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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
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INVENTOR	NUMINATION	·UKM	ENTERED JOL .	, , , , , , ,
SEE	INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO TYPE ALL ENTRIES C			'S
1 NAME				
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nisionic	<b>本</b> Christiansted H	istoric Distric	t HAAI3	Samu V
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TI OCATION	<b>.</b>			
2 LOCATION	•	•		
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OTV YOUNH	NOT FOR PUBLICATI			
City, town Chi	ristiansted	VICINITY OF	CONGRESSIONAL DIST	ŅIC I
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE
	rgin Islands	78	St. Croix	0800
3 CLASSIFIC	ATION			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRE	SENT USE
<b>X</b> .DISTRICT	PUBLIC	<b>X</b> OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	*_MUSEUM
BUILDING(S)	PRIVATE	LUNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTURE	X BOTH	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDENCE
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	T X RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
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	istiansted, St. Cr		U.S. VIII	gin Islands
6 KEPKESEN	ITATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS		
TITLE				
Select p	roperties within t	he district hav	e been surveve	d by HABS.
DATE				
		X_FEDERAL	STATE _COUNTY _LOCA	<b>NL</b>
DEPOSITORY FOR	• 1.	and Matia	Dank Carries	
SURVEY RECORDS	Library of Congre	ss and National	l Park Service	
CITY, TOWN Was	hington		STATE D.C.	
	3			



\* EXCELLENT

**X**GOOD

**EFAIR** 

CONDITION

**≜ DETERIORATED** 

CHECK ONE

X\_UNALTERED

**CHECK ONE** 

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE

#### **DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The visual and architectural character of the Christiansted Historic District is primarily the result of three historic factors: (1) that the grid street system was preplanned, (2) that most of the development of the town was concentrated in the last half of the 18th c. by the Danish West India and Guinea Company as the seat of Danish Government in the islands, and (3) building setbacks, materials and size were almost immediately governed by a building code imposed in 1747.

The site chosed in 1734 by governor-to-be Moth for the future town of Christiansted lies in a reef-sheltered harbor on the north side of St. Croix, east of the Columbus landing site. The town is situated on a low flat plain near the water, which forms the north and east edges, and rises in three separate ridges to the mountains forming the southern and south-western boundaries of the original settlement. The rigid application of the grid street plan over the undulating terrain, with the resulting NE-SW major axis of the grid, indicates that the plan of the town was predetermined and made to fit the selected site. The varying length of the blocks along the major axis was dictated by the three north-south ridges, but the depth of the blocks are constant, except for those which front on the harbor. Company Street was intended as the major street in the plan, on axis with the entrance to the fort and terminating at the large burial ground at the western border of the town. Two market spaces are located on or off this street: Market Square, a one block long, one lot deep open space between Company and King Streets in the western end of the town, and the Sunday Market, originally occupying both sides of Company Street (now limited to the south-side) in the middle of the block bounded by King's Cross and Queen's Cross Streets.

The first street of the town, Strandgade was laid out by Moth in May 1735 along the edge of the harbor, followed during the next decade by a number of parallel streets with slightly more narrow streets intersecting them. The early part of the grid plan focused on the recently rebuilt Fort Christian and the new buildings of the Danish West India and Guinea Company being erected in the north-easterly quadrant of the town. The settlement continued to grow outward from this area, with construction regulated by the building code of 1747 which specified among other things that:

- New buildings were to be built in a straight line along the building line.
- 2. New buildings were to be constructed of masonry or wood with shingled roofs (later to be changed to tile).
- 3. If wood construction (except on Strandgade), to be built on masonry footings or foundations, and also

#### **PERIOD**

#### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	X_COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	X_RELIGION
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<b>X</b> ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	X_MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
<u>X</u> _1800-1899	<b> X</b> COMMERCE	XEXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	X_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
	4.5	INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

#### BUILDER/ARCHITECT

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Christiansted is of special significance for its well preserved architectural examples including Danish Neo Classic, Renaissance revival and Danish West Indian vernacular structures. Fort Christian dominating the the harbour, presents a typical 18th century fortification. The town has not experienced great physical damage from fire or hurricane. Modification have been made to several buildings and a few intrusions exist, however, the town retains the scale and feeling of a 19th century West Indian port and market.

