

PH0502529

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED AUG 15 1977

DATE ENTERED

AUG 29 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Northern Hassel Island Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Hassel Island, Orkanshullet, Hurricanehole

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

305 Charlotte Amalie

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Charlotte Amalie

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

Virgin Islands

CODE

78

COUNTY

St. Thomas

CODE

0900

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple Ownership

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Government House

CITY, TOWN

Charlotte Amalie

STATE

St. Thomas, V.I.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

V.I. Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

June, 1977 / *Summer 1977* FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

V.I. Planning Office / *Library of Congress*

CITY, TOWN

Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, V.I. / *Washington, DC*

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

See photograph attached here and in document

Hassel Island forms the western edge of St. Thomas Harbor. The island was initially/originally connected to the mainland by an isthmus at what is today Frenchtown, west of the commercial area of Charlotte Amalie. Hassel Island is approximately one mile in length by 1800 feet wide, with its highest elevation, 267 feet above sea-level occurring at the extreme southern tip of the island, now occupied by Cowell's Battery. The island was first separated from the mainland by the Danish government in 1860, with the channel deepened and widened by the U.S. Corps of Engineers in 1919. The northern two-thirds (the remainder of the island was placed on the National Register in 1976) contains a series of ruins of a fortification and remains from many of the shipping and coaling stations that prospered in St. Thomas from 1801 to the First World War. Many of the remaining military ruins are identified in an undated plan in the Royal Library, Copenhagen, entitled (English Translation) "Plan Over the Bay, the Englishmen constructed batteries and buildings on the peninsula which forms the left side of the entrance to St. Thomas Harbor. This early 19th century map identifies many of the structures that remain in ruins on the north hills of Hassel Island. Other sites of importance to the history of development of St. Thomas date from the middle and late 19th century and are described below.

Shipley's Battery-Constructed in 1807-09 under the direction of Lt. Colonel Charles Shipley, this five gun battery commands the northern approach to the mainland. Set on the top of a steep hill with an elevation of 215 feet above sea-level, the battery is reached by a long winding path from the south. This path, clearly shown in the "Plan Over the Bay" connects Shipley's Battery with its Officer's Barracks and Kitchen' at the base of the hill and the 'Enlisted men's Quarters' on a slight ridge above the north shore of the 'Careening Cove', approximately 2000' to the south.

The fortification is constructed on an octagonal, raised platform, 12-18" above grade, with the gun emplacements facing due west. The battery consists of two demi-lunes connected by a heavy stone rubble rampart, which takes the form of three sides of the octagonal platform. The semi-circular demi-lunes are provided stone paved raised circular traversing platforms, the south platform covering 150°, the north 180°. The demi-lunes and the ramparts are splayed to the exterior (there is no ravelin or curtain wall) with the height of the walls varying from 6 to 8 feet. A battlemented parapet wall containing three embrasures is reached by two stone steps continuing the full width of the battery. The corners of the demi-lunes and the splayed jambs of the three embrasures are lined with a soft yellow brick. The platform of the rampart wall is 23" above grade, with the top of the parapet wall another 54".

1 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The northern two-thirds of Hassel Island (Orkanshullet) contains a series of ruins of a fortification and several remains from the shipping and coaling stations that prospered in St. Thomas from 1800's to the First World War. The fortification, Fort Shipley or Shipleys' Battery, is significant because it was probably the only physical monument remaining on United States territory built by the British during their occupation of the island. The remains from the shipping and coaling stations are of significance for they were important to the commercial economy during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Moreover, the United States' decision to purchase the Danish colony was heavily influenced by the shipping and coaling stations on St. Thomas and Hassel Island which could provide facilities for the Navy in the Caribbean.

Military

1. Fort Shipley - (Shipley's Battery) is a significant structure remaining from the British occupation of St. Thomas during the Napoleonic Wars. During the first occupation (April 2, 1801 to February 16, 1802) the British desiring to protect their forces from both disease and attack, posted and fortified a peninsula, Hassel Island, jutting into Charlotte Amalie Harbor. On the south end of the peninsula they erected batteries to control the harbor mouth. A magazine, barracks, and a hospital with an associated grave yard were built. Fort Shipley was constructed on the highest ground to the north. A two gun battery was positioned to repel an attack from across a sand pit (Haulover) from the mainland.

