Source Book for Buildings & Structures
A Resource Manual for the V.I. Inventory of Historic Places

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Governor Juan Luis

Under the direction of Roy E. Adams, Director of Planning
State Historic Preservation Officer
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W.R.C.

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Introduction:

This short manual is designed for the use of volunteers and professionals participating in the Virgin Islands Inventory of Historic Places. The main concern is historic buildings and structures, and other manuals are being prepared for archaeological and underwater sites. It is equally applicable for use on any of the three main islands in the Territory and should answer most of the questions which are apt to arise. Most items are in fact self explanatory and have been treated as such. In those cases where problems may exist, however, an attempt has been made to narrow down the focus of a particular question in order that it might be answered as simply as possible. Graphic references have been supplied for the identification of various architectural features in order to insure that a systematic record is made. A short visual glossary of architectural features is also included, as is a bibliography of relevant published sources.

W.R.C.
IDENTIFICATION

1. Island: "St. Croix," "St. John," or "St. Thomas." Smaller islands or cays should be listed under "Town or Quarter" below.

2. Town or Quarter: In addition to "Christiansted," "Frederiksted" or "Charlotte Amalie," refer, if possible, to local quarter names such as "Kronprindsens Quarter" or "Savanne," in the case of Charlotte Amalie, or "Eastern Suburbs" or "Gallows Bay" in Christiansted. Also mention other settlements or well-known localities such as "Coral Bay," "St. John," or "Frenchtown," "St. Thomas." For sites in country areas, indicate the quarter. For example: in St. Croix, "Easternd," "Easternd B," "Northside A," in St. Thomas, "Westend," "Eastend," and so on. Again, cays or lesser islands should be treated as quarters as in the case of "Honeymoon," "St. Thomas," or "Whistling Cay," "St. John." For all sites refer to the United States Geological Survey maps of the three islands. For St. Thomas, a separate quarter map has been published by the Paperwork Gallery and Prestige Press and is available locally or through the Planning Office. This should be referred to in the absence of quarter designations on the U.S.G.S. map.

3. Address: The street number and, in some cases, the name should be listed for town locations. State names and, in nearly all instances, the plot number for country sites. If the address is not known but you know the location of the property, the actual address or subdivision can generally be identified on the Zoning Maps for each island, or in the Real Estate Atlas of the U.S. Virgin Islands, published each year by Real Estate Data, Inc. Copies of the latter -- one volume covering St. Croix and a second for St. Thomas and St. John -- are available at the Virgin Islands Planning Department, the Department of Public Works, and in many real estate offices. To find an address simply identify the building on the appropriate map and, following the instructions printed at the beginning of each book, establish the Assessor's Parcel Number. Further reference to the index will then provide the legal address as well as other detailed information, including the square area of the plot, the assessed value and so on.

4. Assessor's Parcel No.: This number is identified in the Real Estate Atlas as explained above. If you know the owner's name, it is often possible to skip a few steps, although caution must be taken in cases where there are several properties involved. If you know only a street address, it is still possible, through reference to a subdivision or zoning map and then the Real Estate Atlas, to identify the property. If the location is known, however, it is simple enough to identify the property in the Atlas alone. This number is for administrative purposes only and does not help directly in further research on the property's history.

5. Common Name: In instances where there is no generally accepted name such as "Government House" or "Fort Christian," list the name of the original or later owner if known. Otherwise, disregard and leave blank. Avoid using the present owner's name unless
this coincides with the original name or is so well known that no other really suffices, as in the case of "The Adams Guest House." For most properties, however, the only "name" will be the address.

6. Other Names: These are typically the names of previous owners or figures associated with the property in the past. In some instances this would include an earlier or original name no longer in use.

7. Owner’s Name: This is particularly important for dealing with the property in the future. Again, it can be obtained from the Real Estate Atlas or from the appropriate office of the Recorder of Deeds, located in Christiansted and Charlotte Amalie respectively.

8. Owner’s Mailing Address: The Real Estate Atlas again provides this address, if it is not already known.

9. Present Use: "Commercial," "residential" or "combination." Also, describe the use more fully if possible, such as "hotel" or "grocery store."

10. Previous Uses: Refer primarily to local residents or printed material for this information. Earlier uses can sometimes be inferred from building types, as in the case of "warehouses."