Founded on the site of an older French settlement of Bassin, the town was laid out in 1734 by Frederik Moth, later the first Danish governor of St. Croix. Moth platted streets, subdivided the town into building sites, built an earth fort for protection and promulgated a series of exemplar building restrictions and codes whose effects are seen today in the town's attractiveness and visual order.

Prior to French occupation, Bassin was probably the site of an Dutch settlement that was contested by both the English and Spanish. The contest was settled in 1650 by a French military occupation followed by sale of St. Croix to the Knights of Malta. Bassin did not flourish and at best was a collection of crude huts when Moth and the Danes arrived.

Christiansted grew rapidly in the last quarter of the 19th century reflecting the general prosperity of the sugar industry and the towns displacement of Charlotte Amalie as the seat of government in 1755. The port flourished, shipping the many hogsgead of sugar required to generate specie, much needed to pay plantation debts and to purchase imported luxuries.

By 1800 merchantile importance was at a peak with a population of 5,284 somewhat increased by wealthy planters who found it fashionable to own a townhouse in addition to a great house on their sugar plantation estate. The town became a flourishing center for plantation society.

A general decline in the sugar industry began after 1820 causing the town to remain static. By 1829 there were only 12 more buildings

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFE	RENGES
Dookhan, Issac. A History of the Epping Essex: Bower Publishin	Virgin Islands of the United States. g Company, 1974
Gosner, Pamela. Historic Archite Durham, N.C.: Moore Publishin Historic American Building Survey	
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA	A 170 44' 57" N 640 41' 57" W
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 135.9 acres	A 170 44' 57" N 640 41' 57" W B 170 44' 43" N 640 41' 57" W
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edge of the harbor, then running of Lebster Street to its inters	southwesterly along the south side ection with Hospital Street, thence
running east along the north si	de of Hospital Street to the inter-
section of New Street, thence ru	inning southwesterly along the south
running porthwesterly along the	section with Princess Street, thence west side of Princess Street to a
	TIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES
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STATE CODE	COUNTY CODE
11 FORM PREPARED BY	יס
Russell Wright, Thomas Richa	rds, Virgin Island Historic Survey
ORGANIZATION	DATE
Virgin Island Planning Bo	ard May 22, 1976
P.O. Box 2606	(809) 774-1730
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
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12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATIO	AT CARRESCORIS CURSTIFICATA INTCANT
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THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL X STATES STATES STATES As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the Reservation of the Reservation Officer for the	THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:  LOCAL  National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665). I
THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF  NATIONAL X STA  As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National	THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:  LOCAL  National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the
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THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL X STATE As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the Phereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE  TITLE Director of Planning FOR NPS USE ONLY	THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:  LOCAL  National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the DATE May 25, 1976  IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER,

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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U.S. Virging Islands Inventory of Historic Places May, 1976 State Charlotte Amalie, U.S.V.I.

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4. Prohibited thatched roofs in town, except for the "poorer class" who were restricted to the waterfront and the western section of town.

Two other factors that contributed to the original character of the town that obtains today were the long tradition that property owners built out over the public sidewalks, creating the impressive series of arcades and galleries, and a 1749 act which established a public cemetery at the western end of town, with all other burials prohibited except at the small cemeteries of the three approved churches.

By 1800, most of the part of town north of Dronningengade (Queen Street) was developed as the commercial and more pretentions residential quarter of the town, with parts of the hills at the end of Ostergade (East Street) and Bjergegade (Hill Street) reserved for other prestigious residences. The remainder of the town, an 'L' shaped area below the mountains to the south and in the western half of the settlement, was developed as a residential section for the free-colored of which there were over 1,000 living in town by 1800. The land around the Market Place was developed as a commercial area to serve these families. This socioeconomic development pattern is reflected in the visual and architectural character and quality of these two distinct districts.