The fortification was ordered by Lieutenant General, Thomas Trigge in April, 1801. Construction was the responsibility of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Shipley who reported on July 16, 1801 that the "whole is very nearly complete...".¹

1 Letter Lieut. Colonel Charles Shipley to Crew, July 16, 1801, Wo. 55 1943-5952, Public Records Office, London.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dookhan, Issac. A History of the Virgin Islands of the United States.
 Epping, Essex: Bowker Publishing Company, 1974.

Interview: Henry O. Creque IV, March 17, 1976 by Thomas Richards.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 91 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

A.	64° 55' 53" W	18° 19' 52" N
B.	64° 56' 10" W	18° 19' 42" N
C.	64° 56' 34" W	18° 20' 06" N
D.	64° 56' 12" W	18° 20' 26" N

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Revised boundary delineation
 The southern boundary of the Northern Hassel Island Historic District starts at a point 300 feet north of the concret dock and extends west ward across the base of the peninsula 200 feet. From this point the boundary extends northwest 3700 feet to a point 25 feet south of Careen Hill. The northern boundary extends from this point northeasterly to a point 600 feet off the Charlotte Amalie Harbor. The easterly point extends from this point 3750 to the point of origin.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Annie Hillary, Russell Wright, Thomas Richards

ORGANIZATION

V.I. Planning Office

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 2606

TELEPHONE

809-774-1730

CITY OR TOWN

St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Thomas R. Blake

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Director of Planning

DATE 5 August 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

William Leborich

DATE

8/29/77

DATE

8/15/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Records indicate that the battery included a guardhouse, store rooms, a casemented magazine, flag staff, palisades and a Gin to mount the canon on the traversing platforms. Only the guardhouse, referred to as the 'Watchhouse' in the "Plan over the Bay" is identifiable. It is anticipated that when the battery site is cleared of the underbrush that other ruins and remains will be uncovered.

The guardhouse is a square, one story structure 21 feet to a side located approximately 60 feet east of the central section of the ramparts. The two bay 8' high rubble walls are lined with yellow brick at all openings-the north, east and south facades have two windows each, the west two doors. The interior walls are plastered and whitewashed, as specified in the early records. While no part of the original roof remains, it must have been a hipped roof, as the tops of all four walls are finished to receive plates for the rafters. East of the guardhouse are the remains of a circular stone lined well a low parapet wall.

The "Plan over the Bay" shows a series of "houses belonging to Mr. Hassel" at the base of the hill, south of the battery and alongside the path. The largest of these houses has been incorporated into the large cistern and catch basin constructed by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company in the 1840's. The house, only the rubble walls of which remain, was a two story rectangular mass, 40 x 20' with a hipped roof. It is terraced into the hillside so that the west facade is only one story in height. The house pre-dates the 1841 construction of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company facilities. The long side of the house is four bays, with two outer doors separated by a pair of windows and runs north-south, parallel to the shoreline. The upper floor of the west facade, at grade, is entered from a walled terrace which surrounds the west and south walls of the house, and an attached cookhouse. The terrace has a gate in the south wall. There is also a paved terrace with a low parapet wall along the east facade separating the house and the catch basin and cistern. The end walls of the house are two bays wide, with two windows in the north wall and a window and door in the south. The south end of the house has a small addition of indeterminate date, which connects the cookhouse with the main house. The cookhouse, a 10' square has the cooking fireplace as its south wall. All other walls are 8' high with a window in the east and west, and a door in the north. It was originally hipped roof. A bee-hive oven is built into the terrace wall at the southwest corner of the cookhouse.

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The north and east walls of the house and the front terrace form part of the stone and concrete four foot high parapet walled cistern and catch basin, still used today for storage of water used at the Royal Mail Inn below.

The "Plan over the Bay" also identifies other houses' belonging to Mr. Hassel in this area, including a small house approximately 100' north of the main house. The foundations of this house remain, as do the ruins of a 10' x 12' rubble building housing the 'Officers' Kitchen... a Smith's and Bakers Oven', located southwest of the larger house as shown on the 'Plan'. This structure was one by two bays and had a gable roof over the rubble walls. Ruins of other structures shown in the Danish plan as officers houses and dining room are scattered throughout an area south of the main Hassel House.