11. Visible from a public road: "Yes" or "No" is usually a sufficient answer. If it is a country property, give the distance — i.e. "100 yds." — or the degree of visibility — i.e. "slightly obstructed," etc.

12. Accessible to the public (explain): This question refers principally to museums or houses expressly open to the public. List their days and times of admission. Most government-owned buildings and most commercial properties, such as offices, stores or hotels, can likewise be visited. But it should be emphasized that permission to take photographs or drawings is up to the discretion of the owner or manager. In such cases, therefore, the answer "yes," with additional information such as "government office," is usually sufficient. Since the majority of buildings surveyed, however, are private residences, the answer overall will most often be "no." Nonetheless, should the owner be particularly hospitable or be known to have allowed access to his property in the past, then a note should be made about this, including any special requirements on the part of the owner, such as a letter of introduction. Also include the owner’s telephone number.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

13. Style or Building type: Stylistic terms tend to have less relevance in the Virgin Islands than in many other regions. There are, however, a number of exceptions. Churches, for example, might be termed "Baroque" or "Gothic Revival"; and some of the more monumental buildings, including commercial properties such as stores or warehouses, often have features which allow them a stylistic designation. In most instances, however, the period and/or use such as "nineteenth-century commercial building" or "nineteenth century vernacular residence" would be sufficient. If any of the detailing is notably stylistic, such as a neo-classically inspired cornice or a Gothic parapet, these might be mentioned. The typical entry in this case would be "vernacular residence with neo-classical features." For further information on styles refer to the standard works on architectural history listed in the General Bibliography below.

![Vernacular Combined Residence and Commercial Building with Neoclassical details, Christiansted type](image1)

![Vernacular Town Residence with Neoclassical details, Charlotte Amalie type](image2)

![Vernacular Combined Residence and Commercial Building with Neoclassical and Italianate detailing, Frederiksted type](image3)

![Italianate Frame example](image4)

![Commercial Building, Frederiksted type](image5)

![Late Baroque or Neoclassical](image6)

![Vernacular Combined Residence and Commercial Building, Frederiksted type](image7)

![Late Baroque or Neoclassical](image8)

![Vernacular Row 2 or more residential units](image9)
Plantation sites deserve special consideration here. With the exception of kitchens or other outbuildings, most town buildings include no structures of a special type. Plantations, however, with their range of features, are entirely different and should be approached systematically on account of this. Although sometimes awkward, a separate form should be filed on each free standing – that is unattached – building or structure associated with the site. Included would be such items as windmills, cisterns, great houses, servants' residences, steam machines, and so on. The specific building, structure or object should then be indicated in Item 13. A partial checklist is provided here as a guide.

PLANTATION CHECKLIST:

- Great House
- Slave Village – Servants Quarters
- Overseers House
- Cistern
- Aqueduct
- Field Shelter
- Animal Pens
- Stables
- Factory
- Chimney
- Windmill
14. Height in Stories: See the below illustrations if in doubt. A "half story" generally refers to an attic with dormers or sometimes a basement level. In cases of houses built on hillsides, it may be necessary to refer to both sides of the building — i.e. "two on north, four on south." If there is any difficulty, a photograph or short series of photographs would help make this more clear and might be mentioned here, as well as being attached to the appropriate place on the rear of the form.

15. Number of Bays: The number of vertical divisions in the facade. Generally this number is determined by the number of window or door openings in any single wall surface. There are exceptions, however, as in the case of the narrow windows of churches which often number two to a bay. A row house with alternating windows and doors might be similarly treated. Be sure to give the number for both the front and side (or sides) and for each story if they should differ. Also, give the number of bays in any attached structure, such as a porch or verandah. For many buildings, simply supply the dimensions in feet.

16. Foundation: Usually the answer will be "rubble masonry covered with lime plaster." Mention any concrete patches or whether portland cement rather than lime plaster has been used for repairs or resurfacing. Describe the composition of the rubble surface and color of the paint. The configuration or layout of the foundation walls or piers should also be mentioned.