The commercial and governmental core area of the Christiansted Historic District is a six block section bounded by properties along the north side of Strand Street, Church Street, properties fronting the south side of Company Street, and by an arbitary line drawn approximately in mid-block between Princess and King's Cross Streets. Kongensgade (King Street) is the most important street with many of the towns most significant structures located on or just off it, followed by Company Street, with the Sunday Market and rows of many fine residences. Almost all the original public buildings and many of the towns finest larger residences are located on these two streets, with the most important concentration occurring in the Government House area at the intersection of King and Queen's Cross Streets. Strangely, except for the area near the fort and vistas provided down King's Cross and Queen's Cross Streets, the harbor is hardly noticable and has very little relationship to the core area.

Building heights in the core area are two and three stories with most one story heights limited to accessory structures. As required in the 1747 building code, buildings front on the sidewalk line and

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form almost solid rows for the entire length of the block, accented by the exceptional arcaded walkways with galleries projecting to the street line. Most of the ground floor of the structures are in commercial or office use with many of the upper floors used for residences. The predominant method of construction is masonry (brick and rubble, usually stuccoed) with a good number of the buildings having frame upper stories, entrance to which is either by internal stairway or through a rear courtyard. The presence of these courtyards reduces the overall density of the care area to an acceptable level. Virtually all of the buildings, except recent construction and the gable roofed churches, have the traditional West Indian high hipped roof. Building conditions are excellent.

Density of the residential areas to the south and west of the core area is considerably lower, except for the built-up sections along King and Company Streets. Although the buildings are situated along the sidewalk lines, many of which have suspended galleries, they are smaller structures with much larger side yards thereby creating a low density with the exception of the King-Company Street tier, virtually all of the structures are one story in height, most are frame covered with shingles (earlier) or clapboards or novelty siding (later). Except for the areas around the Market Space, land use is predominantly residential with scattered convenience commercial uses and churches serving the residential community. Building conditions vary from good to poor, especially in the Water-The residential area is one of small, detached hip roofed cottages in rows along narrow streets climbing the three hills in the southern section and spread out along the flat open land near the Water-Gut area, west of the core area along the harbor.

The Christiansted Historic District is set off from the surrounding area by the harbor along the south and east boundaries, by the largely undevelopable hills and mountain to the south, and by the change in land uses and visual character of the western ridge, which is composed of three cemeteries, newer residential construction and a large scale public housing project. The boundaries indicated on the accompanying map are those of the 1779 Oxholm map.

Pivotal buildings in the Christiansted Historic District, keyed to the map, include:

 Fort Christian - a square citadel with bastions and gundecks at the salient angles, typical L 18th c. plan of island fort.

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Masonry curtains are one and two stories in height, surrounding one room deep wings which encloses a square court. The main entrance is protected by a ravelin, whose entrance gates are flanked by quoined masonry posts-all other openings are undecorated except the exterior facade of the sally port, which is pedimented and flanked by engaged fluted pilasters. There is a horse yard and stables to the southeast. The fort was constructed over the ruins of an earlier French fortification, completed in 1749. Part of the Christiansted National Historic Site.