Creque's Marine Railway - Directly below Shipley's Battery at the north shore of Hassel Island lies the Creque Marine Railway built in the 1860's by the Orkanshullet Island Coal and Oil Fuel Depot Company. The original 19th century facility consisted of a 156' long marine railway, a 200' pier, a repair shop, a winch house-residence and facilities for storing coal and other supplies. Today the vacant marine yard has a 60' wide masonry wetdock, two parallel 200' long railways, a 30' cradle, an addition to the repair shop, the ruins of the winch house-residence and an iron cistern. The railway was purchased by the Creque's in 1910 and operated continuously by the family until the early 1960's, with the U.S. Navy leasing the facility during WWII.

The repair shop is situated south of the dock at the foot of the railway. The one story gabled roof shop has undergone considerable change, including a 21' wide shed roofed addition to the north and a similar even larger addition to the west facade. The main section is 22' x 58' with vertical wood boards attached to the timber frame, made of 6" x 6" (s), 13' 6" high. The roof, partially covered with later corrugated tin resting on wood purlins, is supported by four combination A and King Post timber trusses supplement with 12 lighter Queen Post trusses. The trusses are fastened with treenails, and there is no ridge pole. The corner braced gable end walls have a single 8' wide door, while the north wall has two doors connecting to the later shed roof machine shop. The concrete floor of the machine shop is 14" lower than the floor of the main shop, its walls are corrugated tin, and the roof has the remains of a timber frame, wood sheathing and asphalt shingles. The west shed addition is open, with a corrugated tin roof. Much of the early machinery remains in the machine shop addition.

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The winch house-residence is located at the head of the railway, west of the dock and repair shop. Now in ruins, this structure retains virtually all of the original machinery and equipment used to haul ships for repair and fitting. Judging from the architectural details that remain, this structure was once one of the best designed in the Virgin Islands.

The Creque Winch House and Residence is a six bay long two story structure set on a stone terrace at the head of the slip. A flight of 20 brick stairs leads from the north end of the terrace to the shore below. The front facade has two doors, a window and three more doors, south to north, and is constructed of dressed stone set in a lime and molasses mortar with heavy joints. The south two bay section has a cross gable roof, the remainder has a gable roof with the ridge line parallel to the front facade. The main entrance and chainway is the fourth bay, framed with limestone quoins and a flat keystone arch. The corners and all openings are lined with brick, and there is a full length brick corbelled cornice.

The south end wall is gabled, with the brick cornice continuing to create a triangular pediment. A rectangular window, with wood shutters on wrought iron straps and pintles, is centered in the second floor level. The wall is constructed of rubble and is plastered. The rear wall is also plastered rubble with four doors at the lower level, two of which are elevated approximately 1/3 of the height between the first and second floors and have projecting landings and stairs. The upper level of the rear wall has two windows and a door that originally opened on to a balcony, now missing. The brick cornice continues the full length of the rear wall, stopping at the massive chimney which projects from the rear of the boiler room. The chimney is 10' square at its base, changes to an octagon at the eaves line and has an octagonal corbelled cap. There is a round headed door for cleaning in the west base, and the plaster covering, the chimney is scored to simulate brick.

The north gable wall, plaster on rubble, has three full length round headed windows on the first floor, with three rectangular windows directly above in the second level. The cornice also returns across the gable end, creating a triangular pediment, which has a small round window. The wall is set on a slightly projecting base and has an eight course brick watertable.

The first floor of the south part of the structure, the first two bays, houses the two large cast iron boilers for the steam engine. A single run stair, 44" wide, is built along the south wall which is

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windowless. The stair is now collapsed, but the timber stair horses remain. It was entered from the exterior only, at the rear, and served the residence on the upper floor. A storage area, with a door in the southeast corner, is provided under the stairs. The stairway is separated from the boiler room by a 16" thick brick wall running the full depth of the room, 36 feet. The north wall of this room is cut stone set in a lime and molasses mortar with two windows and a door at the east end opening into the engine room. This wall projects through the upper space and has a gable. The window jambs are lined with brick, the sill and head are wood and there are louvered blinds. The doorway has a semi-circular head with louvers, is framed with a simple, beaded casing and has an excellent four panel door on iron butts-the lock is missing. The east wall contains two 6'2" wide segmental arched doorways, with double louvered doors and iron shutters. The floor is raised 3'6" to form a platform over the boilers. All interior walls are plastered.

The second space from the south is the engine room one bay in width, with a stair to the upper living quarters accessible from the exterior and from the next room at the rear. The partition separating the stair from the engine room is brick with a four light square window. The north wall is also brick, with a door connecting to the winch room at the east end of the wall. This door is of exceptional design, with a semi-circular arch, panelled reveals and intrado, engaged pilasters with molded capitals and a panelled keystone. The east wall has a single round headed opening with a wood casing and a double set of shutters, the outside pair panelled and the interior pair louvered. The brick lined jambs have been plastered, as have the interior wall surfaces. The floor is wood except for the area supporting the steam engine, which rests on cut stone. The wood fired steam engine that powered the railway winch was built in Hamburg, Germany by the Bolton Co., and probably is the original engine-it is intact and in excellent condition. The 12 foot diameter flywheel is set into the north wall and is connected with a drive shaft to the winch gears in the next room.

The winch room is also one bay wide, with a 7'4" central entrance lined with sandstone quoins and a keyed sandstone flat arch. The jambs are cased with wood and there are the remains of a pair of double shutters, hung on large wrought iron straps and pintles. A stone ramp leads to the floor level, with an iron rail to control access to the winch chain, sections of which remain on site. The rear of the winch

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room has a partition enclosing another stair to the upper level. The stone north wall, decorated with galleting has a full gable, indicating that this may originally have been the exterior wall and that the next section is an addition. This wall has a semi-circular arched doorway to the northerly room, and is 23" thick. The winch is composed of a series of five cast iron reduction gears set into a stone lined pit let into the floor. The largest of the gears, the chain drive, is 10' in diameter. The winch appears to be complete and is in good condition.

The north part of the structure, two bays wide, may be an early addition, as stated. It has two segmental arched windows, rather than the flat arched windows used elsewhere, which are cased in wood and have two sets of blinds and shutters. The room at this time is inaccessible. There is a 30' wide shed roof addition to the north side, and a later two story frame porch added to the front wall in the north-east corner.

The second floor, only part of which is visible from the ruined stairways, was divided into three major spaces: one over the boiler room (bays 1 and 2), the main space over the engine and which rooms (bays 3-5) and the final over the last bay. The roof system, almost all of which is missing, was a heavy timber frame with a ridge pole. The ceilings were wood plank, tongue and grooved, and the walls were plastered. The walls in the larger central space are scored in a diamond pattern, and retain their painted wainscot, chair rail and base. All openings in this level are rectangular, with brick lined splayed jambs, wood heads and sills and double louvered blinds. An interesting feature is that the upper floor was insulated for noise from the lower level by the placing of plaster batts between the floor joists.

A large cistern for the collection and storage of rain water is located 20' west of the winch house. Built on a grid of brick piers, 52'4" square with a 22" spacing, the cistern is situated on a slight hill 5'4" above grade at the east and 3' at the west. The walls and floor of the cistern are made up of 6' by 6' cast iron panels, bolted together at the flanges and provided with cross braces and round central bosses for tie rods. The top edge has 12" wood splash boards. There is no covering to the cistern, which is criss-crossed with tie rods and cables. The cast iron distribution pipe to the winch house is partially destroyed.

The East Asiatic Company, Ltd., founded in 1897, began operations in St. Thomas in 1903, with a coaling station and dock along the eastern shore of Hassel Island, between the Royal Mail Steam Packet

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Company property and the St. Thomas Dock, Engineering and Coaling Company, Ltd. The 300 foot long wooden wharf has disappeared, but the stone sea walls remain and have been consolidated as part of the Royal Mail Inn development. The coaling station function of this facility ceased to be of importance after 1916 when the new docks of the West Indian Company were completed across St. Thomas harbor at Longbay. The business interests of the East Asiatic Company were transferred to the West Indian Company in December, 1915.

