Rhode Island saw the Dorr Rebellion, in which blacks allied with the state's conservative elements against the Dorrites (and the Irish), thereby regaining the vote they had lost twenty years before. In 1848 the Mexican War ended with the acquisition of California, which, under the terms of the Compromise of 1850, was admitted as a free state in return for a much more punitive Fugitive Slave Act.

During all this time Christiana Babcock was growing up and trying to make a living. We do not know when or where she started work, but it was probably in her early teens, and it might have been in Salem, Massachusetts. Her brother Charles had moved there after his marriage to Cecelia Remond, a hairdresser and a member of the leading black family in the town. Two of his new relatives, Charles Lenox Remond and Sarah Parker Remond,

were leading abolitionists. Cecelia's father, John Remond, a native of Curaçao, was Salem's most prominent caterer, but he had originally been a hairdresser, and he had taught two of his daughters—who appeared in the *Salem Directory* as "hair work manufacturers"—his former trade. This connection with the Remonds was extremely important to Christiana, for it both introduced her to the African American elite and gave her the opportunity to learn a trade.⁵

Christiana's first appearance in the printed record was in the 1846-47 *Boston Directory*, where she described herself as a milliner. By that time she was married to an older black man named Desiline Carteaux, a cigar maker. Desiline Carteaux first appeared in the Boston directory in 1839, when he, like many of his black peers, was identified as a clothes dealer (which usually meant a dealer in second-hand clothes).⁶ The following year he was listed as a hairdresser, and then his name disappeared from the Boston directories for the next five years. Apart from these fleeting glimpses, nothing is known about him, though his name suggests that he probably came from one of the French islands in the Caribbean, perhaps Haiti or Curaçao; perhaps Christiana met him through the Remonds. The Carteauxes lived on Cambridge Street on the northern slope of Beacon Hill in Boston, near where Massachusetts General Hospital now stands. The neighborhood was then the heart of Boston's black community; nearly three-quarters of the city's black population of two thousand lived there.

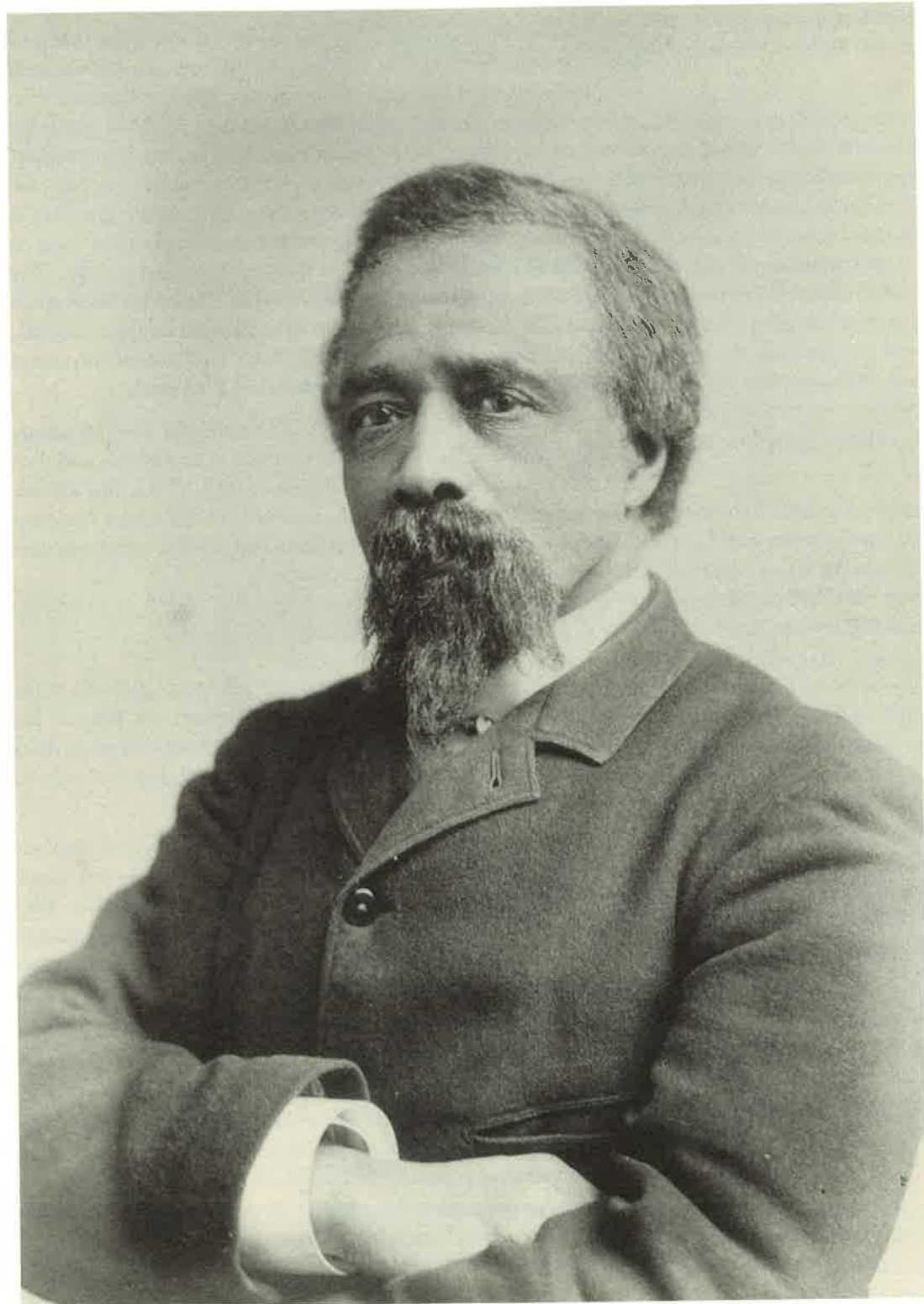
The Carteauxes' marriage apparently was unsuccessful. The U.S. census of 1850 showed that Christiana was then residing with friends in Providence, and there was no sign of her husband when she returned to Boston in 1851. At that time she was still earning her living as a milliner, but in 1853 she was listed in the *Boston Directory* as a hairdresser with her own salon. It is more than likely that most of her clients were male, as ladies' salons were a thing of the future.



Passed as part of the 1850 Compromise that admitted California to the Union as a free state, the Fugitive Slave Law had a severe impact on Boston's black community. Although Massachusetts had earlier decided not to return fugitive slaves, the federal law took precedence, and perhaps a quarter of Boston's six hundred or so fugitive slaves had left for Canada within weeks of its passage.⁷

It was about this time that Edward Mitchell Bannister, a young, free black man, left Canada and arrived in Boston. Bannister had been born in a small village in New Brunswick, probably in 1828 (though records vary considerably). His father was from Barbados; his mother's family came originally from Scotland. Bannister showed an early love of drawing, which was encouraged by his mother. After completing grammar school, he was sent to work for a wealthy lawyer, but he used his free time for painting. He apparently went to sea for a while before arriving in Boston in the early 1850s, with the intention of becoming an artist.⁸

But it was (and is) hard to make a living as an artist, and so by 1853, when he was about twenty-five, Bannister had taken a job as a hairdresser with Madam Christiana Carteaux and moved in with her.⁹ In her early thirties, with long dark hair worn demurely off her face, the divorced or widowed Christiana was an attractive woman, and she had important contacts in the black community. Edward Bannister was handsome, trim, and graceful—he was described by black author and activist William Wells Brown as "Spare-made, slim, with an interesting cast of countenance, quick in his walk and easy in his manners"—and he had big plans for the future.¹⁰ The two were married in 1857, when Christiana was thirty-seven and Bannister eight years younger.



Histrionic Club program, 1858.

Left

Edward Mitchell Bannister. Undated photograph.
RIHS Collection (RH X3 7347).

THE HISTRIONIC CLUB

Would most respectfully invite your presence to their Second Exhibition, to take place at
CHAPMAN HALL,
TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 2, 1858.
WILLIAM C. NELL, . . . MANAGER.