- 2. Customs House and Post Office two story seven bay wide, heavy masonry structure incorporating parts of a 1751-52 building in its first story, the remainder of which was built in 1805. The second story was added in 1828-30, and the entire structure rehabilitated in 1840-42. The building has a projecting entrance pavilion served by a long buttressed stairway. The arcaded lower floor has segmented arched openings with stuccoed keystones and decorative banding on the pilasters. There is a double belt course at the second level and a molded cornice below a stepped parapet wall which surrounds a later, low pitched hip roof. This building, part of the Christiansted National Historic Site, served as the Danish custom house from the 1760's to 1878.
- 3. Steeple Building built 1750-53 by the Danish West India and Guinea Company as a Lutheran Church, Our Lord of Zebaoth. The original structure was a simple one story rectangular masonry block with a low hipped roof. The existing Georgian steeple, from which the building derives its name, was added 1793-96. The church was vacated by the Lutheran congregation in 1831, at which time it reverted back to the Danish government. The building was greatly altered in 1841-42 when the roof was removed, two walls extended and the other two lowered. The church was restored to its c 1800 appearance by the National Part Service in 1961-65 and is part of the Christiansted National Historic Site.
- 4. Government House the large three story masonry structure occupies one-quarter of a full town block and served as the residence of the Governor and offices of the colonial government during most of the Danish era. The three story, highly decorated Baroque center section was constructed as a private residence in 1747. Flanking wings were added to this

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part c. 1800. A 1794-97 private residence along Queen's Cross Street was joined to the rest of Government House in 1830, at which time the monumental staircase was added to the eastern section. Much of the first floor of the central portion is arcaded while the upper stories are divided by heavy belt courses supported by a series of engaged pilasters with bases and capital bands. The entire building is surrounded by a molded cornice below a low stepped parapet wall with a shallow pediment over the center entrance.

- 5. 67 East Street a two story masonry and frame structure on a terraced site with a double curved stairway (welcoming arms) ending in a drum shaped platform. The first story is solid masonry, while the upper story is frame with a combination of shingles and clapboarded sidings and an open gallery typical of much of the residential architecture of Christiansted. The house has a hip roof with a flat section over the drum like pavilion. (In poor condition).
- 6. Quinn House, 4 & 5 Hill Street another hilltop, two story residence reached by a long flight of stairs from the street. The first floor is masonry (brick and rubble, stuccoed) while the upper floor is a combination of masonry and wood frame construction. Of special interest is the five bay gallery using three different sized arched openings with keystones, the central arch accommodating the entrance. The house has a hip roof with slightly projecting overhangs at the eaves.
- 7. Bjerge, 56-58 Hill Street one of the finest town houses on the island, the house is a two story with basement rectangular block, with a six bay gallery running parallel to the street. Wall construction is stucco over brick and rubble masonry and the roof is the typical hip form. Four round arches with square columns support the projecting second floor gallery and two flanking arches with recessed columns complete the six bay facade. The four central arches are decorated with fluted keystones, panelled railings and capital bands on the columns. The central pavilion has a double belt course at the second floor level.
- 8. Markoe House, 17 Church Street an unusual but important example of the large size town houses in the Historic District. Three stories in height with a steeply pitched

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roof, the structure is 7 bays by 4 bays with a low arcade at the ground level. The 7 bay facade is divided by 8 full height, engaged pilasters terminating in a continuous molded cornice. There are also molded belt courses at each floor level. All but one bay of the house is of masonry construction, and in the typical Christiansted manner it is sited at the sidewalk line with upper galleries projecting to the curb.

- Pentheny Hotel, 45 A & B King Street a 'U' shaped three 9. story residence with inner courtyard, now used as a guest house. One of the finest remaining examples of the large residence in Christiansted, the building is of masonry construction, stuccoed on the front and side walls, with exposed brick in the courtyard. The stucco is scored to simulate dressed stone. The main block is 7 x 3 bays with a one bay deep projecting gallery supported by segmental arches with keystones, resting on square pilasters decorated with molded capital bands. There is a molded belt course at the second and third floor levels and a molded continuous cornice in the eaves below a low parapet which encloses a hip roof. The window openings in the upper floors are trimmed with molded castings. A two story wing to the north is brick on the ground floor with frame above.
- Newton House, 56 Company Street a two story, 'U' shaped masonry residence with an interior courtyard. The residence features an exceptional segmental arched arcade, the openings of which are reflected in the recessed ground floor facade. The second floor gallery is part of the original block of the house and is enclosed in the typical hip roof. The main wing of the house is 9 x 3 bays, with a belt course and a continuous molded cornice below the eaves of the overhanging hip roof. The courtyard is enclosed by a high masonry wall and contains a cookhouse.
- 11. Christiansted Lutheran Church