**COMPOSITION:**
- Coursed rubble
- Coursed rubble defined with brick
- Uncoursed rubble
- Uncoursed rubble defined with brick
- Uncoursed rubble defined and reinforced with brick at regular intervals
- Ashlar or cut stone
- Random course ashlar
- Concrete block
- Structural concrete
- Wooden posts

**CONFIGURATION:**
- Piers
- Continuous
- Combination
17. Exterior Walls: If the materials should differ, describe each story separately — i.e., "masonry first story and beaded weather-board second story." Explain in as detailed a manner as possible. Specify the brick bond, the coursing of masonry, the type of wood siding — i.e., "beaded weather-board siding," "cedar shakes" or "cedar shingles," etc. Also be sure to enter the present color and any known or evident earlier colors.

### TRADITIONAL COLORS:
- White
- Yellow-ochre
- Grey
- Natural

### BRICK BOND TYPES:
- English Bond
- Flemish bond
- Galvanized plates
- Corrugated sheet metal
- Shingles

### FINISH:
- Lapped Weatherboard
- Lapped Weatherboard with bead
- Scored Plywood
- Texture T-G
- Board and Batten
- Chamfered
- Molded
- Plain

### COMPOSITION:
- Coursed rubble
- Uncoursed rubble
- Coursed rubble defined with brick
- Uncoursed rubble defined with brick
- Rubble veneer
- Exposed rubble
- Brick
- Concrete block
- Ashlar
- Structural concrete
- Permastone or Form stone
- Molded Stucco
- Covered in lime plaster
- Scored or incised plaster
- Plaster with cement patches
- Rubble veneer
- Exposed rubble
- Non-traditional
- Decked cement
- Non-traditional
- Smooth cement
- Non-traditional
- Spatter cement
- Non-traditional
18. Roof: For older buildings, the most common roof is a “hip” or “hipped” roof. “Shed” roofs are also prevalent and are often used in association with a hipped roof. Twentieth-century buildings usually have “gables” or are “flat-roofed.” Some mention should be made of the pitch — “steeply pitched” or “low pitched,” for example. The material is most typically galvanized sheet metal. The types differ, however, and whether the roof is composed of “corrugated sheets,” “small panels” or “long panels with standing lapped joints and standing ridges,” should be specified. Occasional examples of tile roofs or of shingle roofs are also found and should be noted even if these are overlaid or partially replaced by sheet metal. Colors are usually “metallic” or “red.” Also describe the dormers, their number and roof shape — “hipped” or “shed” — for each. Finally mention leaders (downspouts) and gutters and whether there is a chimney or not.

FORM:
- Gable
- Raking Gables
- Gambrel roof
- Hipped or Hip
- Half-hipped or Clipped
- Mansard
- Shed

MATERIALS:
- Flat tiles traditional
- Pan tiles traditional
- Asphalt shingle Non-traditional
- Sheet metal plates
- Corrugated sheet metal
- Standing seam

PITCH:
- Flat
- 30° or under
- 30° – 40°
- 40° – 50°

19. Windows and Doors: If a masonry building, first describe the character of the openings, such as “flat-arched” or “round-arched,” then their window treatment — “doublehung sash,” “casement,” “modern awning,” etc. Also mention the glazing pattern, such as “6 over 6” or “12 over 12,” etc. Explain whether there are interior jalousies or louveres. Describe the exterior shutters such as “solid panelled” or “double plank,” and construction pattern — “vertical exterior, horizontal interior” and so on. This information should be in summary form in order to avoid describing each window. Call attention, however, to exceptional features such as unusual round windows or windows fitted with leaded glass.

MASONRY OPENINGS:
- Wood lintel, often combined with segmented arch
- Flat arch
- Semi-elliptical or 3-centered arch
- Segmental arch
- Semi-circular or Round arch
- Pointed
- Ogee
- Tudor or 4-centered
- French or Dutch flat arch
- Flat arch, brick gauged
EXTERIOR TRIM:
- Cornice
- Triangular pediment
- Segmental pediment
- Plain trim
- Architrave trim
- Hoodmold or Dripstone
- Label or Label molding

WINDOW TREATMENTS:
- Double-hung sash
- Casement
- 1/1
- 2/2
- 6/6
- 12/12
- Awning window