The presentations will proceed in the following order. Commencing with a **FACTOR**
 prepared for this occasion, by a Member, entitled the

INDIAN'S VISIT.

| | |
|--|--|
| Mr. Edwards . . . Edward M. Bannister. | Miss Morton - Miss Elizabeth C. Smith. |
| Wakinko | Madame Christiana Bannister. |

SCENE FROM THE

FOUR SISTERS.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Benuchamp Robert C. Davis. | Merton Jacob R. Andrews. |
| Caroline Mrs. Rachel Rose. | Susan Mrs. Ruth Bannister. |

TODD'S (compressed) COMEDY OF THE

HONEY MOON.

| | |
|--|--|
| Duke Aranza George L. Ruffin. | Lopez . . . Auxiliary . . . Ira Nell Gray. |
| Rolando William H. Slapson. | Pedro Richard S. Greener. |
| Montalban Edward M. Bannister. | Jullana Mrs. Sybil R. Lenox. |
| Jaques, (the mock Duke,) Wm. Hopkins. | Volante Mrs. Louisa C. Oliver. |
| Balthazar Jacob R. Andrews. | Zanora Mrs. Anne Gray. |

SCENE FROM THE

HUNCHBACK.

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Sir Thomas Clifford - Geo. Washington, Jr. | Master Walter Wm. C. Nell. |
| Julia | Mrs. Louisa Nell Gray. |

PERFECTION.

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Sir Lawrence Paragon - Jacob R. Andrews. | Kate O'Brien - Mrs. Louisa C. Oliver. |
| Charles Paragon Robert C. Davis. | Susan Mrs. Anne Campbell. |
| Sam William H. Slapson. | |

To conclude with A SCENE FROM

RAISING THE WIND.

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Jeremy Diddler William C. Nell. | Richard Richard S. Greener. |
| Fainwould George L. Ruffin. | George Ira Nell Gray. |
| Sam William Hopkins. | |

NOTE. As a mutual accommodation to the "hard times," the Club have ventured
 on this experiment, on the condition that such of their friends as feel disposed, may avail
 themselves of an opportunity to relieve them in part of the incidental expenses, by procuring
 Tickets (from the Members) admitting the holders to a Social Entertainment at the close of
 the Dramatic performances.

It will be necessary for you to show this Programme
 to the Doorkeeper.

Doors open at 6— to commence at 7 o'clock. [BOSTON, Feb. 22, 1858.]

Although the history of hairdressing has yet to be written, one scholar has noted that professional ladies' hairdressers were rare before the Civil War, since most women either dressed their own hair or, if they were affluent, had their maids or slaves do it.¹¹ After the war many ladies' hairdressers seem to have been women of color, and so Christiana Carteaux, if a generation ahead of the curve, was typical in terms of her racial background. Hairdressing was also important for Christiana's involvement in the abolitionist community, as several barbershops served as information centers for the Underground Railroad.¹² Christiana's salon became a center of community activity, and the Histrionic

Club, a black theater group that both Christiana and Edward belonged to, rehearsed in a room above her salon. In a show the club put on in 1858, Christiana played an American Indian woman, Wakinko, in a sketch entitled “Indian’s Visit,” one of several Indian parts she was to play. Edward Bannister, said to have a “splendid” tenor voice, also sang in the Crispus Attucks Quartet, named after the first black man to die in the American Revolution.¹³

Christiana was to become part of the women’s benevolent tradition, whereby middle-class women, black as well as white, helped their less fortunate sisters. She had no children to make demands on her time, and she almost certainly had nieces and nephews living in her home and doing the housekeeping. There were plenty of opportunities for benevolence in antebellum black Boston, where the United Daughters of Zion was organized in 1845, the Female Benevolent Firm in 1850, and the Grand Order of Brothers and Sisters of Love and Charity in 1863.¹⁴

Meanwhile, Christiana was working hard in her salon. In 1857 she started advertising in the *Liberator*, William Lloyd Garrison’s abolitionist weekly. Her advertisement read thus:

HAIR DOCTRESS

MADAME CARTEAUX having, by a long course of study and practical investigation, made herself acquainted with the various diseases incidental to the Hair and Scalp, would now inform the public of Boston and vicinity, that she trusts she is prepared to give entire satisfaction to all who may favor her with their patronage, and warrant a cure in nine cases out of ten.

Having recently removed from 284 to 365 Washington street, where she has a superior suit of rooms, she now advertises a separate room for Hair Dying, also an improvement in that branch, and Champooing.

Madame C. keeps constantly on hand, her celebrated Hair Restorative and Oils, which will not only prevent the hair from falling off, but cause new hair to grow. They are held in the highest estimation by all who have used them.

Madame C’s references are from the first people in this and neighboring cities, by whom she has been liberally patronized since the offer of her services to the public.¹⁵

This advertisement suggests several things: that men, more prone to hair loss than women, made up a large part of Christiana’s clientele; that hair dyeing, done in “a separate room,” was not very respectable; and that Christiana herself, a “Hair Doctress,” was no ordinary hairdresser.

Christiana was not the only supplier of hair products advertising in the *Liberator*. A Mrs. S. A. Allen, of New York, regularly published full-column advertisements (Christiana’s were much smaller) under the banner heading IT IS NOT A DYE! in order to advertise her ZYLOBAL-SAMUM (which was always capitalized) and her WORLD’S HAIR RESTORER. Most of the column was taken up with testimonials from clergymen such as the Reverend M. Thacher (sixty years of age) of Pitcher, Chenango County, New York, who was quoted as saying, “My hair is now restored to its natural color, and ceases to fall out,” or from eminent men like Dr. J. H. Eaton, president of Union University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, who testified that “Notwithstanding the irregular use of Mrs. S. A. Allen’s World’s Hair Restorer, etc, the falling of hair ceased, and my grey locks were restored to their original color.”

Such advertisements reinforce the suggestion that much of Christiana’s hair doctoring was directed at balding men; but women also suffer graying and thinning hair. An advertisement that Christiana began running in the *Liberator* later in 1857 was aimed more particularly at ladies. The heading remained the same—“Hair Doctress”—but with her marriage she had changed both her name and her address:

IMPROVEMENT IN CHAMPOOING AND HAIR-DRESSING

MADAM BANNISTER (formerly Madam CARTEAUX) would inform her kind and liberal patrons and the public, that she has removed to 323 Washington st., and 20 West st.; where will be found her Restorative, the most celebrated in the world, as it prevents hair turning gray, and produces new in all diseases of the scalp. She stands second to none in Hair-Dressing and Champooing.

Ladies waited on at their residences, either in or out of town.

Hair dressed in the latest style. She can refer to the first people in the cities of Boston, Providence, Worcester, and elsewhere. Come and try for yourselves.¹⁶

By 1862 she was giving more information about her hair preparations, claiming that

Her restorative differs from that of anyone else, being made of roots and herbs of the forest.

She Champoos with a bark which does not grow in this country, and which is highly beneficial to the hair before using the Restorative, and will prevent the hair from turning grey. . . .

She is not afraid to speak of her Restoratives in any part of the world, as they are used in every city in the country. They are also packed for her customers to take to Europe with them, enough to last two to three years, as they often say they can get nothing abroad like them.¹⁷

In 1859 and 1860 the Bannisters lodged at the home of Lewis Hayden, the most important and most militant Underground Railroad leader in Boston (Hayden had more than once threatened to blow up his house, with himself and all the runaway slaves in it, rather than allow slave catchers across the threshold). During this time the Bannisters were deeply involved in the abolitionist community.¹⁸ Meanwhile, by 1859 Christiana’s business had become successful enough to allow Edward to give up hairdressing for a career as an artist, and he accordingly announced to the world, via the *Boston Directory*, that he was a portrait painter. But commissions were scarce, and though Christiana continued to work hard to support them, a discouraged Edward Bannister turned to the trade of photography and spent a year working for a maker of daguerreotypes in New York.