  Built prior to 1740 as the Dutch Reformed Church, the
  building was repaired in 1831-34 and reconsecrated as the
  Christiansted Lutheran Church in 1834. The church is one
  story cruciform plan with a later (1831-34) three tiered
  tower. The gable roof is enclosed in highly decorative,
  curved and parapet walls in Dutch Rennaisance style. The

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lower section of the tower, which serves as the main entrance porch, has large arched openings in its three walls and exhibits much of the same detailing as the body of the church and may date from the original construction period. The upper portions of the brick tower are transitional Gothic Revival. The walls of the church are rubble masonry with brick linings at all openings and at the corners serving as quoins in the nave and as engaged pilasters at the transept and sacristry porch to the rear. The main block of the church is 7 x 3 bays with a side entrance centered in each long facade. Door and window openings are semi-circular except for the door to the sacristry which is eliptical. There is a molded cornice and each gable end has a decorative final at the ridge line.

- 12. Lutheran Parsonage, 51 King Street good example of a medium sized, two story 'u' shaped town house with an interior courtyard. The house is masonry rubble with brick linings at all openings and quoining at the corners, a molded belt course at the second floor level and a plastered cornice with dentils set below a parapet wall. The parapet extends over the three center bays and is decorated with tympanum. The main wing is 5 x 4 bays with a second floor gallery to the street line supported by an arcade of five keystoned arcades on square pilasters. The pilasters have molded capital bands and plinths. The main entrance is centered in the street facade and is flanked by engaged Tuscan columns supporting a molded triangular pediment.
- 13. The Anglican Church constructed in 1849 to replace a church of 1761 and restored after a fire in 1868. The church is a large 7 x 3 bay two story with 3 tiered tower structure of the cruciform plan. Built with dressed limestone and brick, the church exhibits many details of the English Gothic Revival-pointed arched windows and doors, three step triangular applies buttress piers, molded brick parapets with crenellations, and pinnacles with crockets at the gable ends. The tower is centered in the street facade and has a pyramidal roof, while the body of the church is roofed with cross gables.

The Christiansted Historic District includes all of the

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Christiansted National Historic Site and all of the Christiansted Historic and Architectural Control District.

The Federal government has custody over the following buildings

in the historic district, all of which are owned by the Virgin Islands Government:

Customs House
Old Post Office
Library
Government House
Fort Christian
The Steeple Building

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more buildings than the 664 which existed in 1796. Except for minor expansion, Christiansted remained within its 18th century limits. Present day expansion is, for the most, to the west and has not disrupted the integrity of the historic town.

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point 100' south of East Street, thence running parallel to East Street until this line intersects with East Street at a point 200' east of Peter's Farm Hospital Street, thence running south for a distance of 300', thence turning and running west for a distance of 200' parallel to East Street to a point which is the extension of Peter's Farm Hospital Street, thence continuing north along Peter's Farm Hospital Street to its intersection with Western Suburb Street, thence running east along the north side of Westernern Suburb Street to a point 100' west of West Street, thence running north parallel to West Street to a point 125' north of West Lane, thence turning and running easterly 100' to the west side of West Street, thence running along the west side of West Street to the harbor, thence continuing along the shoreline to the point of beginning.

# CHRISTIANSTED STRAND SF 11 39 STRAND ST. WEST & SOUTH FACADE QUEEN CROSS ST. CAMERA HORTH FACADE COMPANYOF H=17 COMPAHY ST. LICIRTH FACADE COMPANY ST. CAMERA Nº 1 QUEEN \$60 HILL EAST FACADE SALIZAL OF. CAMERA

QUEEN ST: