

PH 0502359

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 15 1977

DATE ENTERED FEB 17 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

Estate Prosperity

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

n of Frederiksted

CITY, TOWN

Frederiksted

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

Virgin Islands

CODE

78

COUNTY

St. Croix

CODE

0800

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Frances Christensen

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 65

CITY, TOWN

Frederiksted

VICINITY OF

St. Croix, Virgin Islands

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Government House

CITY, TOWN

Christiansted, St. Croix

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

V.I. Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

June, 1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

V.I. Planning Office

CITY, TOWN

St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

STATE

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 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

Prosperity lies one mile north of Frederiksted, in the West End Quarter of St. Croix. Originally a sugar plantation, Prosperity also retains evidences of the period when it was one of the largest producers of cotton in the Danish West Indies. The complex includes a great house, chapel, overseer's house, numerous large animal pens and stables, a steam powered sugar factory, and a slave village.

The great house, now three stories in height including a high cellar, was originally only two, the upper floor being added sometime in the mid-19th Century. The house is rectangular in plan, seven bays by three, with a three story gallery at the west end. The walls are rubble masonry, stuccoed, with a brick belt course at the first floor line. There is no watertable, and only a simple projecting roof cornice. A long straight flight of brick and rubble stairs, flared at the bottom but not of the "welcoming arms" design, lead to double doors centered in the first floor level of both the front and rear facades. The entrances have glass transom lights with louvered blinds and panelled shutters serving as doors...The front (south) entrance is protected by an exceptional lattice work porch with scroll work resembling that found on some houses in Frederiksted. The roof is hipped, with corrugated tin as the covering. A two-story gable roofed cookhouse is appended to the northeast corner. There is also an open air nightclub directly to the north of the great house, with a shed roofed dining area. While visually distracting, the construction of the club has caused no physical damage to the house.

The plan of the great house consists of a wide central hall with a living room to the west (left) and dining room to the east (right). A wide stair hall runs two-thirds of the width of the house, with a small office behind the living room occupying the remaining portion of the rear.

The living room, three by two bays, has plastered walls with a wood ceiling and a good wood dentilled cornice. There is no chair rail. The windows, which are not the typical floor length, and the pairs of double doors opening to the hall and the porch, are finished with molded architrave trim with corner bullet blocks. The jambs of all openings are splayed. The hall door and a door in the wall between the living room and the office have raised panels, while the exterior porch door has the typical louvered blind and panelled shutter combination. The wood base has a molded cap.

The center hall repeats the dentilled wood cornice, wood ceiling, plaster walls and architrave trim to the exterior door and the openings to the living room, rear stair hall and the dining room. The exterior door has splayed jambs, but the opening to the rear hall does not. The dining room features an exceptional wood archway separating the room into two spaces. Resting on wood pilasters, the arch has panelled intrados and soffit, with a wood keystone, but the spandrels are open.

8 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Prosperity is one of the most complete examples of a large plantation complex remaining in the Virgin Islands. The great house, simple on the exterior, has impressively detailed interior spaces and an exceptional entrance porch, yet is representative of the large plantation residences of the period. The smaller overseer's house, factory ruins, with perhaps the only remaining ruins of the once thriving cotton processing industry represented by the ginning room, and the extensive remains of a series of animal pens and stables contribute to the understanding of the workings of a large plantation, further highlighted by the existence of the slave village, which is second in importance only to the village at Estate Slob. The architectural significance of Prosperity lies not only in the individual structures but in the importance of the entire complex, a completely self sustained community.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Danes joined other European nations in securing colonies in the West Indies. The Danes hoped that their colonies would provide them with a permanent site for their trading and commercial interests. Agriculture was to serve as a supplement to the income provided by commerce and trading.

St. Croix surpassed the other islands in the Danish colonies in its agricultural development and proved to be more beneficial to the Danes. By the 1780's sugar plantations on St. Croix were prospering. By 1812-1814 sugar production on the island was at its height. There were 175 plantations in operation with 75% of their acreage in cane.

After the Napoleonic wars, plantation agriculture began to decline in the Danish West Indies. Sugar production had expanded to other areas such as Cuba and Puerto Rico whose more fertile soil gave them an advantage over the Danish West Indies. Burdened by heavy debt, the planters found it impossible to take appropriate measures to maintain the soil. Agricultural methods were generally inefficient and milling operations were wasteful and uneconomic. Europeans added more competition for the Danes with the development of the sugar beet industry. Absentee landlordism made it difficult to maintain sufficient control over the plantations' production. Slavery, which provided the planters with cheap labor, was abolished in 1848 and, with the increase in operating expenses, many plantations discontinued production.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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

Lewisohn, Florence. St. Croix Under Seven Flags. Hollywood, Florida:
The Dukane Press, 1970.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5

17° 43' 46" North Latitude
64° 52' 56" West Longitude

UTM REFERENCES

A

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

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D

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is located in the West End Quarter of St. Croix on Parcel #1, Estate Prosperity off Mahogany Road.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Russell Wright, Annie Hillary

ORGANIZATION

V.I. Planning Office

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 2606

TELEPHONE

809-774-1730

CITY OR TOWN

St. Thomas,

STATE

Virgin Islands

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

DATE *5 August 1977*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Robert B. Pettig

DATE *2/17/78*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Charles Adams*

DATE *2-8-78*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE One

The three chair rail height windows, with splayed jambs and molded architrave trim, in the south facade are repeated in the blind wall separating the dining room from the stair hall, with the central opening a door. All windows have louvered blinds and pannelled shutters. The ceiling is wood with a molded wood cornice, the walls are plastered and there is a base mold with cap.