Bannister was back in Boston in time for the celebration of Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation on New Year’s Day, 1863. The Civil War was not going well for the North. Union forces had been turned back at Fredericksburg and Vicksburg, and sixty-five thousand men were due to be discharged that summer and fall. For two years leaders of the Union had refused to accept black troops, despite the agitation of abolitionists and black leaders for a regiment that would allow black men to demonstrate their competence and bravery. But finally, in January 1863, Massachusetts governor John A. Andrew, an abolitionist, persuaded Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton to authorize the recruiting of a black regiment. This unit, the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Infantry, would become (in Andrew’s words) a “model for all future colored Regiments,” and its “success or failure [would] go far to elevate or to depress the estimation in which the character of the Colored American [would] be held throughout the world.”¹⁹ Since Union leaders were not ready to accept black officers, the twenty-five-year-old Robert Gould Shaw, the son of a Brahmin abolitionist family, was chosen to command the regiment. He accepted the appointment, after initial reluctance, with the rank of colonel.

Boston’s blacks did not rush to enlist. There were several reasons for this: they resented their earlier exclusion from the army; they resented the lack of black officers; and the economy, after several lean years, was strong. In addition, it was known that any black soldier captured by the Confederates risked enslavement or execution. Nevertheless, by the spring of 1863 at least 137 young black Bostonians—about 40 percent of the military-age black males in the city—had enlisted, and as time went on there were enough recruits to form another black regiment, the Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Infantry.

Members of the Fifty-fourth went with recruits from other areas to a training camp at Readville, south of Boston, where Colonel Shaw drilled and trained them. White abolitionists

were supportive of the troops, and a white-led Committee to Aid the Massachusetts Colored Volunteers regularly appealed for funds. Besides direct aid and supplies for the soldiers, money was needed to defray the expenses of agents who were traveling as far

as Philadelphia, Saint Louis, and Rochester, New York, to recruit volunteers. The committee regularly listed donations in the *Liberator*. After an initial burst of support brought in over a thousand dollars in March 1863, small contributions and donations of socks and towels continued to trickle in.²⁰

On 18 May 1863 Governor Andrew and a party of dignitaries—including William Lloyd Garrison of the *Liberator*, abolitionist Wendell Phillips, black orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass, and Christiana Bannister, in her capacity as president of the Colored Ladies' Relief Committee—took the train to Readville to present the Fifty-fourth Regiment, now a thousand strong, with its colors. Apparently the railways were not altogether integrated; the *Liberator* noted that nine or ten extra cars were added to the train "to accommodate the hundreds of colored persons of both sexes who have a personal interest in the 54th." To the huge crowd in attendance, "a large number of ladies, friends of the officers, drawn in elegant turnouts, added a brilliancy." Black minister Leonard Grimes offered a prayer, Governor Andrew made a short speech, and then four flags were presented—one by Governor Andrew, one by the young black women of Boston, one by Christiana, and one by "a large and patriotic committee."²¹

Four days later the regiment marched in full dress uniform through Boston, round the Common and past the State House, before embarking by boat to South Carolina.



Meanwhile, during the period when the Fifty-fourth had been drilling and marching in the mud south of Boston, a national draft law had come into effect, making all men between the ages of twenty and forty-five eligible for military service. In Massachusetts, however, only 743, or less than half of 1 percent, actually served. Most of these were poor men who could not afford to pay substitutes to take their place. The poor in Boston and other eastern cities were predominantly Irish, many of whom were in

NOW IN CAMP AT READVILLE!

54th REGIMENT!

MASS. VOLUNTEERS, composed of men of

AFRICAN DESCENT

COL. ROBERT G. SHAW.

Colored Men, Rally 'Round the Flag of Freedom!

BOUNTY \$100!

AT THE EXPIRATION OF THE TERM OF SERVICE.

Pay, \$13 a Month!

Good Food & Clothing!

State Aid to Families!

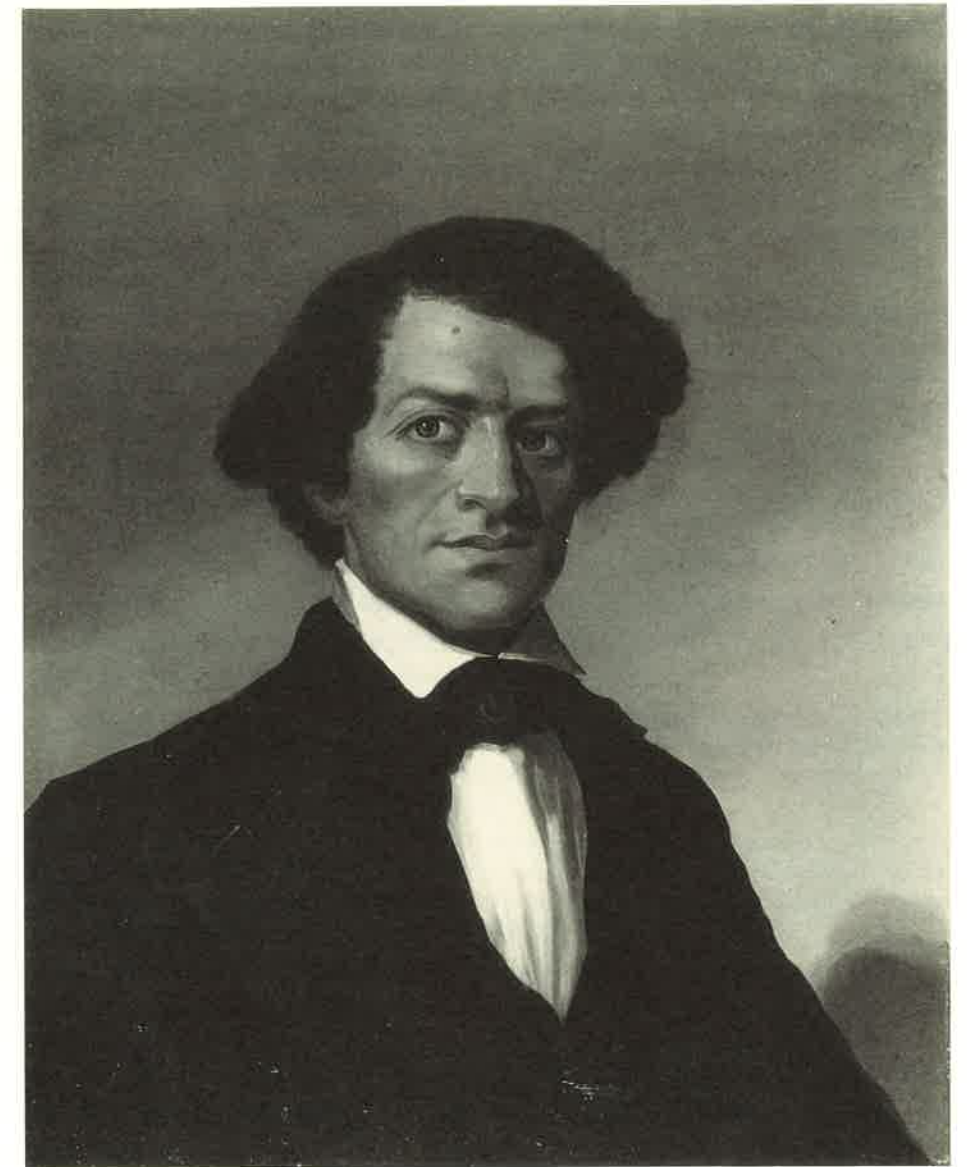
RECRUITING OFFICE,

COR. CAMBRIDGE & NORTH RUSSELL STS.

BOSTON.

MAJOR J. W. M. APPLETON, Recruiting Officer.

Broadside, 1863. Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.



Frederick Douglass. Portrait, oil on canvas, by an anonymous artist, n.d. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 569).

vicious competition for jobs with the next poorest group, the blacks, and they bitterly resented having to fight to free the slaves.