The St. Thomas Dock, Engineering and Coaling Company, Ltd., representing the amalgamation of the West Indian interests of the relocated Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and the St. Thomas Dock Company, joined in July, 1909. The company's facilities included a 220 foot long wharf with a 30 foot depth of water alongside, a stone warehouse, a crane, storage space for coal and a large cistern. The timber wharf no longer exists, suffering severe damage in the many hurricanes that have battered the island, but much evidence of its original design and construction remains. Many of the large timbers were salvaged and are stored on site.

The remains of the large one story warehouse are situated at the south end of the wharf area, resting on six to eight foot high stone rubble sea walls. Two by three bays, the structure is rectangular in plan, with 54 foot long gabled end walls facing north-south, and 122 foot long walls paralleling the water's edge. The end walls are provided with two six foot wide doors each, symmetrically placed, with a small rectangular window centered in the gable. The west side wall has a central door with flanking windows, and the east wall has three doors opening on the pier. The exterior walls are 24" thick and constructed of rubble masonry set in lime mortar. The corners and all openings are lined with yellow brick, which is also used in a three course belt course across the gable ends, below the eaves line. All openings have splayed jambs, with flat brick arches and sills, and are provided with heavy wood casings to take wood storm shutters--some of the drive pintles remain in the casings. The roof is missing, but signs of the spacings for the timber trusses indicate that they rested on a continuous shelf which ran along the inside of both side walls, 13'6" above the stone floor. The height of all doors and windows is 9'6". The exterior and interior faces of the walls are plastered. There is no indication of interior partitions, and it is assumed that the warehouse was one room in plan.

A large rectangular rubble masonry cistern, approximately 40 by 80 feet with ten foot high walls is located south of the warehouse, at the west edge of the coal storage area.

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The company also operated a 250 by 70 foot floating dock, capable of hauling ships of up to 3000 tons, with a keel length of 300 feet. Located in the harbor off the wharf, the dock replaced a similar facility begun in 1866. The earlier floating dock failed in its initial attempt to service a ship, when it could not raise the 752 ton screwship owned by the Royal Mail Steamship Company and was virtually abandoned. The later floating dock remained in service until 1924. Hamburg American Line The coaling depot and wharves of the Hamburg American Shipping Line were located on an eight acre site on the south shore of the Careening Cove, about in the middle of the eastern coast of Hassel Island. The company began its operations in St. Thomas in 1873, and continued until the property was confiscated by the United States at the outbreak of WW I. With a dock frontage of 300', the company had three large gable roofed one story warehouses for the storage of ocean cargo, a steam engined powered marine railway and slip, and above the dock, a system of catch basins and cisterns capable of storing 1500 tons of water. The site of the cisterns was also used for the construction of three large oil storage tanks built in 1919 and dismantled during World War II.

Except for the large cistern and a series of other stone foundations along the north side of the hill overlooking the cove, and an interesting framed gazebo, little if any of the original period remains from the Hamburg American Line facility, as it was almost entirely rebuilt by the U.S. Navy during both World Wars. An exception is the 24 foot wide marine railway which may be from the Hamburg American period, but was altered by the Navy and now lies in ruins, along with an iron cradle and winch chain. There also exists a one story rubble masonry, stuccoed, flat roofed shop building. "L" shaped in plan, the structure has moled window heads and sills, a watertable and a flat cornice band. Other buildings remaining from the Navy period include a rubble cistern, corrugated tin sheds and two frame structures on the wharf.

The entire Hamburg American Line property, which included the St. Thomas Dock, Engineering and Coaling Company property sold to the German company in 1912, was taken over and administered by the Harbor Accommodating Establishment as a war prize in 1917.

Royal Mail Steam Packet Company Ltd., a British shipping company moved to St. Thomas from Tortola in 1819 when the harbor at Road Town was destroyed by hurricane. Chartered in the Danish West Indies in 1839 a coaling station was under construction on Hassel Island by 1841, and continued in operation until 1885, when the company headquarters was moved to Barbados.

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Ruins of part of the coaling wharf remain, but most of the on-shore facilities—a warehouse and repair shops—were incorporated into the design of the Royal Mail Inn, a commercial hotel venture begun in 1957 and continuing as a hotel until 1974 . The Inn is now run as an apartment complex, with the original restaurant and cottages now rental units. The walls of the original Royal Mail Steam Packet Company warehouse have been retained and reused in part in the construction of the Inn. The large catch basin that rises to the west of the Inn and the cisterns previously described date from the Packet Company coaling station period.

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Shipley built in addition to the two gun battery, an officers and mens guard house, store rooms, a casemated magazine, palisade and flag staff at a total cost of \$10,104.00. Also, he constructed a gin, 25 feet in height with a hardwood windlass for mounting the guns on the traversery platforms.

The battery was completed only to be abandoned with the advent of peace in February 1802. Upon renewal of hostilities both the island and the battery were reoccupied and posted by British forces from December 25, 1807 to April 5, 1815.

Commercial

The economic situation on St. Thomas was tenuous during the British occupation. As described by Taylor in Leaflets from the Danish West Indies, "On both occasions during the early 1800's when the British occupied the islands, there was an increase in the price of provisions, a scarcity of all the German, French, Spanish and Italian commodities, and a general stagnation in business. Returning under Denmark, the commerce revived and the island became the commercial emporium of the Antilles".² By 1848, St. Thomas had re-established its importance as the center of trading in the West Indies.

The commercial importance of St. Thomas during the late nineteenth century in the West Indies stems from several factors. The island was centrally located for European and American shipping lines and the freight market industry was concentrated in St. Thomas. The harbor held the reputation for a long time of being large and sheltered against hurricanes. The island provided facilities for the shipping industry. Hassel Island once connected to the mainland by an isthmus at what is today Frenchtown provided a coaling station for refueling, wharves for unloading cargoes, tanks for watering and a drydock for repairing and cleaning vessels.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, several major disasters caused the trading industry of the island to decline. Two cholera epidemics destroyed the notion of the islands' healthiness. The first occurred in 1853-1854, killing 1,865 people (1,500 in Charlotte Amalie). The second epidemic in 1866-1867 occurred despite the cutting

2 Charles Taylor, Leaflets from the Danish West Indies, pg. 54-55.

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✓ of a channel by the Danish government in 1860 to prevent the accumulation of debris in the harbor. Approximately 1,200 people died during the second epidemic. A malaria epidemic in 1853 left 100 persons dead. In November, 1867 a hurricane hit the island causing earthquakes and tidal waves which completely destroyed the reputation of St. Thomas as a "safe haven". These disasters set back the islands' trade; expansion ceased as shipping companies began to contemplate alternatives to the entrepot in St. Thomas.

Prior to the telegraph connection between the West Indies and Europe and the United States, in 1871, traders came to the West Indies to secure current market information. With the establishment of direct communication lines and the increase use of steamships with direct and regular connections between the Caribbean, Europe and the United States, it was no longer necessary to make a stop in St. Thomas. Moreover, because of its more favorable position, Barbados began to attract much of the ships which once stopped in St. Thomas.

Facilities in St. Thomas were growing obsolete. The harbor was too small and shallow to serve the new steamships which were greater in length and draught to the sailing vessels. When several of the larger vessels were in the harbor it was difficult for them to turn. The floating dock at Hassel Island was too small to service the larger ships and no steps were being initiated for expansion of the dock. Instead of buying provision in St. Thomas which were dutiable, shippers turned to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and St. Lucia to acquire their needed supplies.

By the 1890's St. Thomas had lost its importance as a distributing center of trade in the Caribbean. Some companies abandoned the island for new locations while others remained and for a while were able to sustain the shipping industry. Attempts were made to reorganize the harbor authority by making it independent, operating with a governing board and treasury. New companies were created in hopes of continuing St. Thomas as a coaling depot. Money was raised to improve the harbor facilities. Yet, none of the steps initiated to revive the industry proved successful.

The possibility of war in 1916 seriously diminished the shipping industry in St. Thomas. The United States government had become more interested in acquiring the Danish colony and experiences of the American Navy in the Caribbean during the Spanish American War had made the need for a coaling station in the area the main argument for acquisition of the colony.

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Described below are those sites on Hassel Island which were important in the development of the Danish West Indies commercial industry during the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

2. Creque's Marine Railway

The Creque Marine Railway was built in the 1860's by the Orkanshullet Island Coal and Oil Fuel Depot Company. The steam engine that powered the railway which was built in Hamburg, Germany by the Bolton Company and probably is the original engine. The original nineteenth century facility consisted of a marine slip with cradle, capable of taking vessels of 400 tons. The company costed its original promoters approximately a quarter of a million dollars. In 1910, the facilities were sold to Mr. Henry O. Creque Sr., because the shareholders were unable to put up the additional outlays in connection with the undertaking. During World War I the Navy leased the Marine Railway from the Creque family. The marine slip, coaling and shipping business remained in operation until the 1960's by the Creque's.

3. East Asiatic Company, Ltd.

The East Asiatic Company, Ltd., was founded in 1897 and was reputed to be one of Denmark's enterprising and successful steamship concerns. Its head office was in Copenhagen and branches were located in Bangkok, Singapore, Shangal, Uladivostoh, San Francisco, and Valpavos. The company owned many fine steamers, embodying all the latest improvements. A monthly steamship service was maintained with the West Indies and a branch office in St. Thomas was established in 1903 in order to help the Danish West Indies when the question of their sale to the U.S. was being contemplated.

The East Asiatic Company, Ltd., business interest was transferred to the West Indian Company in December of 1915. The facilities remained in operation until an extensive harbor works of the Danish West India Company were completed on St. Thomas in 1916.

4. St. Thomas Dock, Engineering and Coaling Company Ltd.

The St. Thomas Dock, Engineering and Coaling Company Ltd., is the product of an amalgamation of the West Indian interest of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and the St. Thomas Dock Company, joined in 1909.

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Their head offices were located in London. The company's major operation was in supplying coal to numerous transport steamer such as the Quebec Steamship Company, and F. Leyland Company of Liverpool. Company facilities included four iron lighters (one of 50, two of 25, and one of 15 tons capacity) and three water boats - two of iron (of 25 and 15 ton capacity, respectively), and one of wood (of 8 ton capacity). Its most active interest, however, was the machine shops which conducted work with casting of iron and brass, as well as engineering work of all kinds, for which there was a fair equipment of machinery and other facilities to meet urgent supplies.

5. Hamburg American Line

The Hamburg American Line founded in 1847 extended its services to the West Indies in 1871, and in 1873 established a West Indies Office at St. Thomas. The Hamburg American Line was instrumental in much of the increase in the shipping industry of the Virgin Islands up to World War I. Statistics reveal that although the industry was declining and fewer ships were making calls to the Virgin Islands, those which did come to call were mostly Hamburg American Lines (1913-177 steamers received by the company, 172 belonged to the Hamburg American Lines). Between August 1913 - August 1914 practically all the ships were from the Hamburg American Lines.

6. Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, Ltd.

The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, Ltd., a British shipping company, moved to St. Thomas from Tortola in 1819 when the harbor at Road Town was destroyed by hurricane.

After the hurricane, the Company moved its offices to Barbados. Losses experienced by shopkeepers who depended on the passengers brought to the island by Royal Mail ships was considerable. Other companies contemplated removing their headquarters from St. Thomas, however, most companies remained.

Hassel Island is named for the Hazzel family whose long ownership and association with the island can be traced from September 22, 1806 when James Hazzel Sr. and Hames Hazzel Jr. agreed that the "...Careening whaft with bridge shall belong to both of them with equal shares". James Hazzel Sr. deeded his interest in the "Hurricane Hole" to his son James Jr. on January 29, 1817. Hazzel decendents retained interests or rights on the island until March 24, 1943 when the widow of a later James Hazzel and other heirs sold their interest to Issac Paiewonsky.

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Hassel Island's other historic names are Careeninghole,
Orcanshullet, Orkan Island and Hurricanehole.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The district boundary begins at Point A on the shore of Hassel Island, where the previously established Hassel Historic District terminated; then north along the mean high water mark, around the north of the island to include the entrance to the Creque Marine Railway, then south, continuing along the mean high water mark to Point B; then northeast to the point of origin.