The cookhouse, located at the northeast corner of the house, at this floor level, has an open, wood trussed ceiling and roof structure, a lime concrete floor and plastered walls. There is a single window in each of the east and west walls. The north wall is taken up by the charcoal range, but the pyramidal chimney hood has been removed.

The rear stair has 18 risers in a straight run, with a molded handrail supported by turned balusters, two to a tread, and turned newel posts, all of which is mahogany and of excellent quality. The design of the balusters is repeated in the balustrade that runs the full length of the stairs opening at the upper floor level. The upper floor consists of five bedrooms located in a line along the front facade, with a nursery at the west end of the hall and a later bathroom at the east end. The first and fifth bedrooms have three sides of a wood tray ceiling created by the plane of the hipped roof. The other bedroom opens on to the three level porch. The four walls dividing the bedrooms are board partitions, with four panel doors interconnecting the five. The exterior wall (north) and the longitudinal wall between the bedrooms and the hall are rubble masonry, plastered.

A small (17' x 33') one story chapel is located off the north west corner of the great house. One by two bays and rectangular in plan, the chapel has a gable roof behind a crow step gabled south facade, which has a heavy board door. The walls are stuccoed rubble. Ruins of a below grade tunnel connecting the chapel to the great house cellar remain. A 20th Century open shed has been added to the east wall of the chapel.

A large (approximately 15' x 90') rubble stable with a shed roof, of undertimined date, exists north of the chapel and great house, connected to the cookhouse by a high rubble wall. A vaulted roof rubble cistern, still in use, remains west of the great house.

Further to the northwest is a two story hipped roof overseer's house. Seven bays by four and rectangular in plan, the long walls are arcaded, full length at the upper level, and opposite the middle five bays of the lower. The walls are stuccoed rubble and the roof corrugated tin.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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A later two story porch has been added to the west end wall.

Additional animal pens and stables are located west of the overseer's house, with rubble perimeter walls and wood fencing separating the pens. There is an exceptional belfry with a storage space below built into the south wall of the pens. Foundations for another animal pen remain south of these pens, just east of the sugar factory.

The factory is now in ruins, but remains show that it was two stories in height, with rubble walls, and was square in plan. The north half of the structure was divided into five rooms by rubble partitions. This area is largely intact and was the part of the factory given over to the processing of cotton grown on the plantation. It had its own gin and other processing machinery, but nothing remains from this activity. The steam boiler room was located in the extreme southeast part of the factory, with the tall square tapering chimney still in existence, but deteriorated. Parts of the cast iron flywheel and other machinery from the sugar processing period are scattered about the interior and the exterior of the factory ruins. The area opposite the boiler room is divided by a rubble wall, six bays in the lower level and nine in the upper. The east wall of the factory structure, most of which is still standing full height, has six bays, with all openings and corners lined with yellow brick. A round tapered rubble tower for a wind powered well exists north of the factory. Nothing remains of the machinery or sail loft.

East of the factory and running in two parallel rows to Prosperity Road and the shore is a slave village, consisting of four rubble, hipped roof cottages, square in plan, with two to a side.

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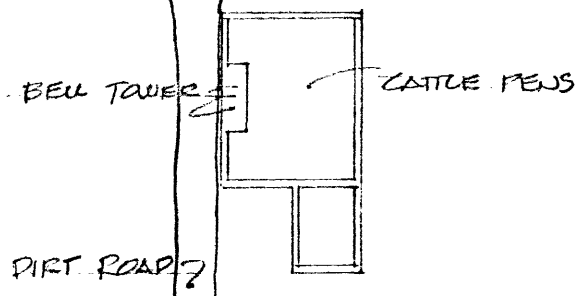
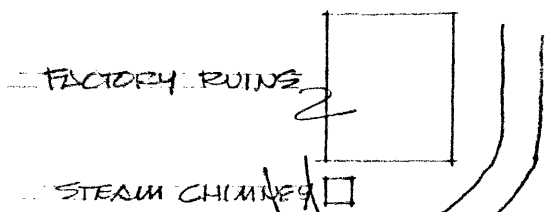
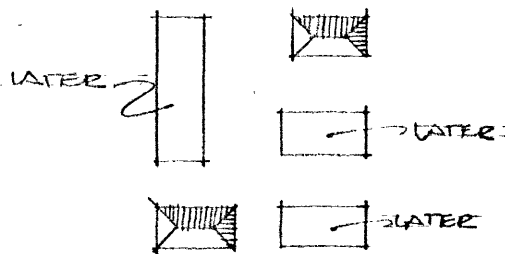
ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE Three

Zabriske, L.K. The Virgin Islands of the United States Of America - Historical and Descriptive Commercial and Industrial Facts, Figures and Resources:
New York, 1918.

McGuire, James William. Geographic Dictionary of the Virgin Islands. Special Publication No. 103 (Serial No. 269), United States Coast and Geodatic Survey, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1925.

Recorder of Deeds Office, Christiansted, St. Croix

SLAVE QUARTERS



DIRT ROAD?