Riots broke out in several eastern cities. The most serious rioting occurred in New York, where on 13 July Irish mobs attacked the Colored Orphans Asylum on Fifth Avenue. The following day a riot erupted in Boston's North End after some Irish Catholic priests had been heard using, in the words of a Catholic official, words "calculated to inflame the minds of their hearers."²² Police were forced to withdraw into their station house, where the mob held them hostage. Informed of the situation, Governor Andrew hurried back to Boston from the Harvard commencement he was attending. Although the Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Infantry was nearby and at full strength—the only such unit available—Governor Andrew decided that black troops could not be "safely employed" to put down a riot of white citizens. Four men, all of them Irish, were killed by bullets before the rioting ended.²³

By 18 July peace had returned to Boston. That day was considerably less peaceful in South Carolina, where the Fifty-fourth Infantry was carrying out an assault on Charleston. Its particular objective was to capture Fort Wagner, one of the heavily forti-

fied islands that protected the city. The assault was not successful; although the regiment's troops acquitted themselves well, they were heavily outnumbered and the support they expected did not arrive. With Colonel Shaw killed and a third of the unit's officers and nearly half of its enlisted men killed or wounded, the Fifty-fourth was forced to withdraw after two hours.²⁴

The regiment had, however, created two heroes, one white, one black. In addition to celebrations of Shaw, Sgt. William Carney, of New Bedford, became a popular hero. Carney had planted the national flag on the parapet of Fort Wagner during the battle; when the retreat was sounded, he seized the flag and carried it back to the Union lines, in spite of wounds he had sustained in his head, shoulder, and both legs. His words on that occasion—"They got me, boys, but the old flag never touched the ground"—became a part of popular legend.²⁵

But despite its honorable service, the Fifty-fourth Infantry was badly treated by the American government. The members of the regiment had volunteered with the understanding that they would receive the same pay as white soldiers; that is, \$13.00 a month plus a clothing allowance of \$3.50. But on 2 July 1863, when they were already in the South, it was announced in Washington that they would instead be paid only \$10.00 a month, with a \$3.00 *deduction* for their clothing. The government's rationale was that they were not soldiers but laborers—clearly an erroneous assumption.

The men of the Fifty-fourth refused to accept any pay at all until the injustice was rectified. According to Louis F. Emilio, a white officer who wrote a history of the regiment, "When the Fifty-Fourth was offered a compromise, the men answered with one voice: 'No. We need the money you offer; our families are starving because the government does not pay us what it promised; but we demand to be recognized as soldiers of the Republic, entitled to the same rights which white people have. Until you grant that, we will not touch a dollar.'"²⁶ Governor Andrew offered to make up the pay, but this too was refused. It was a difficult time for the soldiers, but an even more difficult one for those of their families who were relying on support from sons and husbands in the regiment; the soldiers, at least, were being clothed and fed. (In one unfortunate instance, the wife and children of a Sergeant Swails, who had been promoted for his bravery on the battlefield, had to go into the poorhouse when their money ran out.)²⁷

Finally, reversing the government's earlier ruling, on 15 June 1864 Congress voted full pay to all black soldiers, and the members of the regiment received their back pay from the time of their enlistment.²⁸ Although the black community had been raising money for the soldiers and their families, problems continued for many even after the government payments were received. With these circumstances persisting, the Colored Ladies' Sanitary Committee went into action later that year, organizing a five-day fund-raising fair for the benefit of disabled veterans and their families. Octavia Grimes, the wife of the Reverend Leonard Grimes, was the committee's treasurer; Christiana Bannister was its president.

Ladies' fairs were an established means of abolitionist fund-raising. One such event was the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society's annual fair, held from 1834 through 1858, when it was replaced with a direct monetary subscription. The fair began small, but it "crystallized," according to one scholar, "as a desideratum of Boston's social season," and during the early 1850s it raised about five thousand dollars a year. The society's lady managers pioneered a number of unusual features; the 1843 fair, for instance, had a Christmas tree—a recently introduced symbol of Christmas—"the height of the hall . . . hung with gilded apples, glittering strings of nuts and almonds, tissue paper purses of the gayest dyes, filled with glittering egg-baskets and crystals of many-colored sugar."²⁹

Boston's abolitionist women were more welcoming to black women abolitionists than were their associates in, say, New York. Christiana's sisters-in-law, the Remonds, were active in many abolitionist groups. Although Christiana's name does not appear on any lists of fair organizers, she may well have patronized abolitionist fairs occasionally, and she must certainly have known that plenty of advertising, a well-decorated hall, famous patrons, and art works related to the cause were a good draw. All of these elements were evident in a description of the 1864 Colored Ladies' Fair—organized by Christiana's Colored Ladies' Sanitary Committee—in the *Liberator*:

The fair of the colored ladies of this city, for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers of Massachusetts, opened at forenoon at Mercantile Hall in Summer Street. The hall has been beautifully decorated, and the tables are well filled with useful and ornamental articles, grab boxes, guessing cakes, a post office &c &c. There is a fine piano made by Chickering, one of Mason and Hamlin's Cabinet Organs, and a portrait of the lamented Col. Shaw, valued at two hundred dollars, executed by the young colored artist Edward M. Bannister, to be disposed of by a raffle. Addresses were made in the evening by Hon. Henry Wilson, Rev. Dr. Neale and Col. Lucius B. Marsh. The fair was well patronized yesterday and will continue open through the week.³⁰

One of the white visitors to the fair was the writer Lydia Maria Child, who had been brought to national notice by her offer to minister to John Brown after he was imprisoned for his abortive 1859 attack on Harpers Ferry. Child described her visit in a letter to an abolitionist journal:

The advertisement to a Fair for widows and orphans of colored soldiers drew me to the city a fortnight ago. I found a US flag suspended across Summer Street, bearing the inscription "Colored Soldiers' Fair." It was a sign of the times well calculated to excite a crowd of recollections and emotions in the heart of an old Abolitionist.

The Fair was held in Mercantile Hall, and the colored ladies who presided over it had decorated it very tastefully with Stars and Stripes. They love the old banner now. At the head of the Hall was a full length portrait of Col. Shaw, painted by Bannister, and above it in large embroidered letters was the touching and appropriate motto "Our Martyr."³¹

That letter was meant for publication. Although Child was sympathetic to blacks, she found it difficult not to sound a little condescending in a private letter she wrote at the same time. In that letter Child mentioned that she "went to spend a little money at the Fair" and described Bannister's painting and the motto. "To me," she added, "there is something beautiful and pathetic in these efforts of a humble and oppressed people to canonize the memory of the young hero who died for them."³²



Christiana's activities in the years immediately following the Civil War are unclear. Edward Bannister's career was starting to take off, and by 1865 he had changed his listing in the *Boston Directory* from "photographer" to "artist." For two years, 1864 and 1865, he and the young sculptor Edmonia Lewis had studios in the same building. Lewis, of mixed black and Chippewa ancestry, had come to Boston in 1862 and, like the Bannisters, had become involved in the abolitionist community. Her first success was a medallion of the head of John Brown. Working from photographs, in 1864 she modeled a bust of Robert Gould Shaw; a hundred copies were made, of which she sold enough at a fair in November 1864 to realize her ambition—to travel to Rome, the sculptor's mecca, where she stayed for the rest of her life.³³

It appears that the Bannisters may have lived apart from 1866 to 1868, when they were listed under separate addresses in the city directory. In 1869 the directory showed them living together in Hyde Park, at a distance from Boston's West End, where they had resided for many years. Boston was changing quickly during this time. Racial antagonism between the Irish and the black community continued to simmer, and sometimes

it boiled over. Competition for jobs was fierce. When Irish caulkers demanded to work an eight-hour rather than a nine-hour day, French Canadians and southern blacks were brought in to break their strike. Irish railroad employees in Cambridge managed to exclude black labor, but when white construction workers in Boston objected to the hiring of black laborers, all the whites were fired.³⁴

Meanwhile, the Freedmen's Bureau was sponsoring large-scale migration of former slaves from the South. Former black abolitionists, including the Reverend Leonard Grimes and his wife, Octavia, soon became involved in meeting the refugees on their arrival in Boston, putting them up in a home on Joy Street across from the African Meeting house, sending them to the Howard Street Industrial School for training, and eventually finding them jobs, charging employers five dollars for each placement. Mrs. Grimes ran afoul of the head of the Freedmen's Bureau when he discovered that she had been pocketing the five-dollar fees rather than forwarding them to Washington, though it is not unreasonable to suppose that this money was helping to defray the costs of the operation.³⁵

Not all in the black community welcomed the newcomers. Defending herself against accusations of ill-treating her charges, the white matron of the Howard Street School accused the "resident colored population of Boston" of being "opposed to having its numbers increased by emigration from the South."³⁶ Like their German Jewish counterparts in New York when faced with the large-scale migration of Jews from eastern Europe, the black elite tried to uplift the newcomers while simultaneously maintaining a social distance from them. But with resentment against the relatively uneducated, unskilled, cheap labor from the South spilling over to resentment against all blacks, and Jim Crow-style segregated facilities making their appearance, the black middle class found it hard to sustain the advances they had made in the previous two decades. At this point the Bannisters seem to have decided to opt out of the struggle in Boston, and though Christiana continued to operate her salon there through 1872, in 1869 they moved to Providence.



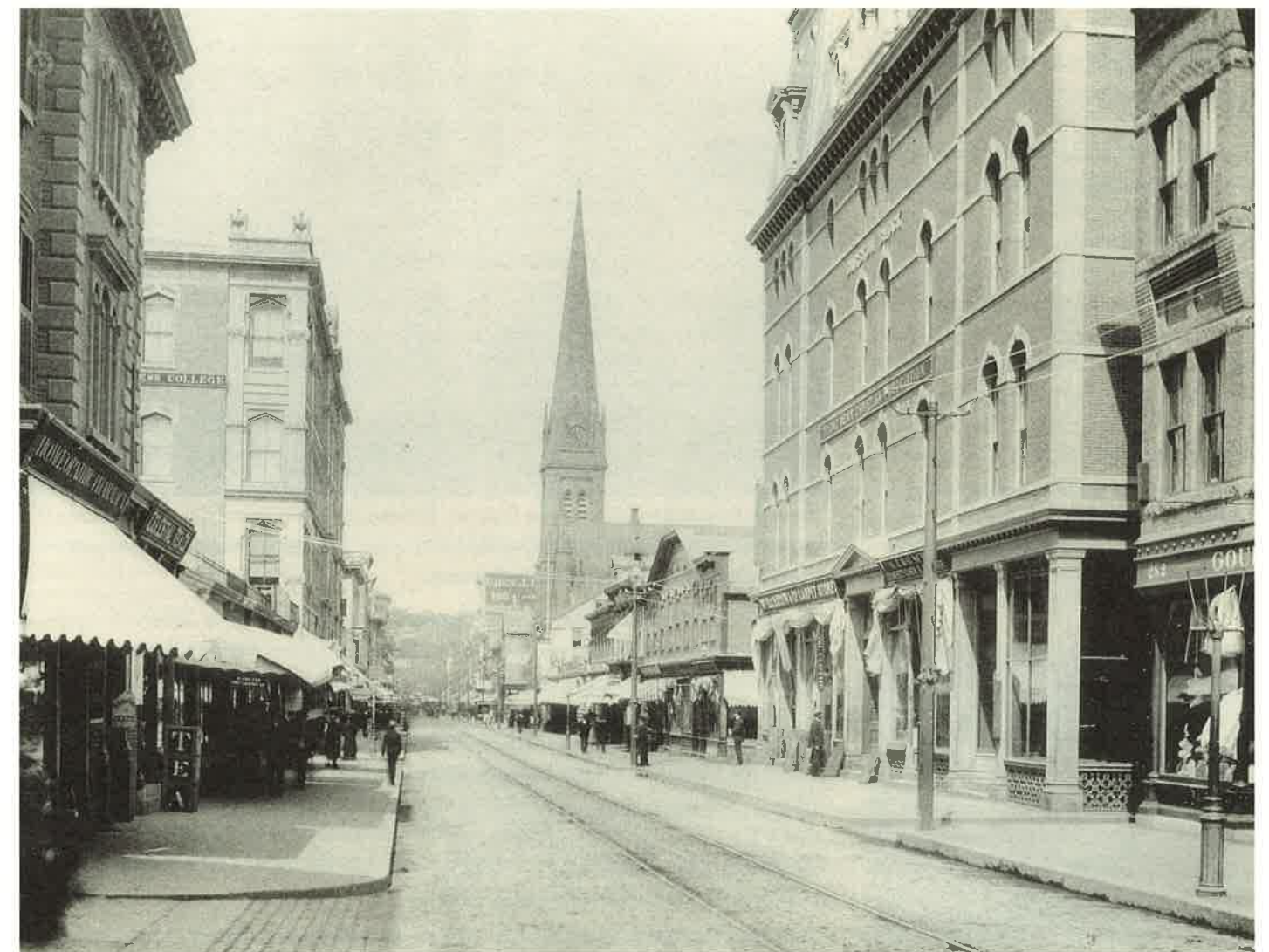
Ironically, Providence was at least as much in the grip of Jim Crow as Boston was. Black leaders in Providence were waging an uphill struggle for access to theaters, restaurants, skating rinks, and other leisure facilities, as well as to barbershops, churches, and juries.³⁷ On the other hand, the city proved to be an excellent location for Edward Bannister, and his artistic career thrived.

Although Christiana's activities for the next decade are not well documented, there are occasional glimpses of her. The 1870 census recorded her as living with her Canadian-born alien husband (Edward Bannister never became an American citizen). Both apparently shaved several years off their ages in responding to the census: Edward, probably forty-four, said he was thirty-eight; Christiana, almost certainly fifty, claimed to be forty. They had relatives living with them: nineteen-year-old Estelle Babcock was keeping house; her mother, Christiana's sister-in-law, was also there, as was fifteen-year-old schoolboy William Bannister, probably a nephew of Edward's. All five described themselves as mulattoes.

In 1870 Christiana, as Madame Carteaux, Hair Doctress, opened another salon at 5 Burrill Street, just off Westminster, the main shopping street in downtown Providence. By the following year Christiana had moved that salon to 224 Westminster Street, a better location. With his career flourishing, by 1874 Edward had moved his studio from 14 Westminster Street to the Woods Building, at 2 College Street, where he was to stay for

most of the next quarter century. Meanwhile, Christiana had bought a small house on Swan Street in South Providence, where the Bannisters lived from 1871 until 1876, when they rented it and moved in with Ransom Parker and his family on Cushing Street on Providence's East Side. Christiana's name then disappeared from the *Providence Directory* until she reappeared, still as Madame Carteaux, Hair Doctress, on Westminster Street in 1883. There are several possible explanations for the seven-year gap: perhaps Christiana temporarily retired; perhaps the Bannisters had separated and she was living elsewhere; perhaps the directory was simply incomplete.

Those seven years were notable ones for Edward Bannister. Professionally successful and socially integrated, he was a cofounder, in 1880, of the Providence Art Club and a member of the local art community's A. E. (or Ann Eliza) Club.³⁸ He won prizes at exhibitions in Providence and Boston and, most importantly, at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, where his landscape *Under the Oaks* won first prize for painting.



Westminster Street, Providence, looking east from Aborn Street, 1886, RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7332).

The story of the rudeness of the clerk at the exposition's gallery has been often told. Having read in the newspaper that his picture had won the prize, Bannister decided to go to check for himself. According to his account, the clerk demanded,

in the most exasperating tone of voice, "Well, what do you want here any way? Speak lively." "I want to enquire concerning 54. Is it a prize winner?" "What's that to you," said he. In an instant

my blood was up: the looks that passed between him and others in the room were unmistakable. I was not an artist to them, simply an inquisitive colored man; controlling myself, I said deliberately, "I am interested in the report that *Under The Oaks* has received a prize; I painted the picture." An explosion could not have made a more marked impression. Without hesitation he apologized, and soon everyone in the room was bowing and scraping to me.³⁹

In 1884 the Bannisters moved from Ransom Parker's house to a newly built house on Benevolent Street, also on the East Side. The fourteen years during which they rented that house were the longest they ever lived in one place. Christiana seems to have been a noticeable presence in the neighborhood; one account of the state's black community pictures her as "a stately figure who wore a purple dress walking on Benefit Street."⁴⁰ Edward bought a boat, which he sailed up and down the East Coast, and during the summers the Bannisters rented a cottage on Narragansett Bay.

Edward and Christiana seem to have been very much involved in the black community in the 1880s and early 1890s. Ransom Parker, in whose house they boarded for several years, was an important man in that community. The son of a black father and a white mother, he had been active in the Dorr Rebellion in the 1840s. Formerly a teacher, he worked as a nurse during his sixties, when the Bannisters shared his house. His daughter had married a doctor and moved to Liberia, where her three children were born, but they were now all in Providence.⁴¹ The Bannisters had friends among other of the state's black elite as well—people like George Henry, a former slave who became one of the wealthiest blacks in Rhode Island by the time of his death in 1900,⁴² and George Downing, the prosperous Newport caterer whom they had known in Boston back in the 1850s, when they were all involved in the abolitionist movement.

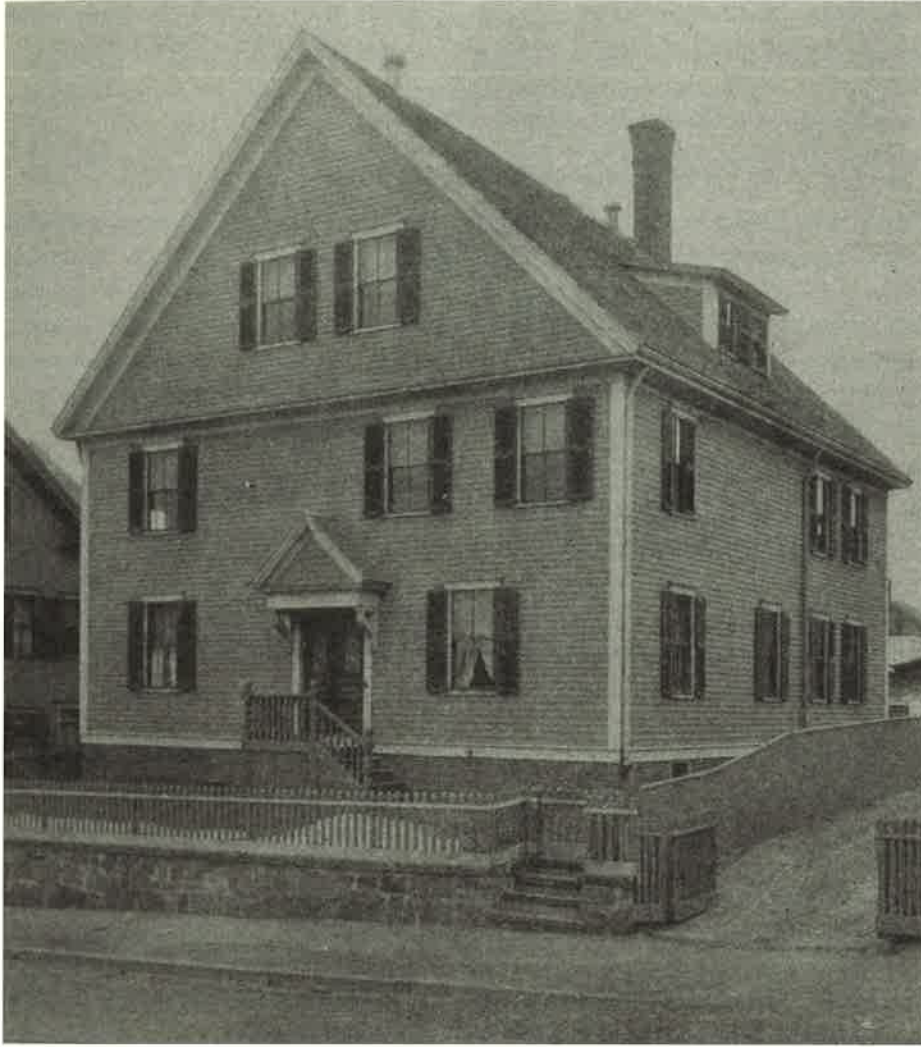
These connections were probably the reason for Christiana's involvement with the Home for Aged Colored Women. The late 1880s saw an effort within Providence's black community to organize a home for retired black women who had no family to care for them. Most of the needy women were former domestic servants. In 1888 black leaders gathered at a Methodist church on Meeting Street to discuss ways to care for these women, and they began raising funds and looking for a place to house the proposed facility. Christiana approached some of the society women she knew through her hair-dressing business to ask for their support. She doubtlessly pointed out, very politely, that many of the black women needing help had spent their entire adult lives living in white people's homes and raising white children.

The most responsive of the women Christiana approached was Elizabeth Goddard Shepard, whose husband, T. P. Shepard, owned Providence's premier department store. There was already a connection between Mrs. Shepard and the Bannisters: as a Goddard, Mrs. Shepard was a member of the family (one of the oldest in Rhode Island) that owned the Warwick estate on which Edward Bannister had painted his prizewinning *Under the Oaks*. The entire Goddard family became major benefactors of the project. When it was discovered that the house the black leaders' committee had found in East Providence was unsuitable, Thomas Goddard donated a lot in the Fox Point section of Providence, Mrs. Shepard volunteered to build a house on it, and William and Robert Goddard promised to provide the furniture.⁴³

The Home for Aged Colored Women opened at 45 East Transit Street in April 1890, with Mrs. Shepard as the honorary president and women with old Rhode Island names filling the various offices. When the Home was incorporated by the General Assembly that January, at least one black person was listed among the incorporators—the Reverend Mahlon Van Horne, the pastor of the Union Congregational Church in Newport, who five years earlier had become the first black to serve in the legislature. Along with Van Horne, Christiana Bannister was a member of the corporation from the first year, as was

Mahlon Van Horne. Halftone photograph by the Remington Printing Company, Providence, 1901. RIHS Collection (RHi X3 7089).





The Home for Aged Colored Women, East Transit Street, Providence. From the cover of the Home's 1897 annual report.

Hester Henry, George Henry's wife, who became a life member with her contribution of twenty-five dollars. The other twenty-eight members of the original corporation were drawn from the white elite, including members of the Angell, Brown, Chace, DeWolf, Gammell, and Hoppin families.

The Bannisters played an active role in supporting the Home's operations. Christiana received special mention in the secretary's report for the first five years, and she was prominent in the list of donors appended to each report. "We cannot thank Mrs. Bannister enough for her untiring zeal and labor in behalf of the Home," wrote the secretary in the first annual report. The \$147.16 that Christiana collected, either through donations or life memberships, was the largest sum collected by any individual that year. The annual reports show that Christiana continued to solicit money and donations of food and other supplies, except for a single year, for the rest of her life. Meanwhile, Edward exhibited his painting *Christ Healing the Sick* at the Home in 1892, and he donated to the Home his portrait of Christiana, which he had probably completed some years earlier. Edward also joined Col. Robert

Goddard and Halsey DeWolf on the Home's advisory board in 1892, and he continued to serve on the board until his death.



The last few years of the Bannisters' lives seem to have been difficult. Edward Bannister was now finding it hard to sell his paintings, and Christiana, at nearly eighty, was too old to be running a business. Edward apparently moved back to Boston for a year in 1899, and Christiana may have gone with him; for the first time since the founding of the Home for Aged Colored Women, her name does not appear in its annual report. In 1900 the Bannisters rented a small house on Wilson Street in Providence, a considerable step down from their previous home on Benevolent Street. According to the census of that year, many of their neighbors were immigrants from Germany, Scotland, and England; they were tailors, dressmakers, jewelry workers, house painters, foremen, carpenters, and laborers, and they were all white.

On 9 January 1901 Edward Bannister died suddenly during a prayer meeting at the Elmwood Avenue Baptist Church. He was in his mid seventies. A friend described his death: "With a mind clouded and bewildered, a hand that had lost its cunning, mentally and physically a wreck, he passed away in his beloved church."⁴⁴ Near his grave at

Providence's North Burial Ground a group of white artists erected a seven-foot-high granite boulder, adorned with a bronze palette and scroll and an inscribed tribute:

Friends of this pure and lofty soul
Freed from the form which lies beneath the sod
Have planted this stone to mark the grave of him
Who, while he portrayed nature, walked with God.

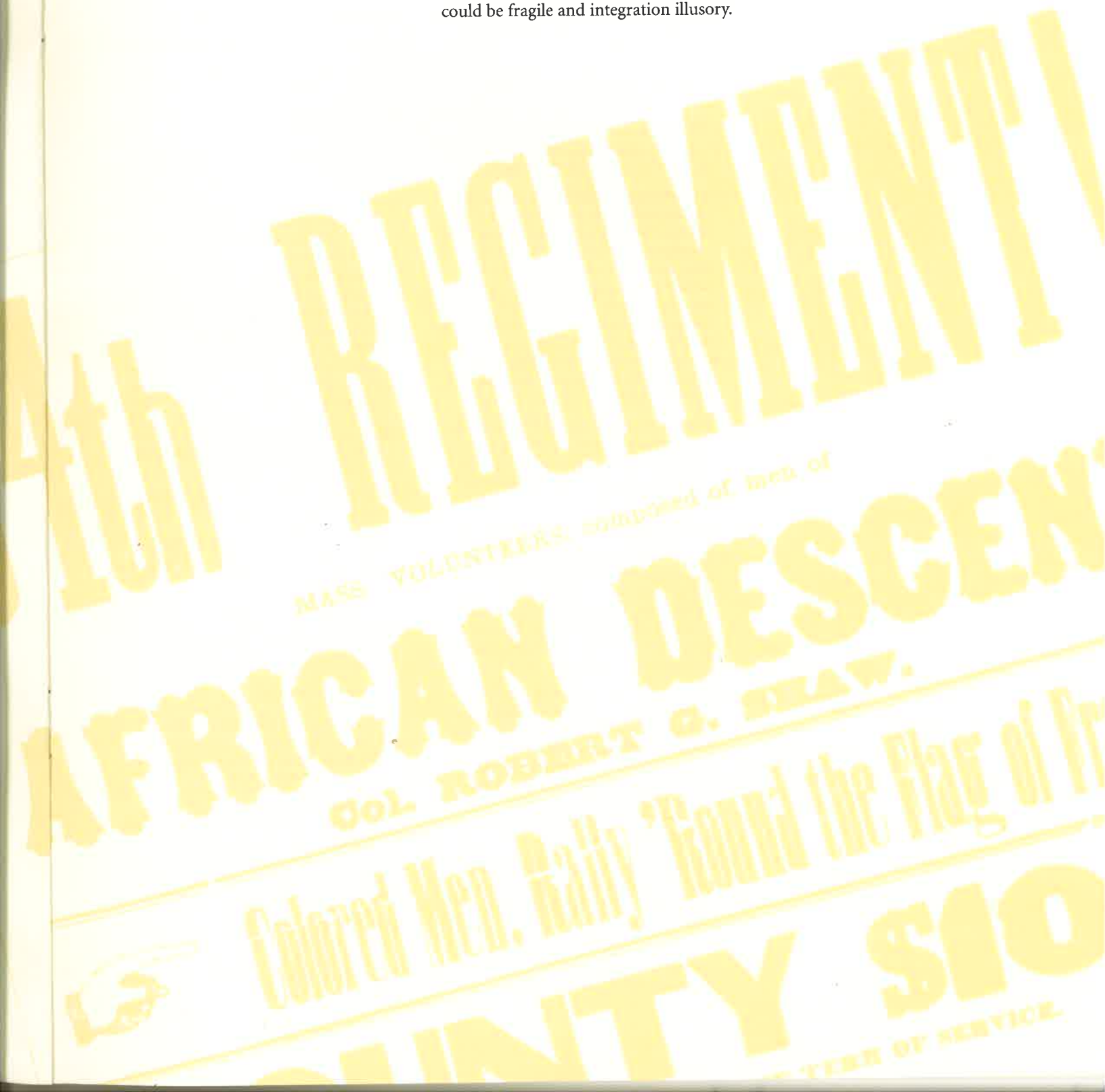
Eleven of the artists posed for a photograph next to the monument when it was dedicated in November of that year.⁴⁵ A friend—perhaps not one of the group—remarked, with some bitterness, that “in the labor incident to this work I was constantly reminded of the remark attributed to the mother of Robert Burns on being shown the splendid monument erected to the memory of her gifted son: ‘He asked for bread and they gave him a stone.’”⁴⁶ The photograph did not include Christiana, who was increasingly troubled by age, poverty, and illness. Bread would have been of use to her too.

By 21 September 1902 Christiana could no longer manage alone, and she was admitted to the Home for Aged Colored Women. There had long been an understanding that if she wished, she would be admitted to the Home without paying the usual \$150 fee. But Christiana did not stay there long. The secretary recorded in the annual report for 1903 that “Mrs. Bannister was in an excited though exhausted state when she arrived, and, in a few days, became violently insane, so that it was necessary to remove her after she had been but eight days in the Home.” The bylaws of the Home, printed in its first annual report, clearly stated that it was not a nursing home, and “If any inmate is pronounced insane by the attending physician, and his opinion is confirmed by a consulting physician, such inmate must be removed from the Home either by her friends or by the action of the Executive Board, as the Home has no facilities for treating insanity.” The board members with whom she had served for over a decade did nothing to prevent her removal, and Christiana had no close relatives who were able or willing to take care of her, and so on 29 September she was taken to the State Hospital for the Insane, ten miles away in Cranston. There was a certain irony in the fact that the superintendent of that institution, Dr. George F. Keene, was an old friend of Edward Bannister’s—the two had been fellow members of the A. E. Club back in the 1880s—but there is no evidence that this was of any comfort to Christiana.

The Howard Asylum, as it was called, was overcrowded and in desperate need of new buildings to house its 808 inmates; it was only the release of more than 250 men and women “on parole” and the discharge of 58 more that made room for the 323 new inmates who were admitted during 1902.⁴⁷ The asylum was, however, as forward-looking as its inadequate facilities permitted. The inmates were not permitted to be totally idle; they were expected to help on the hospital farm, and the institution’s annual report for 1902 lists the quantities of strawberries, corn and summer squash, and beef and pork they produced. But such work was hardly suitable for old ladies suffering from senile dementia, and it is likely that Christiana spent her last three months in bed, in a ward with similarly afflicted women. She died on 29 December 1902, exactly three months after she entered the asylum.

Christiana’s funeral was held in early January 1903. It started from the home of her niece, Miss Melvenia Babcock, at 91 Hope Street, Providence. Melvenia Babcock was in her fifties and a hairdresser—at least the third generation to carry on the family trade. The service was held at the church on Elmwood Avenue where Edward Bannister had died two years earlier, and Christiana was buried next to her husband in the North Burial Ground. Perhaps appropriately for a woman whose remarkable life left so few traces, there is no marker on her grave.

Christiana Bannister's legacy is fourfold. As a supporter and financier of one of North America's best nineteenth-century black painters, she made an important contribution to art; as a businesswoman and entrepreneur, she demonstrated that a determined woman of color could overcome racial prejudice and Jim Crow; she never forgot the less fortunate members of the black community, whether they were soldiers' wives and children or aged colored women; and she lived with dignity, an example to others, black and white. But her final months—her admittance to the Home for Aged Colored Women, which she had helped to found, and her death in the state asylum—serve to remind us that for even the most apparently wealthy and well-integrated people of color, success could be fragile and integration illusory.



Notes

1. "The Artist Bannister," *New York Daily Sun*, 8 Nov. 1893 or 1898 (date uncertain), quoted in *Edward Mitchell Bannister, 1828-1901* (New York: Kenkeleba House; Stamford, Conn.: Whitney Museum of American Art at Champion, 1992), 21.
2. See James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Black Bostonians: Family Life and Community Struggle in the Antebellum North* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), for the fullest account of the social circles the Bannisters joined in pre-Civil War Boston.
3. Lewis's school is mentioned in the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society's *Creative Survival: The Providence Black Community in the 19th Century* (Providence, n.d.), 63.
4. "Home for Aged Colored Women," *Providence Magazine* 28 (September 1916): 586.
5. See Ruth Bogin, "Sarah Parker Remond: Black Abolitionist from Salem," in *Black Women in American History from Colonial Times through the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1990). Also, the *Salem Evening News* of 21 February 1922 recorded the death of Miss Cecelia R. Babcock, who had begun learning hairdressing from her mother, Cecelia B. Remond Babcock, about seventy-five years earlier. Miss Babcock was said to have "had a large patronage of the best ladies of Salem."
6. Of all the black men listed with an occupation in the 1839 *Boston Directory*, the largest occupational group (about 20 percent) were hairdressers; the next largest (about 18 percent) were clothes dealers.
7. Horton and Horton, *Black Bostonians*, 102-3.
8. Bannister's first known portrait, painted in 1852, was of the wife of John V. DeGrasse, who was soon to become Boston's first black physician. See Romare Beardon and Harry Henderson, *A History of African-American Artists from 1792 to the Present* (New York: Pantheon, 1993), 484 n. 15.
9. Partly because they were too poor to buy property (only 6 percent of Boston's blacks were homeowners in 1850) and partly because white boardinghouse keepers would not take them in, a high proportion of Boston's black population boarded with other blacks. See Elizabeth H. Pleck, *Black Migration and Poverty: Boston, 1865-1900* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 33.
10. William Wells Brown, *The Black Man: His Antecedents, His Genius, His Achievements* (1863; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968), 214-17.
11. Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998), 62-63.
12. John Daniels, *In Freedom's Birthplace: A Study of the Boston Negroes* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 57.
13. George W. Forbes, "Edward Mitchell Bannister with Sketches of Earlier Artists" (undated typescript, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library), 7. Forbes, an African American, was an assistant librarian at the Boston Public Library from 1897 to 1913.
14. Daniels, *In Freedom's Birthplace*, 452.
15. *Liberator*, 17 Apr., 8, 15 May, 19, 26 June, 3, 17, 24, 31 July, 7, 14, 28 Aug. 1857.
16. *Liberator*, 30 Oct., 6, 13, 20, 27 Nov., 4, 11 Dec. 1857; 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Jan., 5, 12, 19, 26 Feb., 5 Mar., 7, 21 May 1858.
17. *Liberator*, 5 Sept. 1862 and many subsequent issues.
18. On 1 August 1859 black Bostonians celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of West Indian emancipation at a Convention of the Colored Citizens of New England States. Later that month, in an oral report on the festivities, community leader William C. Nell "stated that several letters had been received (among them an interesting letter from Mrs. Bannister) and read extracts from letters from colored citizens," including Frederick Douglass, "which were listened to with interest." *Liberator*, 26 Aug. 1859.
19. John A. Andrew to Francis G. Shaw, 30 Jan. 1863, quoted in Horton and Horton, *Black Bostonians*, 126.
20. See the *Liberator*, 27 Mar., 10 Apr., 1, 29 May, 25 Sept., 19, 27 Nov. 1863.
21. *Liberator* 22 May 1863. See also Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953), 9, 11.
22. Rev. James Healey, quoted in Thomas H. O'Connor, *Civil War Boston: Home Front and Battlefield* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 140.
23. *Liberator*, 17 July 1863.
24. See O'Connor, *Civil War Boston*, 125-34, for an account of the recruitment and actions of the Fifty-fourth Regiment. The 1989 movie *Glory* also depicts the regiment's struggles.
25. Daniels, *In Freedom's Birthplace*, 77. Some years after the war Carney was appointed messenger to the Massachusetts secretary of state. On the day of his death in an elevator accident in 1908, all the flags on the Massachusetts statehouse were lowered to half-staff. *Ibid.*
26. Louis F. Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment: History of the 54th Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1863-65*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1894), xii-xiii.

27. *Ibid.*, 179.
28. See James M. McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War* (New York: Pantheon, 1964), 193-203.
29. Lee Chambers-Schiller, "A Good Work among the People': The Political Culture of the Boston Anti-Slavery Fair," in Jean Fagan Yellin and John C. Van Horne, eds., *The Abolitionist Sisterhood: Women's Political Culture in Antebellum America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994), 249-50.
30. *Liberator*, 21 Oct. 1864.
31. Lydia Maria Child to the editor, *National Slavery Standard*, 5 Nov. 1864.
32. Lydia Maria Child to Sarah Blake Sturgis Shaw, 3 Nov. 1864, Correspondence of Lydia Maria Child, Microfiche ACC 87-250, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library.
33. *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Edward T. James et al. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 2:397-99. Twenty-five years younger than Christiana, Edmonia Lewis had (according to one description) "a simple directness of manner and a girlish enthusiasm that seem to have charmed almost everyone with whom she came into contact." She had grown up in the Chippewa tribe near Niagara Falls. Her brother, who had made money in the California gold rush, sent her to Oberlin College, where she was involved in a scandal when two white schoolmates (whom she had evidently failed to charm) accused her of poisoning them. Released for lack of evidence, she then moved to Boston. *Ibid.*
34. Pleck, *Black Migration and Poverty*, 24-25.
35. *Ibid.*, 26-29.
36. *Ibid.*, 28.
37. See Jean Girard, "Anti-Negro Prejudice and Discrimination in Rhode Island, 1860-1900" (typescript, Rhode Island Historical Society, 1966), 11, 39-40.
38. Besides its serious study of art, the A. E. Club seemed to be given to increasingly elaborate dinners and terrible puns. Its records are at the Rhode Island Historical Society library.
39. George Whitaker, "Edward M. Bannister" (undated typescript, Edward Mitchell Bannister Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.), 5, quoted in *Edward Mitchell Bannister, 1828-1901*, 34.
40. Carl R. Gross, "The Negro and Events in Rhode Island, 1696-1968" (typescript, Rhode Island Historical Society, 1968), 7.
41. Ransom Parker is mentioned as the owner of 67 Cushing Street in a memo from William McKenzie Woodward to Pamela Kennedy and others, 31 Aug. 2000 (copy of memo in my possession). The 1870 census described Parker as a sixty-four-year-old mulatto, born in New Hampshire, living with his Rhode Island-born wife Amey, his daughter Hannah B. Lang, and Hannah's three young children. I am indebted to Andrew Boisvert for this information, gleaned from his archival and genealogical research.
42. Henry was also the first black to serve on a jury in Rhode Island. See Gross, "Negro and Events," 2.
43. *First Annual Report of the Home for Aged Colored Women* (Providence, 1891).
44. John Nelson Arnold, *Art and Artists in Rhode Island* (Providence: Rhode Island General Assembly, 1905), 38.
45. The photograph, which is at the Boston Public Library's Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, is reproduced in Beardon and Henderson, *History of African-American Artists*, 51.
46. Arnold, *Art and Artists*, 40.
47. Board of State Charities and Corrections of Rhode Island, State Hospital for the Insane, Annual Report for 1902, *Reports of the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (Providence: E. L. Freeman, 1903).