DOORS:
- Glass louvers Non-traditional
- Operable red-wood louvers Non-traditional
- Miami louvers Non-traditional
- Wooden bars horizontal or vertical
- Fixed louvers
- Iron bars vertical or horizontal
- Louvers or jalousies - inoperable
- Operable louver jalousies
- Solid panelled shutters
- Double-plank shutters, horizontal inside vertical exterior
- Double-plank, chevron pattern inside vertical exterior
- Metal covered wood doors
- Double plank doors, chevron pattern
- Cast iron doors
- Double plank doors horizontal inside vertical exterior
- Modern mahogany or redwood doors

GLAZING PATTERNS:
- One panelled door
- 4-panelled door
- 6-panelled door
- Half louvered double door
- Louvered double door
- Louvered double half door
- Modern louvered door
- Modern glass door
- Modern flush panel door
- Carved "Spanish" door, Non-traditional

Hardware:
- Tapered strap hinge - lozenge point
- Straight strap
- Straight strap - with point
- Tapered strap hinge circular point
- Square butt hinge
- "H"
- "L"
- Triangular butt hinge
- Hooks and eyes usually wrought iron
- Pintle

Describe the hardware in the most general way. A sketch might be added to the edge of the space provided for the site plan below. For doors, again mention whether they are “single” or “double” or whether they are “panelled” or “solid.”
20. **Verandahs, Porches, Balconies:** Explain their location and position. Describe any significant details, such as "brackets" or "jigsaw ornamentation." Wrought or cast iron balconies should be described in some detail. A sketch might be added to the space provided under "Site Plan" on the back of the form, particularly if a decorative pattern is used. The roof type, if a covered balcony, should also be noted – i.e. "hipped" or "shed" – and the roof covering.

- Verandah
- Double arcade
- Masonry arcade with overhanging second floor
- Arcade fitted with louveres
- Loggia
- Portico
- Gabled entrance porch
- Frame porch with lattice trim
- Arcade and balcony supported by posts with jigsaw balusters and bargeboard

**DETAILS:**
- Zig-saw pattern balusters
- Wrought iron balusters
- Cast iron brackets
- Attached Gate
- Quoins
- Wooden quoins on end boards
- Cornice or entablature
- Dentil course
- Freeze
- Architrave
- Entablature
- Doric entablature
- Corinthian entablature
- Ionic entablature

21. **Other Significant Features, Exterior:** Call attention to outstanding elements, such as columns, pilasters, elaborately molded cornices, quoins or other surface decoration. Other features to be aware of are panels or crests identifying owners or trades, posts and gateways, and most importantly, staircases.
22. Significant Features, Interior: In most cases this item will necessarily be left blank since only rarely will the field worker have the opportunity of seeing the inside of any building. If the interior is accessible, however, various elements such as ceilings, doors and window-surrounds, doors and staircases should be described. Call attention as well to materials, such as "plaster" or "plank" (wooden) ceilings. Lighting fixtures and hardware should all be described. A brief plan either included in the Site Plan section or drawn on a separate sheet would also be helpful as would interior photographs.

WINDOW & DOOR SURROUNDS:

Plain trim

Architrave trim

Screen, with classical detailing

DECORATIVE MOLDINGS & TRIM:

Egg-and-dart

Fret band

MOLDING ELEMENTS:

Fascia

Torus

Ovolo

Cyma Reversa

Ogee

Cyma Recta

Fillet

Astragal (or bead)

Cavetto

Cope

Scotia
23. Outbuildings and Related Structures: Simply list the buildings and describe their relationship. Be sure to add these to the Site Plan below. Concentrate on large or more prominent things such as buildings or larger structures but in some cases, plants or trees might be mentioned as well. Otherwise summarize their number and extent in a most general way and indicate their location on the site plan. Since each freestanding building or structure should be described on a separate form, this item is intended merely to help tie all related features and buildings together. The main reference, however, remains the Site Register Number, later assigned by the office staff.

Unattached posts and gate
Unattached posts and wall
Isolated post

Rubble wall with masonry cap

Separate gate or fence

Well
Cistern

Related servants compound

Kitchen
Significant plantings

Servants cottages on lot

24. Context: Briefly summarize the answer for this item, “Residential district,” “commercial district” or “combined” is usually sufficient. In some instances describe adjacent buildings or features, such as “next to Government House” or “facing Roosevelt Square” or even “across from a gas station.” For country properties, describe the general surroundings and any significant landscape features.
25. Condition: Summarize the condition of each building—"excellent," "good," "fair," or "poor"—then briefly elaborate with a description of the physical state. "Cracked stucco foundation," "peeling paint," "vacant and boarded up" would be typical entries, for example, as would "recently painted" or "well maintained." A "ruin" or a "stabilized ruin" is another possible entry for this item.

As a special note, "excellent" should be retained to describe a well-maintained and generally unaltered building only. Well kept but greatly changed buildings can be described as "good" only. How they have been altered might be mentioned at this point as well.

For other management purposes all **unoccupied** buildings should be specifically noted and this should be emphasized by underlining the word.
26. **Approximate Date of Construction:** There are a number of sources for this information. Stylistic elements or even building materials can provide a general idea and will probably be the most useful way of determining the age of a building. Oral sources can also be used as can references in published sources. Refer to the Office of the Recorder of Deeds in Christiansted or Charlotte Amalie for more specific information. In St. Thomas and St. John, the office is in the Lt. Governor’s office; in St. Croix, consult the records at Government House, Christiansted. To research a particular property, you will need the legal address or lot number, not the Assessor’s Parcel number. In St. Thomas, research is facilitated by the Gundy Pedersen Abstracts which include summaries both of the Danish period deeds, that is those prior to 1917, and more recent property transfers. These are, as the name suggests, abstracts only, and if more detailed information is required it will be necessary to consult the original, but there are problems here as well, and in St. Thomas especially, the older Danish deeds should be consulted only in rare circumstances because of their extremely fragile condition.

It should be emphasized as well that it is not possible to establish the exact date of a building’s construction through the deed history since what is recorded is a record of property transfers, not building transfers. Occasionally, however, it is possible to ascertain an approximate date through references in the deed, particularly if a right of way or easement was granted for the creation of an arcade or stairway on government property at the time of initial construction.

Finally, there is a certain amount of other historical information in various printed sources, and these should be reviewed before completing the form. Newspapers, for example, can be helpful but cannot really be used effectively until a full index of property references, such as sales records, is completed. More useful are published books, particularly those with illustrations which might provide clues to a property’s earlier appearance. A list of some of the possible sources is included as an appendix below.

Taxation and ownership records — the usual primary source materials — are generally not available in the Virgin Islands. Most of these records have been destroyed over the years and those which do survive are now located in the Danish National Archives (Rigsarkivet) in Copenhagen or in the U.S. National Archives. Neither are adequately cataloged or indexed, however, and in most cases provide only partial references. As a result, this usually important source must, for all intents and purposes, be overlooked.

More recent changes are recorded at the Public Works Department and in rare cases it might be worthwhile to review building permits in order to record these. It should be emphasized, however, that these date only from the 1940’s and that earlier records are often not easily accessible.

27. **Name of Architect or Builder:** This information is rarely known and therefore this item in most cases must be left blank. More recent changes or restorations, however, are recorded either at the Public Works Department or, in some cases, at the Planning Office. These should be noted if possible.

28. **Dates of Known Alterations:** Again, this information is often difficult to establish, though in most cases changes can be roughly dated on the basis of materials or features and, even more occasionally, on stylistic grounds. More recent changes are recorded at the Department of Public Works, but again those are not easily retrievable. Changes within the local Historic and Architectural Control Districts in Charlotte Amalie and Christiansted are recorded and on file in the Planning office at Sub-base, St. Thomas, and Anna’s Hope, St. Croix. These, however, date back only to 1968 and so are of limited value as a resource. An educated guess is often all that can be expected.

29. **Significant Associations:** The Recorder of Deeds or informative local residents are the most valuable sources for this item. Published descriptions of the Islands can also be helpful. The aim is to provide a list of well-known residents or the dates of significant events occurring in or around the property. If the building is merely representative, as in the case of a warehouse or servants compound, this fact might be mentioned instead. Any additional information or longer accounts may be attached to the form.

30. **Bibliographical Information:** For this item simply list the sources. For oral sources, give the name of the person giving the information and the date of the interview. For published works, list the author, title of the book or article, place and date of publication and the page reference.

**PHOTOGRAPHS:** Provide at least one black and white photograph of the property, usually a “¾” view, that is one that includes both the front facade and a portion, or more oblique, view of one side. A second view taken from another angle or a detail of some particularly interesting or representative feature is desirable as well. For reasons of cost, it is suggested that contact prints be used for this purpose. A 35mm format is acceptable, although 120mm print would be preferable. Negatives should be deposited with the Division for later use if at all possible.

Photographs should be attached with standard model airplane type glue. Do not use rubber cement which creates only an impermanent bond. To prevent buckling, it is often desirable to apply wax paper, a towel and hot iron to the photograph immediately after attaching it to the form.

**SITE PLAN:** Provide a simple overhead view of the property showing its site, nearby buildings and the locations of access and other roads. Interior layout should be included if it is
known. For plantation sites, the topographical maps at the Public Works Department or the Planning Office can be useful, although they are not always adequately detailed. For town sites, refer to the Zoning maps. In both cases xeroxed copies provide the ideal base map. For Charlotte Amalie sites, however, a separate lot drawing will have to be drawn at a larger scale beside the xeroxed base map. Extra space provided in this section can be used for sketches of features such as hardware or carpentry work or for any other miscellaneous notes or diagrams.

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St. Croix: P.L. Oxholm, 1799
GLOSSARY

Anthemia . . . Stylized honeysuckle flower used as an ornament in Greek and Greek Revival architecture.

Aperture . . . Any opening such as a door or window.

Apron . . . The trim under the projecting interior sill of a window.

Arcade . . . A range of arches supported on piers or columns, generally standing away from a wall and often supporting a roof or upper story. A covered walkway.

Architrave . . . The lowest member of an entablature. It is sometimes used alone as the surround or enframement for a window.

Baluster . . . An upright member supporting a railing or bannister.

Balustrade . . . A railing consisting of a handrail or balusters.

Batten . . . A board attached to the back or front of two other parallel boards, usually to hold them together. Associated with stick style architecture and only rarely found in the Virgin Islands.

Bargeboard . . . A stylized fascia projecting from the bottom of a gable or along the front of a porch, typically pierced with a jigsaw design. Generally found on Gothic Revival buildings or more ornate, late 19th-century Italianate designs.

Bay . . . . . The horizontal divisions of a building, defined by windows, columns, pilasters, etc.

Bay window . . A window projecting from the body of a building. A "squared bay" has sides at right angles to the building; a "slanted bay" has slanted sides. If segmental or semi-circular in plan, it is a "bow" window.

Belt course . . . A continuous horizontal band on an exterior wall. Also called a "string course" and in some instances marks the watertable.

Brackets . . . Supporting members of wood, stone or metal often used for both decorative and structural purposes and generally found under projecting features such as eaves or cornices. Also, the supports for a balcony.

Buttress . . . A mass of masonry or brickwork placed against a wall for additional support.

Capital . . . . The head or top of a column or pilaster.

Casement . . . A window in one or two vertical parts mounted on hinges and opening in the center or on one side ("single"-leafed or "double"-leafed).

Chamfered . . . When the exterior angle of two surface planes has been cut away or "bevelled".
Clerestory . . . . A section of wall pierced with windows projecting above the aisles of a church.

Colonnade . . . . A range of columns.

Colonnette . . . . A small slender column, usually found flanking an entrance.

Composite . . . . A classical order with a capital combining features of the Ionic and Corinthian orders.

Corbeling . . . . A series of stepped or over-lapped pieces of brick or stone usually forming a projecting support.

Corinthian . . . . The most ornate of the classical orders with a capital composed of ornamental acanthus leaves and curled fern shoots.

Cornice . . . . . The uppermost projecting member of an entablature. Often inaccurately used to designate the whole entablature.

Course . . . . . A horizontal layer or row of stones or bricks in a wall.

Crenellation . . . A low parapet or retaining wall composed of alternating squared blocks and spaces. Originally designed for defensive purposes, this feature was used strictly for decorative purposes during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Cupola . . . . . A dome placed on a circular or polygonal base crowning a roof or turret.

Denticulation . . . A series of small blocks and spaces under a cornice. The elements are smaller than the similarly used modillions. Another reference is "dentil course." Individually, each element is referred to as a "dentil."

Doric . . . . . A classical order characterized by simple undecorated capitals.

Dormer . . . . . A window projecting from a roof.

Double-hung window . . . . A window with two horizontally balanced frames or sashes which slide up and down, one in front of the other. There are also "triple-hung windows."
Entablature . . . The horizontal element above columns and pilasters or sometimes simply at the the top of a building facade. Following classical precedent, it is divided into major sections: the architrave, the frieze, and the cornice.

Entasis . . . . . The very slight convex curve on the shaft of a column.

Facade . . . . . The front or face of a building.

Fascia . . . . . A flat, horizontal moulding; a smaller element in the entablature.

Fenestration . . The arrangement of windows in a facade.

Fanlight . . . . A window over a door, often semicircular or semielliptical in form, with radiating muntins suggesting a fan.

Finial . . . . . A carved or moulded ornament crowning a gable, gatepost, pinnacle, spire, or other roof point.

Fluting . . . . Shallow, concave grooves running vertically on the shaft of a column, pilaster, or other surface.

Fret . . . . . . A maze-like running ornamental pattern associated with Greek and Greek Revival architecture.

Frieze . . . . . The middle division of an entablature, often decorated with sculptural relief. Applies as well to interior decoration.

Gable . . . . . The triangular upper portion of an end wall, underneath a peaked roof.

Gambrel roof . . A roof with two sloping planes of different pitch on either side of the ridge, the lower portion is the steeper one.

Header . . . . . A brick laid with the short side exposed, as opposed to a "stretcher."

Hipped roof . . . A roof with slopes on all four sides meeting at a ridge or at a single point.

Hood mold . . . A projecting molding placed to throw off water running down the face of wall above an arch, doorway or window. Also called a dripstone. Associated with Gothic or Gothic Revival architecture. Similar to a "label" or "label lintel."

Impost . . . . . The point of a wall or pier at which an arch begins or "springs." The topmost block is called an impost block.
Ionic .......... A classical order characterized by a capital with large spiral scrolls, or volutes, at the corners.

Jamb .......... The vertical side of a doorway or window.

Joists .......... Horizontal timbers supporting a floor.

Label .......... A projecting molding placed above an arch, doorway or window to throw off water running down the face of a wall. Differs from hood-mold in its rectilinear shape. Also known as a "label molding" or "label lintel."

Light .......... A section of a window, the pane or glass.

Lintel .......... A horizontal beam resting on two separate posts, usually bridging an opening such as a door or window.

Loggia .......... A roofed passage, gallery or portico colonnaded on one or both sides.

Mansard .......... A roof form with a steeply pitched, and in some cases concave face and a flattened roof top.

Modillion .......... An ornamental block or bracket under a projecting cornice. See also "denticulation."

Monitor [roof] . A roof with a continuous section raised above the main part of the roof in order to admit light. Usually used in factories or similar industrial buildings.

Mullion .......... The vertical dividing piece between panes of a window.

Muntin .......... The horizontal strips separating window panes.

Oeil de Boeuf .......... "Bull’s eye" — a circular or oval window.

Oriel .......... A projecting bay window. Usually on an upper story, it is sometimes supported on brackets.

Palladian window .......... A window arrangement of three parts; the central and larger window is topped by a round arch. Sometimes referred to as a "Serlian window."
**Parapet**  
A low retaining wall at the edge of a roof or terrace.

**Pediment**  
The triangular space forming the gable of a classical, two-pitched roof or any similar form above porticoes, doors, windows, and so on.

**Pilaster**  
A flat faced representation of a column projecting from a wall surface.

**Plate**  
The uppermost horizontal piece of a frame wall directly supporting the roof.

**Plinth**  
The block-like base of a wall or column.

**Portico**  
A porch projecting from a building, typically with a pediment supported by columns.

**Quatrefoil**  
An ornament with four “faults” or lobes, often defining a window opening. Associated with Gothic and Gothic Revival buildings.

**Quoins**  
Slightly projecting stone blocks, sometimes simulated in brick or wood, used to emphasize corners or angles of buildings.

**Rafters**  
The framing members of roof, sloping down from the ridge to the plate.

**Return**  
Molding carried around the corner, typically found on the gable end of a building.

**Ridge**  
The peak of the roof. Also, the horizontal member at the peak into which the rafters join.

**Riser**  
The vertical part of a step.

**Sash**  
The movable component of a glazed window. Invented in the seventeenth century, sashes allowed for movement of the leaves up and down for ventilation. See also “double-hung window.”

**Sill**  
The heavy timber member resting on the foundation of a building and providing support for the walls. Also, the bottom piece of a window frame.
Shed . . . . . . A roof form with a single plane.

Spandrel . . . . The triangular space between the outer curve of an arch and the rectangle which surrounds it. In a frame building it refers to the surface area below an upper story window.

Stretcher . . . . A brick laid with the long side exposed, as opposed to a “header.”

Studs . . . . . . Upright framing members of a wood building.

Surround . . . . An enframement.

Transom . . . . A window opening over a door or window often with a hinged window. The opening serves for ventilation.

Tread . . . . . . The horizontal part of a step.

See also “riser.”

Tuscan . . . . . . A classical order resembling the Doric but of greater simplicity. Characterized by unfluted columns, unadorned capitals, and plain entablatures.

Tymanum . . . . An ornamental space, usually defined by the sides of a pediment.

Weatherboard . . Wooden siding, usually overlapped, placed horizontally on wood-frame buildings. Often “beaded,” that is, finished with a projecting, rounded edge.
BIBLIOGRAPHY:

A Partial List of Useful Books on Virgin Islands Architecture.


Includes a number of the author’s paintings of the 1940’s. A good pictorial source of buildings and sites at a very crucial time in the development of St. Thomas.


Contains a number of interesting photos pertaining to Charlotte Amalie and a number of Cruzan plantations. There are also good descriptions of all three islands.


For all non-Danish speakers, this is useful for its pictorial contents alone, but as it contains a number of good illustrations, it can be useful.


Includes a number of interesting pictures and descriptions particularly of lesser known things such as port facilities and gas-storage tanks, many of which remain.


This is one of the best pictorial sources on the islands with illustrations covering the late seventeenth century and extending to the beginning of the twentieth. Again, however, unless you can read Danish, this material, though very valuable, is out of reach.


This study is particularly helpful for comparative purposes and general descriptions of building types.


Though essentially a school text, there is some incidental mention of architecture.


An oversized book of drawings and other pictorial material.

Cochran, Hamilton. These are the Virgin Islands. New York, 1937.

A short travelers’ guide with some mention of architecture.

The Danish West Indies in Old Pictures. Copenhagen, 1967.

An exhibition guide containing a great number of useful photographs.


Includes a number of photographs and descriptions of plantations, as well as commercial and industrial buildings.


Contains a few photographs and descriptions.


An important technical source. Descriptions, drawings and photographs of several pivotal buildings. This work is indispensable reading for anyone involved in the preparation of inventory forms.


An excellent general study of these important structures.

The only comprehensive guide published to date. There are some inaccuracies and many details, particularly dates, should be accepted with caution.


The Virgin Islands and Its People. Philadelphia, 1944.

Each contains a number of photographs and descriptions of buildings and places in the Islands.

Knox, John P. A Historical Account of St. Thomas, West Indies ... with incidental notices of St. Croix and St. Johns. New York, 1852.

Contains little information on architecture, and what there is suffers from many of the failings of the rest of the book. There are, however, a few illustrations.


Contains descriptions of the town of Charlotte Amalie but long before anything which is still standing — with the exception of Fort Christian — was built.


The story of the Virgin Islands from the point of view of the Lutheran Church. Contains some useful information on Lutheran properties.

Larsen, Key, Den Danske Vestindien 1666-1917, Copenhagen, 1928.

Most useful in terms of the Inventory as a source of references to other materials.


A good source book, particularly of graphic and photographic material. Probably the best outline description of sugar processing techniques, and associated equipment, readily available.


Also, a good source book. Valuable especially for her references to primary sources.


Contains some mention of buildings.


Includes a number of sketches and descriptions of historic properties, particularly of St. Croix plantation sites.

Nissen, Johan Peter. Reminiscences of a 46 Years’ Residence in the Island of St. Thomas in the West Indies. Nazareth, Penn., 1838. Also available in manuscript from in the Public Library.

Little on specific buildings, but his descriptions of the town of Charlotte Amalie is a good overall picture of development there during the early nineteenth century, particularly the development following fires and hurricanes.


Contains some descriptions of buildings, but in an incidental way only.


A few descriptions of prominent buildings.
General and Comparative Works of Interest:


