

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 16000698

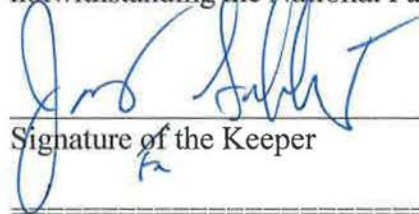
Date Listed: 10/4/2016

Property Name: St. John's Episcopal Church

County: St. Croix

State: VI

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

10-4-2016

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 3 and 8: Criteria

Criterion B is hereby deleted. The significance of the association of Hamilton and his mother with this congregation is not supported. His attendance is an interesting historical fact, but in order to satisfy Criterion B, the association must be 1) direct and significant, and 2) during the period when the subject was productive and significant. Hamilton had no direct relationship with this building; it was initially constructed in the mid-19th century and reconstructed a decade later.

Criteria Considerations D and E are hereby deleted. Consideration D is not necessary since the church building is the focus of the nomination. And, since the reconstruction of this building is part of its historical development and significance, it is not necessary to check consideration E.

Section 5: Resource Count

The number of **previously listed resources** is 1. The number of **contributing resources** is 1 (1 site). The entire property is included in the Christiansted Historic District, and the church building is accounted for in that original nomination. The cemetery was not, and is therefore included as a newly contributing resource.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

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NRIS Reference Number: 16000698
Property Name: St. John's Episcopal Church
County: St. Croix State: VI

Section 8: Area(s) of Significance

Religion and Education are hereby deleted as areas of significance. The thrust of the narrative indicates that the importance of this church (beyond its architectural significance) lies in its role within the social construct of the city and as a place where people of both African and European descent could gather together, a rarity in many, if not most, Caribbean islands. The narrative does not establish the importance of any educational activities that occurred in the church, nor any substantial religious significance beyond the establishment of the parish.

Section 8: Period of Significance

The period of significance is hereby determined to be 1868-1966, coinciding with reconstruction of the present building and ending at the arbitrary 50 year cutoff. While the cemetery remains from the earliest periods of the parish, there is not enough information provided to ascertain its potential significance as anything other than an adjunct to the church itself. And, since the building as it stands today did not exist prior to its reconstruction after the fire of 1866, the date of construction is the logical choice for the beginning of the period of significance. The social history and concurrent ethnic heritage related to the parishioners of African descent continued (remarkably) after the transfer of the parish from the English Church to the American Church.

Section 8: Significant Dates

The list of dates is hereby removed

Section 8: Significant Person

Criterion B has been deleted, therefore this section has also been deleted.

Section 8: Cultural Affiliation

"British" and "Black" are hereby deleted. Since Criterion D is not cited, this section should read N/A.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

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NRIS Reference Number: 16000698
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County: St. Croix State: VI

Section 9: Previous Documentation

"Previously listed in the National Register" is hereby checked

The US Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

698

Page 1 of 18 United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: St. John's Episcopal Church
Other names/site number: St. John's Anglican Church
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Plot #27 King Street
City or town: Christiansted State: VI County: St. Croix
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C ___ D

Sean L. Krigger / Acting Deputy SHPO September 22, 2016
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
V.I. State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
Sean L. Krigger September 22, 2016
Signature of commenting official: Date
Acting Deputy SHPO, Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

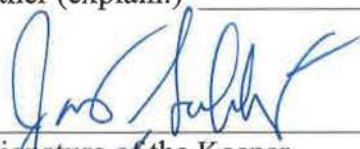
St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

10-4-2016
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

FUNERARY/Cemetery

EDUCATIONAL

SOCIAL HISTORY

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

EDUCATIONAL

FUNERARY/Cemetery

SOCIAL HISTORY

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Mid-19th Century English Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Limestone, Brick

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

St. John's Episcopal Church is located on the western boundary of Christiansted town on King Street. Enlarged in 1849 to replace churches built in 1760 and in 1779, and restored after the fire in 1866, the church structure follows a cruciform plan: 7 sets of 3 bays, two-story, with three-tiered bell tower. Built of dressed limestone and brick, the church exhibits many details of the English Gothic Revival: pointed arched windows and doors, three-step applied columns, molded parapets with crenellations, and pinnacles with crockets at the gable ends. The bell tower is centered on the western façade and has a pyramidal roof, with a pinnacle on each corner. The church's roof is supported with cross gables made of Southern pine.

Narrative Description

St. John's Episcopal Church is included in the Christiansted Historic District, structure #13, located on Plot # 27 King Street at the western entrance to Christiansted town, St. Croix. The building is cruciform with its main axis oriented southwest-northeast, parallel to King Street. There is an adjacent large cemetery used to bury parishioners since 1760. The current building was restored by 1868 after the fire that burnt the church to the walls in 1866. Andrew Ferris, a 74-year old native of St. Croix, a master carpenter, joiner, blacksmith and stonemason, planned and supervised all aspects of that restoration.

The cruciform configuration is nave and cross transept – 7 sets of 3 bays, two-story, and a three-tiered bell tower. The church building occupies approximately 9,000 square feet under roof on

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

the 3-acre property. The interior of the two-story building has a balcony with a large Austin pipe organ opposite the altar and a smaller Hutchings-Plaisted Tracker organ dated 1881 above the north transept. Construction materials are dressed limestone and brick on the exterior, stucco on the interior. The roof timbers are cross-gabled and supported by wooden trusses with a cross plate at the intersection of nave and transepts. The roof structure is made of Southern pine. Danish yellow bricks surround the pointed arch windows and doors.

Specific features include a triglyph chancel on the east wall with an impressive stained glass window above the altar, designed by Sharpe & Steele of New York, and dedicated in 1854. It was reproduced in 1868 to replace the window which was melted by the fire of 1866. A plaque by the Vestry dedicates the building in 1858, and another one commemorates the rebuilding in 1868. The bell tower at the west end of the church was completed in 1858. The 2,566-pound bell bears the inscription, "Meneelys West Troy, N.Y. / Presented to St. John's Church, Santa Cruz, W.I. / by Charles Lucas Esq. Planter, A.D. 1857 / Rev. Fletcher J. Hawley / Rector." The bell was broken in the fire of 1866 and recast in 1867. Both the stained glass window and the bell are the largest of their kind in the Virgin Islands.

Many large gravestones are in the floor of the nave, inserted in remembrance of special benefactors and important congregation members of the past. Only one burial is recorded inside the church, that of Revd. William Josephus Bulkley, whose remains are under the altar. A marble plaque was erected to his memory on the east wall of the chancel. The other gravestones were re-located from the churchyard and date from the early 1700s.

Nearby to the bell tower is a life-sized crucifix—a bronze *corpus* mounted on a massive wooden cross--marking the north entrance to the cemetery.

A church cemetery lies to the south of the building and contains 19th and 20th century gravesites and tombstones, some of which are surrounded by intricate cast iron fencing. All the 18th century gravestones of parishioners were removed to the interior of the church to prevent them being covered over by the transepts when the church was enlarged.

The church exhibits many details of English Gothic Revival: pointed arch windows and doors, three-stepped columns reminiscent of Gothic buttresses, molded parapets, and crenellations and pinnacles at the gable end. The church's design was influenced by the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement of the Church of England.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religious

Architectural

Educational

Social History

Ethnic Heritage

Period of Significance

Mid-19th Century

Significant Dates

1760 – Parish established by Church of England in Danish colony of St. Croix

1765-1773 – Alexander Hamilton & family worshipped at St. John's at least occasionally

1768 – Rachel Faucett's (A. Hamilton's mother) death recorded in St. John's burial registry

1772 – Original building destroyed by hurricane, rebuilt in 1779

1794 – Petition from the "Free Coloured" to Vestry to rent pews

1797 – Vestry approved "Free Coloured" ability to rent pews

1801-02 and 1807-1815 – British occupation during Napoleonic Wars

1848 – Sunday school building completed on adjacent plot

1849-1858 – Church enlarged to accommodate "the recently emancipated;" bell tower added

1866 – Building burned to the walls in Sunday Market fire

1868 – Building restored.

1917—Danish West Indies sold to the U.S.A.

1919—Jurisdiction transferred from Church of England to Protestant Episcopal Church (US)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Hamilton , Alexander

Faucett , Rachel (mother of Alexander Hamilton)

Cultural Affiliation

British

Black

Architect/Builder

Andrew Ferris of St. Croix (restoration 1866-68).

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Efforts to establish a formal Anglican presence on St. Croix began in 1752 with purchase of land. St. John's Anglican Church was built in 1760. English, Irish and Scots living on St. Croix under Danish sovereignty (1733-1917) worshipped alongside blacks ("Free Coloured" and slaves, long before emancipation). A young Alexander Hamilton and his family worshipped, at least on occasion, at St. John's, very near their shop/residence. In 1797, the "Free Coloured" were granted the right to rent pews in the church. The deaths of many British soldiers are recorded in the burial register of the church; they died of tropical diseases. St. John's Church building, in the English Gothic Revival style, stands today in spite of destructive hurricanes, earthquakes and fire.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

A. The ethnic diversity of St. Croix's inhabitants under Danish sovereignty (1733-1917) was remarkable, even by regional standards. The island's plantation economy generated a diverse population that included more than 60 West African tribal or linguistic groups and whites from the British Isles, Europe and the Lesser Antilles. In order to partially please the different non-Danish cultures represented among the white population, the Danish Crown decreed relative religious toleration in their West Indian colonies in 1754, to an extent not found elsewhere in the region.

The numerical growth, wealth and influence of the English, Irish and Scots inhabitants of St. Croix led the Church of England to establish a parish, to be called St. John's, at Christiansted, in 1760. During the English short-lived attempt to settle St. Croix (1645-1650), two Anglican chapels are depicted on a Spanish map of 1647; all were uprooted in the Spanish attack of 1650. The English were followed by the French and the Knights of Malta. The Danes bought St. Croix in 1733, after which Anglicans witnessed and contributed to St. Croix's history. In 1803, Denmark abolished the African slave trade, and in 1848, the slaves on St. Croix (and by extension, St. Thomas and St. John) were emancipated. Until the 1820s, St. Croix enjoyed a great prosperity. Christiansted served as the capital of the Danish West Indies from 1755 to 1871.

Africans and their descendants were an integral part of the St. John's congregation. Many thousands, regardless of residency or visitors, race and class, have found St. John's a source of inspiration and comfort in joys and sorrows, and a symbol of stability in times of political, social and economic uncertainty.

B. After moving from Nevis in 1765, Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) and his family lived nearby on Company Street and worshipped at St. John's, at least occasionally. His relatives, the

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

Lyttons, his employers David Beekman and Nicholas Cruger, and the Thomas Stevens family, with whom he lived after his mother's death, were all influential parishioners at St. John's. As a teenager, Hamilton witnessed the island's destruction in a major hurricane on August 31, 1772, and he wrote a vivid account that was later published in the *Royal Danish American Gazette*, causing something of a sensation. The essay impressed his employer and a young Presbyterian minister to provide funding and letters of introduction to the young Hamilton to further his education in the British North American colonies. During the American Revolution, he served as an officer in the Continental Army and as an aide to General George Washington. Hamilton was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, wrote 51 of the 85 *Federalist Papers* (1786-1800) in support of a strong central government, and signed the final document. He served as the first U.S. Secretary of the Treasury under the Presidency of George Washington and established the Bank of the United States. Before his death in 1804, Alexander Hamilton shaped the economic course of the new nation to manufacture and trade as opposed to agriculturalism.

Hamilton's mother, Rachel Faucett, died of yellow fever in Christiansted in 1768, and her burial is recorded in the St. John's Church burial registry.

C. The church exhibits many details of English Gothic Revival architecture: pointed arch windows and doors, three-stepped columns reminiscent of Gothic buttresses, molded parapets, and crenellations and pinnacles at the gable end. Its style was influenced by the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement of the Church of England. Unlike most of the larger buildings in Christiansted, which are Neo-Classical in style, St. John's Church is distinctly British.

The Danish bricks surrounding the pointed arch windows and doors were brought from Denmark as ships ballast; similar bricks were used in many other buildings in Christiansted.

The furniture, pews, pulpit, banisters and balustrades inside the church are of hand carved West Indian mahogany, mostly local, and display the beauty of caring craftsmanship.

On the balcony of the north transept, a tracker organ dates to 1881. A newer, larger pipe organ on the west balcony is currently used.

In the manner of many older British churches, a number of commemorative memorials and gravestones can be found embedded in the floor of the nave and in the walls, with dates beginning in the late 1700s. The gravestones had been placed originally over graves in the churchyard; and were relocated because there were no living descendants and were in danger of being built over during the expansions of the church. As a result, many of these gravestones have been saved from further deterioration by the elements.

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Cissel, William Fleming, St. John's Episcopal Church Restoration Committee, "A Summary History of St. John's Episcopal Church, Christiansted, on the 250th Anniversary of Its Founding." 2011, revised 2014 (Notes, bibliography and work cited included). Copy enclosed with this Application.

Holsoe, Svend E, "Danish West Indies Families: Goodchild" August 10, 2009.
<<http://www.vifamilies.org/images/Goodchild.doc>>
(For a Summary of all the Church records at St. John's Episcopal Church.)

Barker, Jack, Jr., HABS Historian, NPS form 10-920, 1983, HABS # VI-21, Library of Congress. (Copy enclosed here.)
HABS Survey with 13 Photographs, 1960-61, Library of Congress.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey **10-920 (1983) HABS # VI-21; 60-61 and earlier surveys to 1933**
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: attached paper: Cissel, William F., "A Summary History of St. John's Episcopal Church, Christiansted on the 250th Anniversary of its Founding."

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approximately 3 Acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: N 17.742993 Longitude: W 64.708682

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

King Street (Plots #24, #25, #26, #27) to the north; Peters' Farm Road to the west; Company Street and Company Cross Street to the south; Company Cross Street and Queen Street to the east, also eastern boundaries of Plots #24 King Street and #34 A & B Company Street. (See attached survey map O.L.G Drawing #A9-53-C010.) The south and west boundaries of the church cemetery are in dispute with the Government of the Virgin Islands.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Town streets and plot numbers form natural boundaries for the church and cemetery.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: St. John's Episcopal Church Restoration Committee
Organization: St. John's Episcopal Church, Rev'd Gregory H. Gibson Priest-in-Charge
Street & number: 27 King Street
City or town: Christiansted State: VI Zip code: 00820
E-mail: ggibson@stj.edovi.org

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State

Telephone: (340) 778-8221

Date: _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: St. John's Episcopal Church

City or Vicinity: Christiansted

County: St. Croix Island State: VI

Photographer: Ellen Sanpere

Date Photographed: March 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:



VI_StCroix_StJohns 01

View of church from the southwest with cemetery in foreground

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State



VI_StCroix_StJohns 02

Cemetery south of church building: cast iron grave fencing



VI_StCroix_StJohns 03

South elevation, cemetery in foreground



VI_StCroix_StJohns 04

View of bell tower and south elevation



VI_StCroix_StJohns 05

North transept entrance on King Street



VI_StCroix_StJohns 06

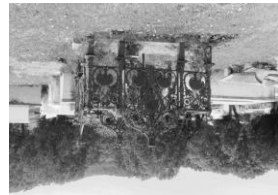
West nave entrance and life-size crucifix

St. John's Episcopal Church

Name of Property

St. Croix, VI

County and State



VI_StCroix_Stuohns 07

Ornate cast iron grave fence in cemetery



VI_StCroix_Stuohns 08

East nave facade, north transept and entrance



VI_StCroix_Stuohns 09

Detail of pointed arch windows and pinnacles



VI_StCroix_Stuohns 10

Bell tower with pointed arch windows and pinnacles



VI_StCroix_Stuohns 11

South transept entrance



VI_StCroix_Stuohns 12

South transept detail: pointed arch windows and pinnacles

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State



VI_StCroix_StJohns 13

Detail: trusses support roof structure; stained glass window in east nave wall behind altar.



VI_StCroix_StJohns 14

East nave, with altar and stained glass window; carved fleur-de-lis pew finials in foreground



VI_StCroix_StJohns 15

Oblique view from upper level: crossing grill and roof trusses; large organ and choir in background



VI_StCroix_StJohns 16

Detail, truss to wall connection



VI_StCroix_StJohns 17

Commemorative plaques

St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State



VI_StCroix_StJohns 18
West Indian mahogany furniture



VI_StCroix_StJohns 19
Pulpit detail



VI_StCroix_StJohns 20
Mahogany pews with fleur-de-lis finials



VI_StCroix_StJohns 21
Plaque on south transept wall carved with Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments and Credo



VI_StCroix_StJohns 22
East nave wall, stained glass window, altar

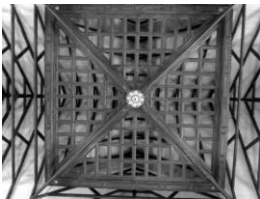
St. John's Episcopal Church
Name of Property

St. Croix, VI
County and State



VI_StCroix_StJohns 23

West nave entrance; organ and choir on upper level



VI_StCroix_StJohns 24

Detail of square grillwork, bracing trusses at crossing

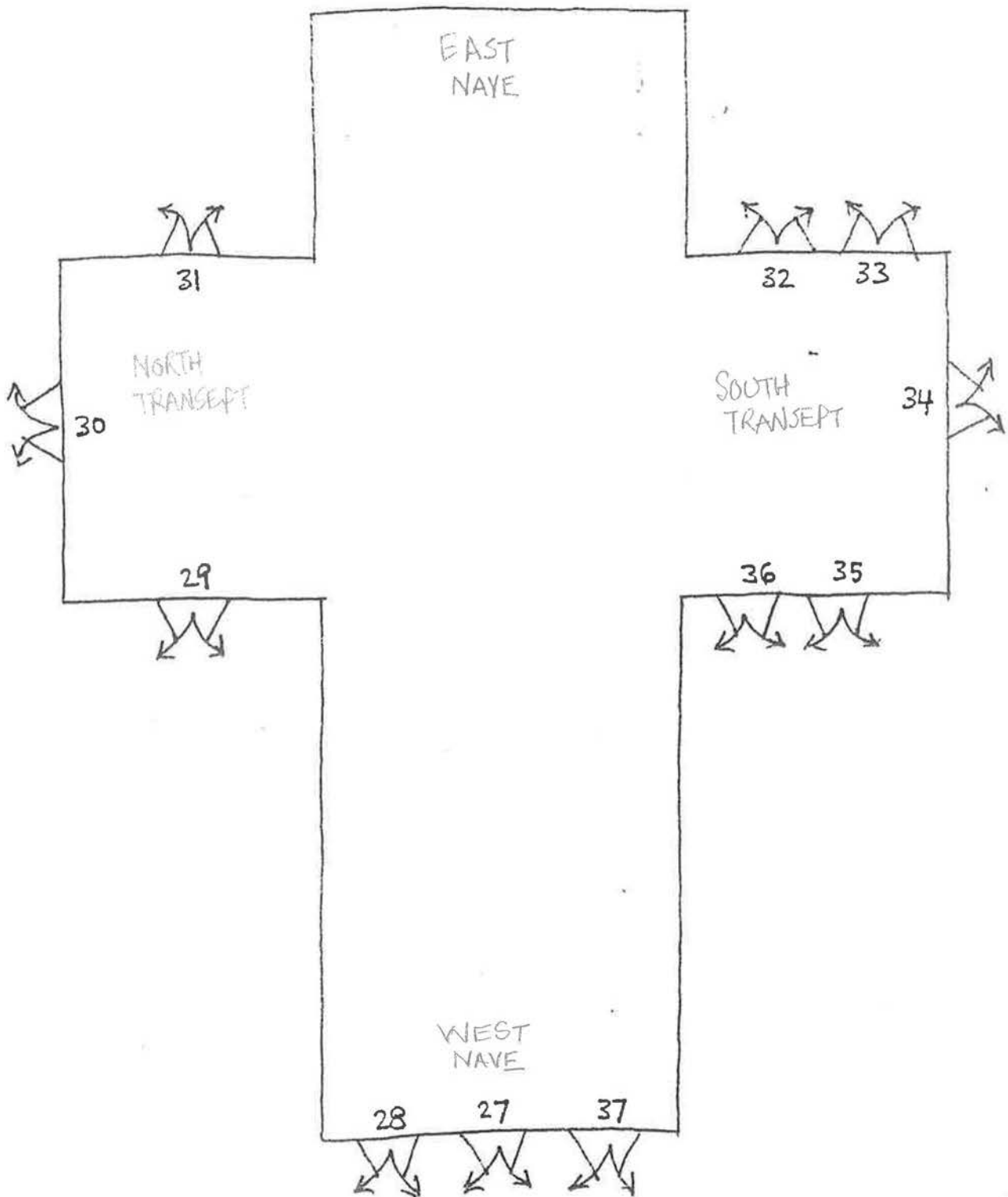


VI_StCroix_StJohns 25

View from King Street; north transept entrance

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

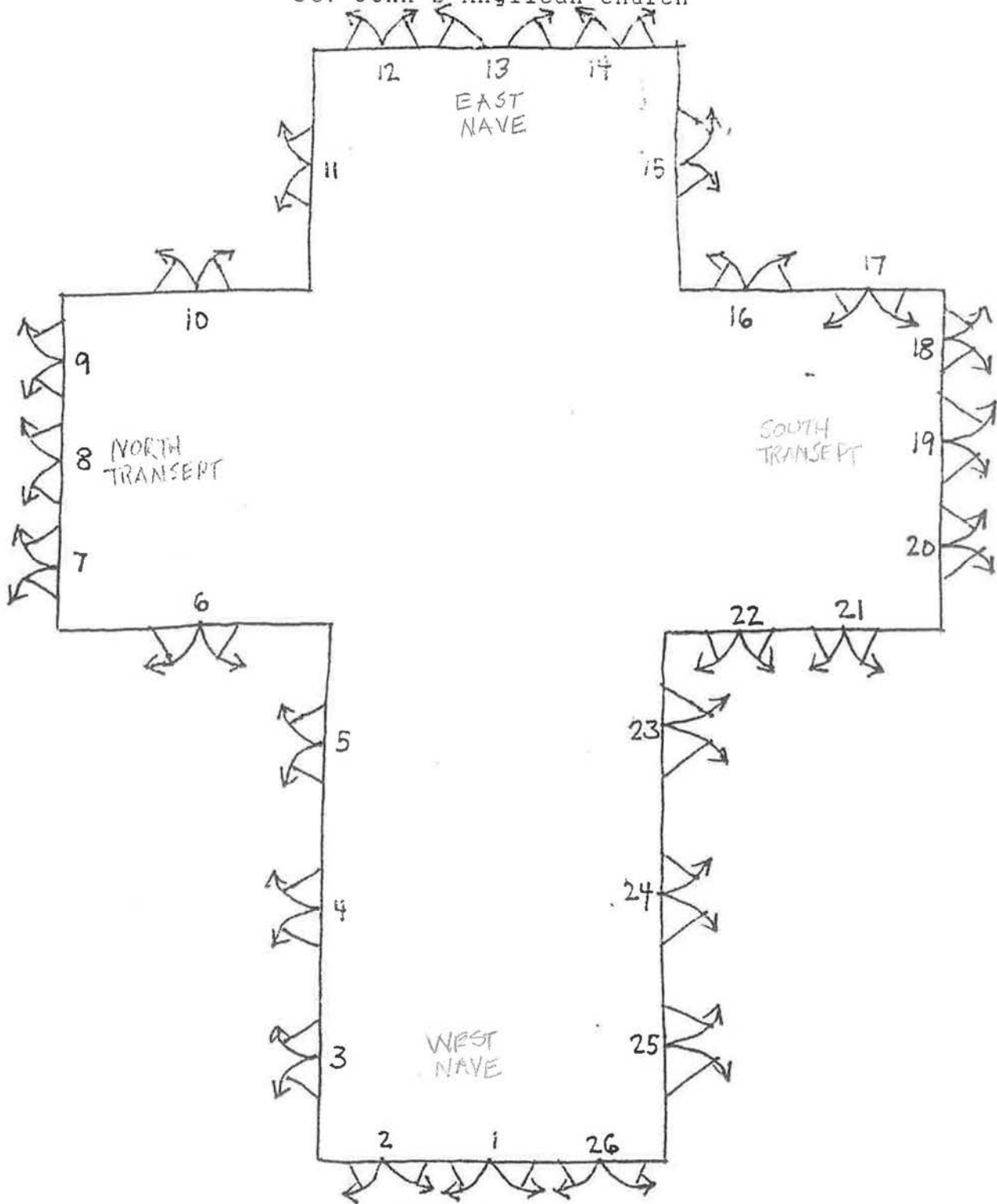


Plan View, Second Floor
(Not to Scale)

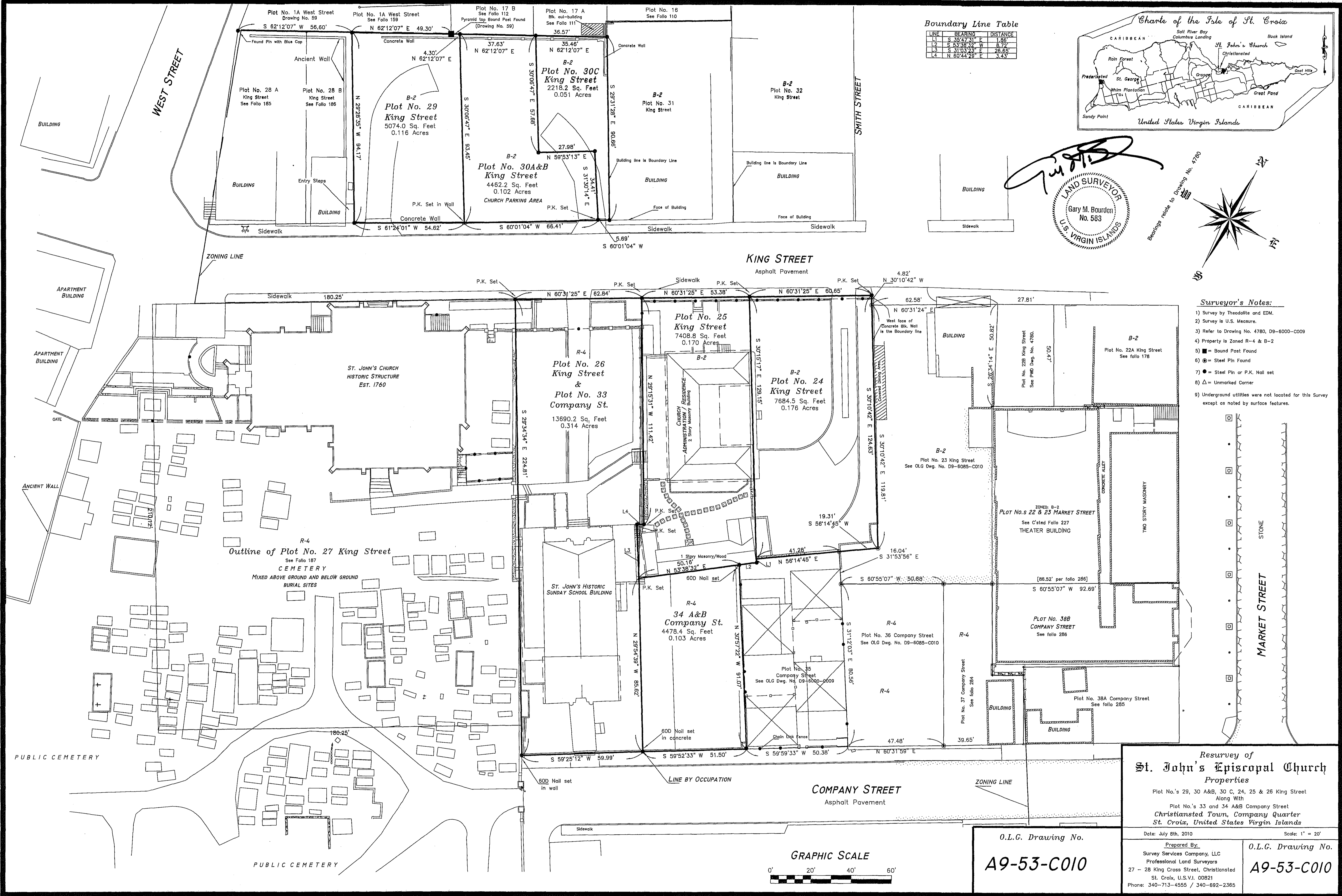
St. John's Anglican Church

APPENDIX "A"

Schedule of Window, Door, and Frame Work,
St. John's Anglican Church

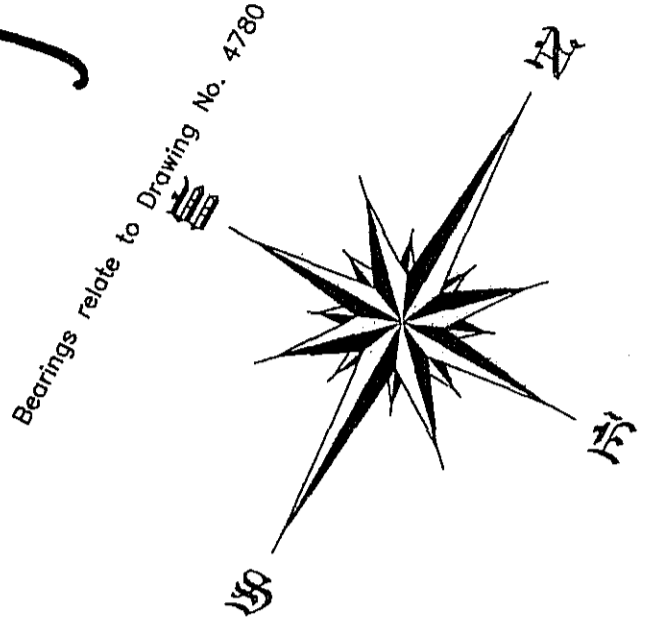
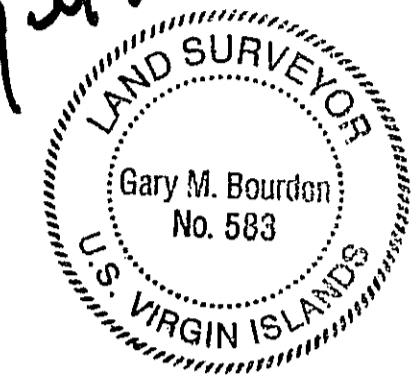
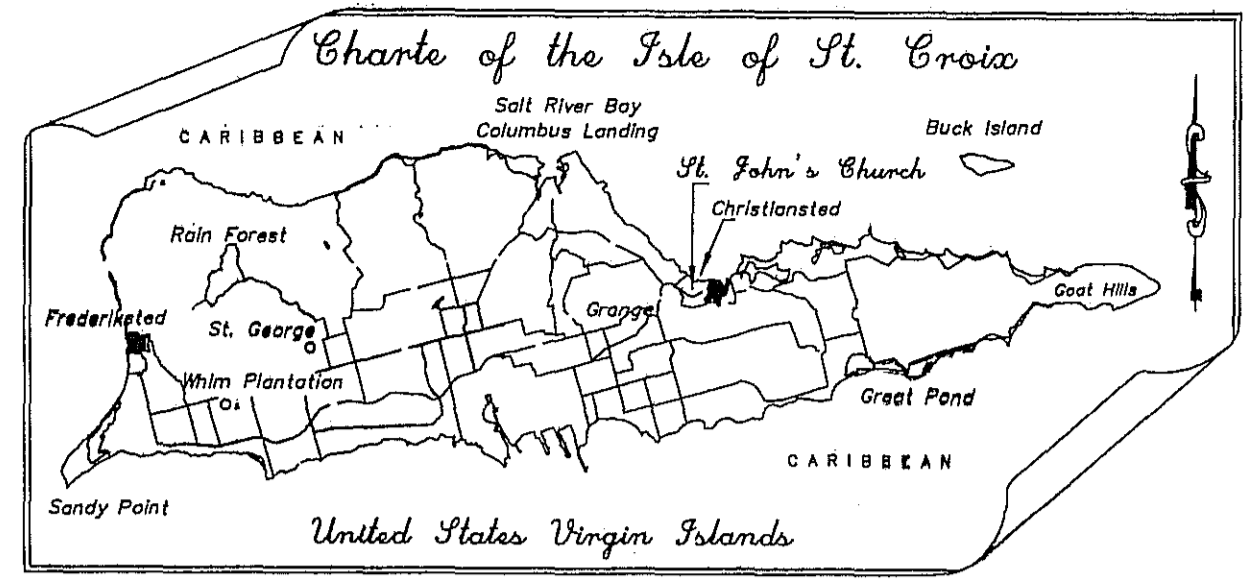


Plan View, First Floor
(Not to Scale)



Boundary Line Table

LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
1	S 35°47'31" E	1.86'
2	S 43°38'32" W	6.72'
3	S 31°03'23" E	26.53'
4	N 50°44'28" E	3.43'



- Surveyor's Notes:**
- 1) Survey by theodolite and EDM.
 - 2) Survey is U.S. Measure.
 - 3) Refer to Drawing No. 4780, D9-6000-C009
 - 4) Property is Zoned R-4 & B-2
 - 5) \blacksquare = Bound Post Found
 - 6) \odot = Steel Pin Found
 - 7) \bullet = Steel Pin or P.K. Nail set
 - 8) \triangle = Unmarked Corner
 - 9) Underground utilities were not located for this Survey except as noted by surface features.

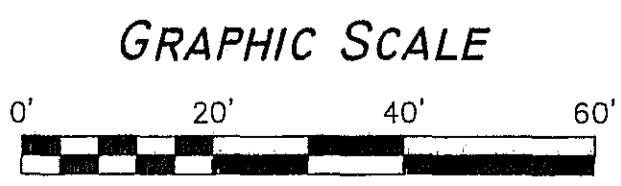
**Resurvey of
St. John's Episcopal Church
Properties**

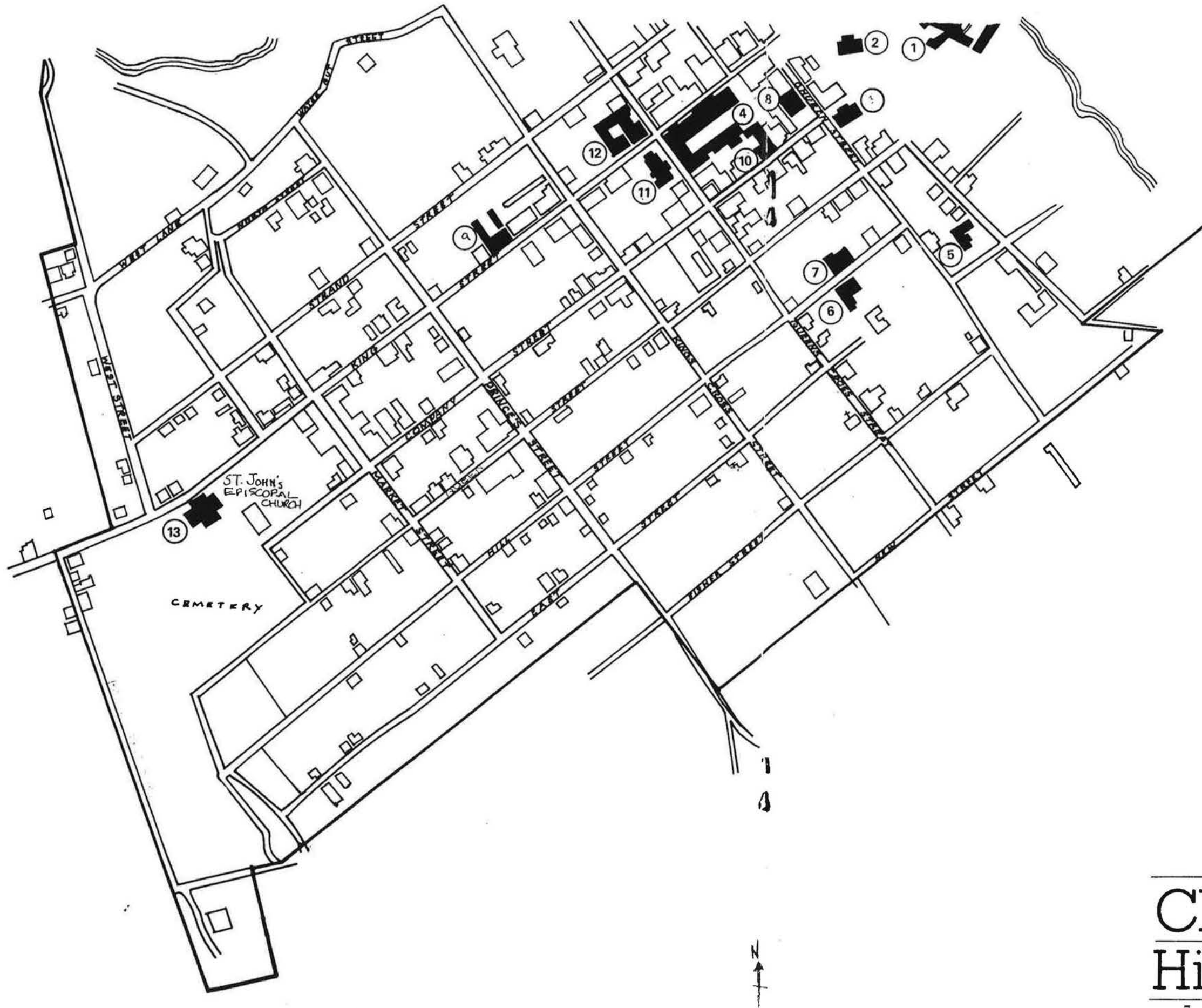
Plot No.'s 29, 30 A&B, 30 C, 24, 25 & 26 King Street
Along With
Plot No.'s 33 and 34 A&B Company Street
**Christiansted Town, Company Quarter
St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands**

Date: July 8th, 2010 Scale: 1" = 20'

Prepared By:
Survey Services Company, LLC
Professional Land Surveyors
27 - 28 King Cross Street, Christiansted
St. Croix, U.S.V.I. 00821
Phone: 340-713-4555 / 340-692-2365

**O.L.G. Drawing No.
A9-53-C010**





Christiansted Historic District











ST. JOHN'S

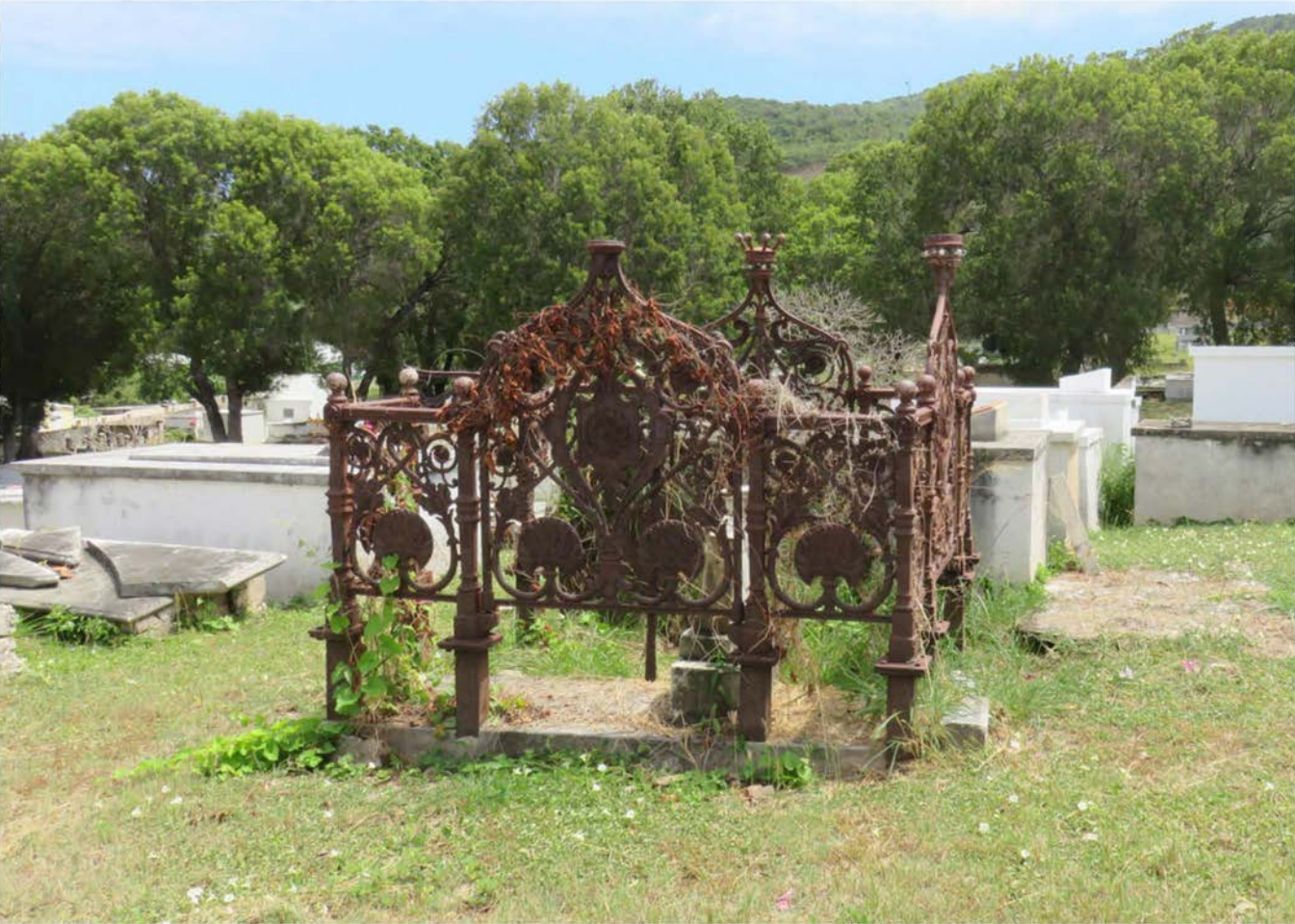
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

(ANGLICAN)
FOUNDED 1790 BY THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

SERVICES

12:10 WED. HOLY EUCHARIST
8am SUN. HOLY EUCHARIST























St JOHN'S CHURCH

REBUILT & ENLARGED BY THE CONGREGATION
UNDER THE PERSONAL DIRECTION AND EXERTIONS
OF THEIR ESTEEMED RECTOR
THE REV^d F. J. HAWLEY D. D.
COMMENCED A. D. 1849
AND
COMPLETED A. D. 1858.

BURNT TO THE WALLS IN 1866.
RESTORED WITHIN TWO YEARS
BY THE CONGREGATION
AND THEIR FRIENDS,
UNDER
THE Revd. C. J. BRANCH, Rector

J.B.











Exodus

Chap. xx

Believe

Psalm 119

Our fathes which art in heauen
Hallowed be thy name: Thy
kingdom come. Thy will be done
in earth as it is in heauen: Give
us this day our daily bread:
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass
against us; And lead us not into
temptation; But deliver us from
evil: For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory: for
ever and ever. Amen.

Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.

II.

Thou shalt not make to thyself any
graven image, nor the likeness of
any thing that is in heaven above,
or in the earth beneath, or in the
water under the earth; thou shalt
not bow down to them, nor worship
them: for I the Lord thy God am
a jealous God, and visit the sins of
the fathers upon the children, unto
the third and fourth generation of
them that hate me; and shew mercy
unto thousands of them that love me
and keep my commandments.

III.

Thou shalt not take the name of the
Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord
will not hold him guiltless that
taketh his name in vain.

IV.

Remember that thou keep holy the
Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou
labour, and do all that thou hast
to do; but the seventh day is the
Sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it
thou shalt do no manner of work;

neither shalt thou plow, nor sow,
nor reap, nor make any work in the
field, nor in the house; neither shalt
thou use any fire in thy house: seven
days shall be unto thee a Sabbath,
in which thou shalt do no work:
The seventh day is the Sabbath of
the Lord thy God: for in six days
the Lord made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that in them is, and
rested the seventh day: wherefore
the Lord blessed the seventh day,
and hallowed it.

V.

Honour thy father and thy mother:
that thy days may be long in the
land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI.

Thou shalt do no murder.

VII.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII.

Thou shalt not steal.

IX.

Thou shalt not bear false witness
against thy neighbour.

X.

Thou shalt not cover thy neighbour's
house: thou shalt not cover thy
neighbour's wife; nor his servant,
nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass,
nor any thing that is his.

In God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth: And
in Jesus Christ his only Son our
Lord; Who was conceived by the
Holy Ghost; Born of the virgin
Mary; Suffered under Pontius
Pilate; Was crucified, dead, and
buried; He descended into hell;
The third day he rose again
from the dead; He ascended into
heaven, and sitteth on the
right hand of God the Father
Almighty; From thence he shall
come to judge the quick and
the dead. I believe in the
Holy Ghost: The holy catholic
church; The communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins; The
resurrection of the body; And
the life everlasting. Amen.









National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: St. John's Episcopal Church

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: VIRGIN ISLANDS, St. Croix

DATE RECEIVED: 8/19/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/19/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 10/04/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/04/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000698

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 10-4-2016 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Previously Listed

Remove Criterion B

Criteria Considerations D+E

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C

REVIEWER *[Signature]* DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N Y see attached SLR Y/N Y

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office**

Charles W. Turnbull Regional Library
4607 Tutu Park Mall
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

RECEIVED 2280

AUG 19 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places
Facsimile National Park Service

Telephone: (340) 776-8605

August 8, 2016

Ms. Stephanie Toothman
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
Washington, DC 20005

**Ref: National Register of Historic Places Nominations from the Virgin Islands for the
St. John's Episcopal Church and the Cruz Bay Town**

Dear Ms. Toothman:

I am pleased to forward to you two (2) National Register of Historic Places nominations from the Virgin Islands for your review, approval and addition to the National Register of Historic Places.

The nominations are for the Saint John's Episcopal Church in the City of Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands and for the Town of Cruz Bay, St. John, Virgin Islands. Both sites are of significance to the architectural, cultural and social heritage of the former Danish West Indies (1672-1917) and the continued heritage of the Virgin Islands (1917-present).

Thank you in advance for your time and that of your Staff in reviewing these nominations for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Should you have any questions or wish to contact me, I can be reached at 340-776-8605 and by email at sean.krigger@dpr.vi.gov.

Sincerely,

Sean L. Krigger
Acting Director and Deputy SHPO

Enclosures: St. John's Episcopal Church, VI, NR nomination forms and CD set
Cruz Bay Town, VI, NR nomination forms

HABS
VI
1-CHRIS,
40-

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE XXXXX Territory Virgin Islands		COUNTY St. Thomas Island	TOWN OR VICINITY Christiansted
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Anglican Church			HABS NO. VI-21
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE			
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 27 King St.			
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1849		ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The English Gothic Revival details of this church distinguish it in appearance from the Danish and Moravian churches of the island			
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) English Gothic Revival			
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Limestone and brick			
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Cruciform			
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Pointed arched windows and doors, three-step triangular applied buttress piers, molded brick parapets with crenellations, and pinnacles with crockets at the gable ends, tower in the center of the street facade			
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)			
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Restored after fire in 1868			
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE			
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE			
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) National Register of Historic Places			
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Jack Barker, Jr. HABS Historian			DATE July 15, 1983

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**Historic American Buildings Survey,
Engineering Record, Landscapes
Survey**

Anglican Church, 27 King Street, Christiansted, St. Croix, VI



View photos from this survey. (Some may not be online).



Title: Anglican Church, 27 King Street, Christiansted, St. Croix, VI

Creator(s): [Historic American Buildings Survey](#), creator

Related Names:
[Barker, Jack](#), historian

Date Created/Published: Documentation compiled after 1933

Medium: Photo(s): 13

Data Page(s): 2

Photo Caption Page(s): 1

Reproduction Number: ---

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Call Number: HABS VI,1-CHRIS,40-

Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

Notes:

- Significance: The English Gothic Revival details of this church distinguish it in appearance from the Danish and Moravian churches of the island.
- Survey number: HABS VI-21
- Building/structure dates: 1849 Initial Construction
- Building/structure dates: 1868 Subsequent Work

Subjects:

- [Anglican churches](#)
- [stone buildings](#)
- [religious services](#)
- [fires](#)

Place:

- [Virgin Islands \(US\) -- St. Croix -- Christiansted](#)

Collections:

- [Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record/Historic American Landscapes Survey](#)

Part of: Historic American Buildings Survey (Library of Congress)

Bookmark This Record:
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/vi0076/>

Related

- [Browse neighboring items by call number.](#)

Collection: [Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record/Historic American Landscapes Survey](#)

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**A SUMMARY HISTORY OF
ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CHRISTIANSTED
ON THE 250th ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING**

William Fleming Cissel
30 March, 2011
[Revised 16 September, 2014]

Efforts to establish a formal Anglican presence on St. Croix under Danish sovereignty began in the 1750s. The island's plantation economy generated a diverse population that included over 60 West African tribal or linguistic groups and whites from the British Isles, Europe, and the Lesser Antilles.⁴ In order to partially satisfy the different non-Danish cultures represented among the white population, the Danish Crown decreed relative religious toleration in their West Indian colonies in 1754 to an extent not found elsewhere in the region. In Christiansted, in addition to the Danish State Church (Lutheran), one could find Dutch Reformed, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Scottish Presbyterian, and Moravian congregations. The existence of a small Sephardic Jewish congregation in the 1760s and 1770s was ignored, and West African animist religions were banned outright. Toleration, however, was—as it still is—a relative concept. Each “foreign” (i.e., non-Danish) congregation was required to petition the King through the governor-general in submissive terms in order for their chosen clergyman to be licensed to exercise his ministry. A license could be revoked and the clergyman expelled if something was said or done to give offense to the governor-general.

The spiritual needs of growing numbers of English, Irish, and Scots plantation owners, managers, overseers, craftsmen, merchants, doctors, and lawyers resulted in the purchase of a vacant lot (now No. 27) at the head of King Street, Christiansted, for future use. Title was listed in the *Matrikul* (annual property tax register) under the name of *den engelske Kirke* (“the English Church”) for the first time in 1752.⁵ The property was developed into St. John's, the first parish of the Church of England in the “Danish Islands in America,” in 1760. According to one source, the Reverend Cecil Wray Goodchild left Chantry, Teddington, Middlesex, England in March of that year to take up his “living” as Rector of the Parish, and the construction of a church was also begun.⁶ Financial support initially came from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), the missionary arm of the Church of England in the Americas, which strove to “provide an orthodox and learned clergy” to counter “the neglect of Christian ordinances, and the relaxation of morals.”⁷

The Revd. Cecil Wray Goodchild served St. John's as Rector from 1760 until his retirement in 1785.⁸ Of him, the Danish planter Reimert Haagensen wrote (with an undertone of national envy) that, “The British... have a pastor who holds services on Sundays in town [Christiansted] and again on the west end, in order to spare those who live far from town a long trip. This greatly satisfies his congregation, which pays him an annual salary of 1,000 *Rdlr.* (*Rigsdaler*).⁹ He has other sources of income, and lives well.”¹⁰ Goodchild's “other sources of income” included a 75-acre cotton plantation, No. 9b in Prince's Quarter (later named “Clear Mount” and eventually incorporated into Estate Beck's Grove),¹¹ and two developed lots in Christiansted. Shortly after the 1772 hurricane, we see the following advertisement appeared in the Royal

Danish American Gazette: “To be sold, two lots of land, with ruins therein, laying on the Hill above Watergut, and belonging to Cecil Wray Goodchild Minister of the English Church...”¹² The Revd. Goodchild, his wife Rebecca (who was two and a half months pregnant with their fifth child at the time of the hurricane), and their children moved into the wooden house on King Street belonging to the parish, east of the church.¹³ Their nine children—four girls and five boys—were born in Christiansted.¹⁴ Mrs. Goodchild died December 15, 1785, and the Revd. Goodchild (who had retired as Rector in 1785) died on May 18, 1787.¹⁵ Both were buried in the churchyard.

St. John’s was consecutively under the jurisdiction of the Bishops of London (1760-1824), Barbados (1824-1842), and Antigua (1842-1919).¹⁶ In 1919, two years after the purchase of the Danish West Indies by the United States, jurisdiction over the three Anglican parishes and one mission there were officially transferred to the Domestic and Foreign Mission Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church and placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Missionary Diocese of Puerto Rico.¹⁷ The Episcopal churches in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Anglican churches in the British Virgin Islands were combined to form the new Missionary Diocese of the Virgin Islands in 1963. Both the Dioceses of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have long since progressed from their “Missionary” status.

Details of the physical appearance of the original church is derived from a copperplate print from a drawing by “C.G.A.O.”, dated April 15, 1768.¹⁸ It was a rather lofty, single-story, “T”-shaped wooden structure on a masonry foundation. The church proper took the form of a rectangle, oriented east-to-west, with a transept at mid-length on the north side facing King Street which may have served as the main entrance. The roof—likely shingled—had gable ends. The church was “blown down” (*nedblast*)¹⁹ in the great hurricane of August 31, 1772, which was described by a St. Croix correspondent to an influential London magazine as, “the most dreadful Hurricane known here in the memory of Man.” Damage throughout the island, “computed at 5,000,000 dollars[,]” must have seemed to border on the apocalyptic: 460 houses destroyed at Christiansted, and all but three at Frederiksted.²⁰

A vivid account of the hurricane—half descriptive, half philosophical--was penned by an obscure, illegitimate teenaged orphan living and working in Christiansted. After some persuasion, the letter was published in the Royal Danish American Gazette, and caused something of a sensation.²¹ The young man was Alexander Hamilton. He, together with his mother, Rachel, and older brother, James, had lived and worked in Christiansted after they relocated there from Nevis in 1765. Their shop-residence at No. 33 Company Street was located only a very short distance from the church, where they would have worshipped, at least on occasion. When Rachel died of Yellow Fever in 1768, her burial was recorded in the parish register. Many individuals closely associated with Alexander Hamilton during his Christiansted years (1765-1773)—his collateral relatives, the Lyttons; his employers, David Beekman and Nicholas Cruger (both of established New York families); and the Thomas Stevens family (formerly of Antigua) with whom he stayed after his mother’s death, and especially their son Edward Stevens—were prominent parishioners, many serving in leadership roles in the Parish as Wardens and Vestrymen.²² Very few people—Cruger and the newly-arrived Presbyterian (Scottish Rite) minister Hugh Knox, in particular—recognized Hamilton’s innate superior intelligence and potential, mentored him, and provided him with the introductions and financial

wherewithal to further his education in British North America. In 1773, no one could have envisioned his rise to greatness as one of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America. But for Divine Providence, the identity of Alexander Hamilton—along with his mother, brother, and countless thousands of others with an affiliation with St. John’s Church, Christiansted—would be “known but to God alone.”

By 1779, a larger and far more durable edifice had been erected on the same site,²³ built of “sandstone brought from the island of Bermuda, and seating about five hundred persons.”²⁴ By the next year, the property tax register referred to the achievement as *den nye engelske Kirke* (“the new English church”).²⁵

Up to the present, St. John’s Church, Christiansted, has had 33 rectors, “priests-in-charge” or “interim priests” (clergy providing ministerial services to the congregation for an agreed-upon length of time during vacancies).²⁶ Curates (assistant parish clergy) have not been listed, nor were “supply priests” drawn from available parish clergy in the Deanery of St. Croix. Deaths of clergy “in office” are indicated with a “+”:

1. Cecil Wray Goodchild	1760-1785	
2. William Thomas	1785-1787	
Vacancy	1787-1789	
3. John Bowden	1789-1791	
4. William Niles	1791-1799	
5. Martin Wesston	1799-1802	
6. James Parsons	1802-1811+	
7. William Niles	1811-1813	
8. J. Hobson	1813-1818	
9. Robert Adam	1818-1820	
10. Nathaniel Bruce	1820-1827	
11. William J. Bulkeley	1827-1830+	
Vacancy	1830-1832	
12. Benjamin Luckock	1832-1840	
13. M. B. Johnson	1840-1845	
14. Fletcher John Hawley, D.D.	1845-1859	
15. Richard Cox	1859-1860	
16. Foster F. Almon	1860-1866	
17. Charles James Branch	1866-1879	
18. Ralph de Moyne Dodsworth	1879-1891	
19. A. J. Gummer	1891-1894	
20. Walter Clarence Watson, M.A.	1894-1916	
21. Hubert M. Pigott	1916-1953	
22. Daniel J. Welty	1953-1954	
23. Sidney Lanier	1954-1957	
24. Roger William Smith	1957-1961	
25. Donald F. Gowe	1961-1972	
26. L. Seymour Clarke	1972-1982+	
27. Adrian Ivan Heyliger	1982-1992+	
28. Richard Abbott	1992-1994	Priest-in-Charge

29. Keithly R. S. Warner	1994-1997	
30. Richard Abbott	1997-2000	Priest-in-Charge
31. Wilfred A. Daniel	2000-2009	
32. Robert B. Dendtler, Sr.	2009-2010	Priest-in-Charge
33. Kerry C. Neuhardt	2011	Priest-in-Charge
34. Dwight D. O)gier, D.D.	2012-2013	Priest-in-Charge
35. Gregory H. Gibson	2013-	Priest-in-Charge

These clergymen hailed from England, the United States (primarily the Mid-Atlantic region), various islands in the Lesser Antilles, and even Ceylon. A number of the early clergy were forced to seek leaves of absence or resign their charge due to tropical illnesses or strain from overexertion. Others were forced by necessity to resign because the Parish was in substantial arrears in their salaries, which was not extravagant to begin with.²⁷ Many rectors were High Churchmen and imparted that liturgical tradition to the congregation, which is still a characteristic of St. John's to this day. The first published reference of this High Churchmanship so far found dates from the 1790s, when Hans West, the Danish Rector of the West Indian School Institute in Christiansted, described St. John's as *höie engelsk*²⁸ (literally, "High English"), implying that its worship was very liturgical by Protestant standards.

While each clergyman has had to face his own challenges and crises within the Parish, there were times when these far exceeded what one would expect to "come with the territory"! At times, the colonial government could make matters even more difficult with an overt resentment of the superior numbers and economic influence of "foreign" whites. Two books published in the mid-19th century contain rare instances involving the Anglican churches on St. Croix. The first, dated 1839, stated that, "...disrespect for the Sabbath is fostered by those in authority; the Governor can remove any minister at a word, and the present Minister, from a sermon preached a fortnight ago, on the duties of the Sabbath, is in danger; one was dispossessed of his office a short time back."²⁹ The second, dated 1843, was in a similar vein: "The other minister, then in Ste. Croix, a North Briton, known to the literary world as author of A History of All Religions, is at present incumbent and garrison chaplain at Tobago....[T]hese foreign clergymen became involved with the Danish authorities, who, it seems, attempted to impose on them restraints which they deemed incompatible with their efficiency [including the advocacy of abolition]. The law of the strongest prevailed....and the shepherds driven out,--to assume other cures in the localities already indicated."³⁰ This autocratic exercise of power rapidly diminished after the adoption of a constitutional monarchy in Denmark in 1848 and the introduction of the Colonial Law of 1856.³¹

During clergy vacancies or absences, services were conducted by the Parish Clerk, whose wide-ranging duties reflect those of curates (assistant parish clergy) today. They included "...making the usual responses,...singing Psalms,...attending the minister at the Baptismal Font, at the Lord's Table, and at the Celebration of all other...Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be observed by the Church..."³² In no case was Divine Worship governed by the clock! When on June 3, 1831, the Royal Danish Government wrote to the Vestry of St. John's, "...[a]pplying for the use of the Church for the accommodation of the Danish [i.e., Lutheran] Congregation while theirs is under repair[.]" The members of the Vestry responded that they had, "much pleasure in being Able to Comply with the Governments request", but noted that, "the Clerk of the Church

Officiates on Sundays from 11 to 2 O Clock & on Holy Days from 11 to 2 & 5 to 6 PM. At any other period of the day the Church is at the Service of the Danish Congregation...”³³

During the Napoleonic Wars, Great Britain twice tried to coerce Denmark to abandon its neutrality. From 1801-2 and again from Christmas Day, 1807, to the Spring of 1815, the British invaded and occupied the Danish West Indies without benefit of a declaration of war. The British land and naval forces so outnumbered the small Danish garrisons that no resistance was offered.³⁴ The Rector of St. John’s was appointed “Chaplain to the Garrison” for the British troops on St. Croix³⁵ in addition to ministering to the regular congregation. St. John’s burial register for that period has numerous entries of British soldiers of all ranks who succumbed to tropical diseases—mostly Yellow Fever. Their units read like a roll call of well-known and famous British regiments.³⁶

Even though St. John’s was established to minister first and foremost to the English-speaking white population, the non-white population (both slave and free) and the destitute (regardless of racial distinction) were by no means neglected. In the late 1700s, Hans West (*q.v.*) remarked that, “...one often finds the churches...full of members[,]” whose religious commitment was manifested by a “...benevolence toward the needy which many places would not easily equal.”³⁷ Separate baptismal, marriage, and burial registers for the “Free Coloured” and for the slave members of the congregation did not equate to segregation, but simply reflected the prevailing social distinctions and the statistical reporting requirements of the colonial government. The Lutherans used language to justify separate “creole” and “Danish” congregations, but worship in Anglican churches was conducted entirely in English. Seating in church, however, proved contentious. In 1794, “the free people of colour [being] desirous of taking seats and paying an annual rent for the same, and wishing that every fair & honourable means for increasing the revenues of our Church should be adopted...” petitioned the Vestry to be able to do so, which was eventually granted in 1797. Their designated section, “the North part of the gallery and the double pew under the same....”, was estimated to generate Ps. 1,500 pew-rent annually. That accommodation lasted thirteen years, by which time no amount of money could offset the reality that the upward aspirations of the Free Colored had strained the limits of social acceptability. In reaction, the Vestry noted that the “People of Colour...encroach so much on...the Church that it...has become...disagreeable to the Congregation in General...[so that we find] Ourselves under the absolute Necessity to come to the following resolution—First: that no Coloured Person whatever be able from this time forward to Occupy a Pew in the Church---2^{dly}, that no Chairs or Moveable seats such as benches...be brought therein under any pretence whatever---3^{dly} we admit only of the moveable seats...in a line down the Middle Isle [*sic.*]---and of which may be placed hereafter, and consider[ed] a Fixture of the Church—The Gallery to be appropriated to the use [of] the Military—whenever they march to the Church in regular Order &c. &c. &c.”³⁸ As late as the 1830s, a visitor observed that, “The blacks have an allocated place in the church, but enter in at a different door.”³⁹

The Parish’s involvement with charitable works can also be found in Vestry Minutes. They detail the accounting for and disbursement of annuities from special funds and legacies for the “relief and support” of the poor. The existence of a “Poor School[,]” described as “so good and useful an institution,” was noted prior to 1796, and that of a “Poor House” in 1810.⁴⁰ When the English Quaker philanthropist and abolitionist Joseph John Gurney visited St. Croix and

preached at St. John's at the invitation of the Rector (the Revd. Benjamin Luckcock) in 1840,⁴¹ he noted that the Anglican Parish's Sunday School was "attended by several hundred of black, mulatto, and white children. Some of the planters and their wives are united with colored persons and others as instructors..., and the blessed work is carried on, both among the teachers and the taught, without prejudice of caste or distinction of color."⁴²

Concern for the impoverished or ignored in society was greatly enhanced by the Revd. Fletcher John Hawley, D.D., during his tenure as Rector from 1845 to 1859. His vision, energy, persistence and leadership first resulted in the construction of a two-storey masonry Sunday School Building, completed in 1848⁴³ and which still exists. This was promptly followed by an even more ambitious undertaking—the enlargement of the church, which Hawley successfully argued was "rendered necessary to provide sittings in church **for the recently emancipated...**" [emphasis added].⁴⁴ The exterior appearance of the church was significantly changed. distinctive arched windows and doors, spires, and crenellations--so characteristic of Gothic Revival architecture—was influenced by the anglo-catholic Oxford Movement in the Church of England, and the associated Ecclesiological Society in London.⁴⁵ The impressive stained glass window was designed and executed by the Firm of Sharpe and Steele in New York City, installed, and dedicated on Palm Sunday, 1854.⁴⁶ The 2,566 4-lb. bronze bell bears the inscription, "Meneelys West Troy, N.Y. / Presented to St. John's Church, Santa Cruz, W.I. / by Charles Lucas Esq. Planter, A.D. 1857. / Rev. Fletcher J. Hawley / Rector."⁴⁷ Both the stained glass window and the bell are the largest of their kind in the Virgin Islands.

No descriptions of the evolving arrangements of the interior are known to exist, save for very scattered references in Vestry Minutes for specific repairs, alterations, or additions. Architectural evidence and liturgical practice can provide clues. The altar would have been placed against the east wall of the chancel, beneath the stained glass window. In the manner of much older British churches, commemorative memorials and gravestones can be found embedded in the floor of the nave and in the walls, with dates beginning in the last quarter of the 1700s. The presence of these gravestones are misleading: there are no mortal remains beneath them! The stones had been originally placed over graves in the churchyard, and were relocated either because there were no living descendants of the interred or because of encroachment during the expansion of the church. There has been only one recorded burial recorded **inside** the church: that of the Revd. William Josephus Bulkley of Connecticut, whose "...Body...was deposited under the Altar..." on November 15, 1830.⁴⁸ A marble plaque was erected to his memory on the east wall of the chancel, closest to the sacristy.

Even though construction of the bell tower would not be completed until 1858, St. John's Church was consecrated by the Rt. Reverend Daniel Gateward Davis, Bishop of Antigua, at the request of the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry on October 29, 1854.⁴⁹ On the previous day, Bishop Davis conferred the Rite of Confirmation on 244 candidates!⁵⁰ The conclusion of work in 1858⁵¹ was commemorated by the Vestry with an address to the Revd. Hawley which acknowledged the "completion of your design" that "...would do credit to the zeal of a much larger and more wealthy country" and references the installation of a marble tablet placed "over the Northern Door."⁵² The Revd. Hawley's vision and effort was rewarded with a **five-fold increase** [emphasis added] in membership, from 300 to 1500,⁵³ most of whom were people of color! This all the more remarkable in view of relatively recent scholarship that noted a decline in the

membership in all denominations **other than Anglican** [emphasis added] following Emancipation.⁵⁴

Twelve years of “unremitting toil” had left the Revd. Hawley physically and emotionally exhausted, leaving little choice but to tender his resignation as Rector,⁵⁵ to the great sorrow of the congregation.

The whole labor of love was almost completely undone eight years later. “A calamity, unequalled in extent to any which this unfortunate community has ever been visited with, occurred [on the evening of February 5, 1866] at a quarter to nine o’clock. A Fire broke out in the rum shop of Mr. McGregor, in Market Street, by the bursting of a Petroleum lamp, which, in the course of four or five hours, laid over forty houses in ruins.”⁵⁶ The flames moved “in two waves,...along Company Street towards the Burial Ground and King’s Street towards the English Church.” The small hand-pumped fire “engines...proved utterly worthless. They had not sufficient power to play on the roofs....Water could not be obtained in sufficient quantity to supply the engines...” The extent of the fire was only limited by the exertions of residents of the town, the sailors in port, and that of the military. Among the properties destroyed were, “[t]hat fine edifice, the English Church, together with the School House in the vicinity, which were burnt to the walls...”⁵⁷

In the aftermath of the fire, other denominations in Christiansted reciprocated for prior courtesies extended by the Vestry of St. John’s while their church buildings either underwent renovation or rebuilding. “We are informed that on every Sunday afternoon, at 2 o’clock, service will be held for the members of the English Church at the Moravian Church [“Friedensthal”], and that the evening service at 7 o’clock, will be held at the Lutheran Church [“Lord God of Sabaoth”]. The Week-day services will also be held at the Lutheran Church.”⁵⁸

Losses from the fire were further exacerbated by the departure of the Rector, the Revd. Foster B. Almon, two and a half months later. It would seem that the Revd. Almon’s salary was already considerably in arrears before the fire, and that revenues had since come to a virtual standstill.⁵⁹ The Bishop of Antigua, the Rt. Rev. William Walrond Jackson, sent the Revd. Charles James Branch “to take charge of the Parish in the place of the Reverend Mr. Almon, subject to their approval...”⁶⁰ It was an inspired choice. “Under [Branch’s] energetic direction[,]” the church was completely restored within two years.⁶¹

While Parish records did not list (much less quantify) furnishings lost in the fire, one can safely assume that the contents were a total loss. Drawing on the example of St. Paul’s [Frederiksted] devastating fire in 1996, which completely gutted the church, the stained glass window was probably reduced to molten glass although the records are silent on the subject. If that were so, what has existed since 1868 is likely an exact duplicate made by Sharpe and Steele. The fate of the bell is more clear, as told in the following additional inscription: “**Broken** in the fire of 1866 and **recast** in 1867 / Having been forwarded to and from New York By Messrs. Roche Brothers & Co., Free of Charge” [emphasis added]. The result was later described as a “fine specimen of ecclesiastical architecture,...nicely fitted up inside, all the pews being of solid mahogany, highly polished. The roof is well constructed and reflects credit on the liberality of those who subscribed, under very trying circumstances, to replace it after the former one had been entirely

destroyed in the dreadful fire...⁶² It was and remains a testament both to the faith and commitment of the parishioners and to the “skill and extraordinary mechanical ability” of Andrew Ferris, a native of St. Croix, who undertook the planning and execution of the work at seventy four-years of age.⁶³

If trouble does not come alone, a severe underwater earthquake occurred the following year, with the epicenter in the British Virgin Islands. Striking at ten minutes of three o'clock on the afternoon of November 18, 1867,⁶⁴ the earthquake triggered a tsunami which sank or otherwise wrecked hundreds of ships at anchor at Road Town, Tortola, and in the harbor of St. Thomas, as well as those underway at sea. The effects were also strongly felt at St. Croix, 60 miles to the south-southwest. Here, the tsunami “upturned or completely demolished...upwards of twenty small houses...in Gallow’s Bay”⁶⁵ adjacent to Christiansted. At Frederiksted, the wave—estimated by eyewitnesses at 40 feet in height--lifted the USS “Monongahela” (flagship of Rear Admiral David G. Farragut at the Battle of Mobile Bay during the American Civil War), and set it high, dry, and relatively upright in the area between the Customs House and Fort Frederik.⁶⁶ Seismic aftershocks of varying intensities continued for a month.⁶⁷ A report in the *Avis* noted one particularly strong shock which took place on Sunday, December 1, “...just at the time, when Communion was being administered in the English Church here...at half past seven in the morning...Nothing but fear and trembling were the result.”⁶⁸

After Emancipation in 1848, St. Croix faced the challenges of trying to achieve some degree of social and labor equilibrium while trying to maintain the feasibility of its sugar industry. The island was becoming more and more of an economic backwater. The gradual depression was periodically broken by disasters, both natural⁶⁹ and man-made. The three notable challenges to the established order between 1852 and the end of Danish sovereignty in 1917 incorporated significant elements of racial confrontation.⁷⁰ Of the three, the labor uprising or “Fireburn” in 1878 came closest to delivering the *coup de gras*—the finishing blow. During a five day orgy of violence that looted and burned the business district of Frederiksted and two-thirds of the sugar estates west of Christiansted. Christiansted was spared, a refuge for those able to flee from their estates, and as the command center for the military response. The actual number of fatalities will never be known, but certainly far more than officially reported. The cause of some deaths cannot be determined with certainty. Two entries in the St. John’s burial register are curious: although the causes of death were not given, the two individuals were not among fatalities resulting from assault, murder, or military action. They most likely died due to extreme stress, overexertion, and/or exposure to the nighttime elements.⁷¹ Twelve laborers were sentenced by court-martial to suffer death by firing squad for “excesses” committed during the “Fireburn.” The condemned were ministered to by their respective clergymen prior to and at the place of execution—six at Fort Christiansværn and six at Fort Frederik. Of the six shot in Christiansted, four were Anglicans.⁷² None of the names of the executed, otherwise reported in the “Avis,” are found in their respective denominations’ burial records.

St. Croix gradually recovered, but her glory was even more faded and tattered than before. There were many scores to settle by aggrieved factions, and resentment lurked not far beneath the surface. The colonial system of justice, if possible, was administered even more harshly than before. Some clergy dared to speak out. The Revd. Walter Clarence Watson (Rector of St. John’s 1894-1915) was one such man, whose sense of religious conscience extended to the social

realm as well. A letter from Watson has been referenced in which he decried the brutal treatment of prisoners by the Danish authorities.⁷³ Ironically, it was the need for prison reform that initially attracted David Hamilton Jackson after his dismissal as a teacher in the Danish West Indian school system, before helping to establish the St. Croix Labor Union which represented agricultural laborers on that island in November, 1915, but for different motives.

The Year of Our Lord 1917 marked the successful culmination of three attempts by the United States of America to purchase part or all of the Danish West Indies, begun in 1867.⁷⁴ Formal ceremonies were held on March 31 on St. Thomas and in Christiansted and Frederiksted on St. Croix to mark the transfer of sovereignty. The Episcopal Bishop of Puerto Rico, the Rt. Rev. Charles Blaney Colmore,⁷⁵ was present at St. Thomas and gave the benediction there. The occasion marked the beginning of Bishop Colmore's involvement with what was now called The Virgin Islands of the United States.

The anticipated transfer of ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Anglican churches in the Virgin Islands gave cause for some apprehension in certain quarters of that community of faith. Beyond the expected emotional tug of tradition and nostalgia, social concerns that had been voiced by some black Crucians leading up to the Transfer in 1917 were again raised in the parishes. Notwithstanding the inequities of prevailing attitudes of society and the colonial administration under the Danes, many people were also well aware of the United States' far-from-admirable record on race relations. In a formal petition to the Rt. Revd. Edward Hutson, Bishop of Antigua, the Vestry of St. John's observed that, "...this Parish has been an integral part of the Diocese of Antigua for over a hundred years, during which time the church has flourished, and whereas we are convinced that a change of jurisdiction will ultimately involve the undoing of our present happy and Christian conditions, **wherein no line of demarcation in Religion has been drawn between race or color**" [emphasis added].⁷⁶ Bishop Hutson found himself in an awkward position. As a native of Antigua and the well-loved former rector of St. Paul's, Frederiksted, Hutson had a deep and abiding affection for the people of St. Croix, and especially for his fellow churchmen and women. The choice to retain, however, was ultimately not his to make. Regardless of personal inclinations and "efforts...to retain these parishes as an integral part of the Diocese of Antigua," he had to "acquiesce..., though with the deepest regret, in **the Archbishop of Canterbury's decision** [emphasis added]"⁷⁷ to transfer "...spiritual oversight...to the Presiding Bishop of the American Church",⁷⁸ which took effect on April 30, 1919.⁷⁹

Bishop Colmore expressed the position of the American Church in an overview of his new charge in Spirit of Missions, stating that in "...accordance with the unwritten law that every possession over which our flag flies must be incorporated with some district of our Church, the presiding bishop...asked me to take oversight of the Virgin Islands, as they are now known."⁸⁰ The property is owned by the parishes themselves and therefore.... title to the property remains where it is and the change in the Episcopal jurisdiction is the only one that takes place."⁸¹ With regard to demographics, Bishop Colmore observed that, "...The total population of the [U.S.] Virgin Islands is about thirty thousand, of whom eighty percent are Negroes."⁸² As far as America is concerned this is a virgin field, but the Church is an old institution in the Virgin Islands....The Church of England has undoubtedly 'made good' in this work with the people of these islands. At the confirmation that Bishop Hutson held while I was [on St. Croix in January,

1919] the largest church in the islands [St. John's] was crammed full....Many of the colored people are communicants of the Church. They worship right alongside the white people and there is no distinction made in church at all. [T]he largest part of the support of the parishes came not from the well-to-do but from what is called there the "weekly pence"—that is, subscriptions from a large number of poor and from others in moderate circumstances...." Colmore penned a powerful concluding statement: "...[N]ow that the Church in America is taking over their Church home, it is most vitally important that we should maintain the standard that has been set by the Church of England....so that we may not fall behind in the ministrations that they have been accustomed to..."⁸³

In 1926, an article entitled "Our Mission Work in Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands" in Spirit of Missions introduced mainland Americans to the islands and their inhabitants with genuine affection. It described, in invaluable detail, the characteristics of each of the parishes: buildings, clergy and people, the schedule of services, number of communicants, and the various kinds of outreach. "...St. John's Church, at Christiansted..., has a total enrollment of 2,000 and a regular attendance of 555 with a Sunday School numbering 380. **At all...these churches extensive educational and social service ventures are under way** [emphasis added]."⁸⁴ A less complimentary perspective appeared in The Living Church that same year, in an article by the Revd. Henry S. Whitehead,⁸⁵ Rector of St. Paul's. It was an unvarnished critique of the national church's neglect of the Virgin Islands. Whitehead wrote, "The Virgin Islands Churchmen are poor in material wealth, [but] rich in blessings, and in their love for God and the holy things of His Church. The Church in the Virgin Islands gets almost no support from the general Church. All the splendid work which is going on, on a large scale (the Virgin Islands population is about one-fourth members of the Anglican Communion), costs the Church at large regularly only the salaries of two assistant clergy and \$750 per annum for the partial support of the four Sisters of St. Anne in St. Thomas. The Virgin Islands Church has, in round numbers...2,750 communicants...in good standing.... Its ratio of paid workers [i.e., clergy and religious orders] to communicants (all rectors fully supported by their parishes) is nine to 2,750, or one to 305." Rising to the inequity, he went on to compare this ratio unfavorably to the support provided by the American Church for the Missionary Districts of Hankow (China), Mexico, Tobuku (Japan), and Southern Brazil. "Because they [the churches in the Virgin Islands] are 'parishes,' and self-supporting, and not proclaimers of their own admirable virtues, and not '**rice Christians**' [emphasis added]—for these and similar allied reasons, they get almost literally—nothing! He ended with a plea for "...some additional resources [to] relieve the strain on already overburdened congregations which pay their missionary quotas, and make it possible for this admirable group of Christian people to carry out some necessary advances and carry on existing work more adequately and successfully."⁸⁶

St. Croix's economy was caught between competition from larger regional sugar producers, Prohibition, and the Great Depression; things just went from bad to worse. St. Croix's population had declined from a peak of 32,000 in 1803 to 14,700 in 1917. Church membership was naturally affected. An article in Spirit of Missions in the late 1920s touched on this: "There were over 2,000 communicants in all [at the time of the Transfer in 1917], but the number has been reduced by emigration to the States."⁸⁷ A more painfully candid assessment, couched in the language of New Deal socialism, found its way into print in 1940. The communicant strength at St. John's was now down to about 700—half of what it was twenty years before.

“...[U]nderneath the colorful garb are poverty, unemployment, a background of slavery, and a great class of landless peasants. There is nothing easy about missionary work in conditions such as these, but the Church **has shown increasing success** [emphasis added] since it took over the jurisdiction from the Anglican Church more than twenty years ago....About 90 percent of the population...is colored. A few of these colored people have a background of education and culture and they are able to become government executives, business and professional men. But their number is small. A huge majority lives in insecurity, not certain where the next meal will come from but confident that the Lord will provide. Some of these people have no fit clothes or shoes to wear, cannot always attend services, but they have a deep feeling for the Church....The people, poor as they are, do what they can.”⁸⁸

By 1950, the population of St. Croix had fallen to a low of 12,601! The greater part of the population was rural, working in the sugar cane industry. They were abjectly poor, living in estate village houses that had no more creature comforts than they had a hundred years previously. This author, growing up in the countryside, has vivid recollections of laborers walking to church in what passed as their “Sunday best” with shoes in hand to save them from wearing out. Then, in the early 1960s, St. Croix’s economic fortunes changed dramatically. Then-Governor Ralph M. Paiewonsky decided to radically restructure the economic base, phasing out sugar agriculture and replacing it with a combination of heavy- and light-industry and tourism. As with all things, there were trade-offs. Unprecedented prosperity in salaries and material things was tempered by social stresses—both racial and inter-island--adversely affecting what had long been a fairly stable demographic and cultural base. The residual effects of this still remain. And yet, history demonstrates that nothing remains the same forever.

For over 250 years, St. John’s Church, Christiansted, has been an enduring symbol of faith and inspiration for many thousands of congregants and visitors, regardless of race and social status. Most of their names have long faded from memory, save on some gravestones or in Parish records. Nevertheless, everyone has contributed something—whether subtle or sublime, selfless or self-serving—to this legacy. The Church, after all, is made up of these inherent tensions and contradictions. All whose paths have crossed at St. John’s have shared its joys and sorrows, prosperity and “hard times,” and all sort of disasters. How each person has risen to the test has shaped and manifested his or her character and contribution to the glory of Almighty God, His Church, and the broader community based on faith. If the foregoing history of St. John’s Church, Christiansted, has proven intriguing, just imagine what the narrative for the next 250 years will be like!

Notes

¹ Primary sources and general histories consulted by this author included Oldendorp (1777), West (1793), Lloyd (1839), Knox (1852), Taylor (1888), Larsen (1928), Petersen (1946), Larsen (1950), Brøndsted *et al.* (1953), Lewisohn (1970), Lawaetz (1991), and Willocks (1995). Memoirs and reminiscences surveyed included Armstrong (1971), Richardson (1984), and Merwin (2001). Superior to Gosner (1971), Chapman and Taylor (1986) addressed the architectural character and merits of the historic churches in the U.S. Virgin Islands in some detail, but certain dates and other assertions about St. John's Church (pp. 74-5)—based on uncritical repetition of erroneous information found in Larsen (1950), for example (see Cissel 2004:fn. 65)—shows a surprising lack of primary research, as is their limited grasp of liturgical practices and religious symbolism.

² This map was made in preparation for a pending attack from Puerto Rico that same year. The original is found in the Santo Domingo Archives, *Archivo General de las Indias*, Seville. A 1667 French map by François Blondel, found in the *Archives de la Marine*, Paris, showed a building in the same general location as “D” identified as “*les Jacobins*”—the French colloquial term for the monastic Dominican Order.

³ Under Danish sovereignty, Peter Lotharius Oxholm's large, detailed, and influential map of 1799 called that area *Kirkegaard* (“Churchyard”) Hil (McGuire 1925:105), probably reflecting previous French use, but contained no symbol or label that could be related to “O” in the 1647 map.

⁴ The ethnography of St. Croix's population in the late 1760s can be found in Oldendorp (1777 1:270-292 and 232-3, 256-269). On religious diversity and toleration, see Cissel 2004:fn. 53). 18th century examples of petitions requesting licensure, see Vestry Minutes (1789:November 10; 1791:August 8; and 1802:October 8). The Danes founded the town of *Christiansted* (literally, “Christian's Place,” in honor of King Christian VI of Denmark and Norway) in May, 1735. It is sited on the latter 17th century French settlement referred to simply as *le Bourg* (“the village”). Christiansted's historical nickname, “Bass End,” is an English Creole corruption of the French *Bassin* (“the harbor”) (Cissel 2003:1).

⁵ *Matrikler, St. Croix, 1752: Christianstæd, Kongens Gade*. Reference to the growing number of “English speakers” is found in Larsen (1950:157).

⁶ “St. John's Church”, an unattributed and undated one page typed manuscript found in the Parish archives.

⁷ Buchanan (1813:19, 35, 59).

⁸ See general references in “St. John's Church” (n.d.), Croixian (1780:10), Bicentennial (1960:3), and St. John's (1995:1).

⁹ The *Rigsdaler* was the basic unit of Danish currency. It had two distinct rates of exchange, usually distinguished by the suffix “d.c.” for *dansk Courant* (“Danish currency”) and “v.c.” for *vestindisk Courant* (“West Indian currency”). For images of the Danish West Indian currency of the period, see Higgin (1962:7-8, 11-20, 44-46).

¹⁰ Highfield (1995:43).

- ¹¹ *Matrikler*; McGuire (1925:56); Oxholm (1799).
- ¹² RDAG (1772:November 11).
- ¹³ *Matrikler* 1773.
- ¹⁴ Their children, in order of birth (dates of birth in parentheses) were: Isabella (1767), Bridget (1769), George Laurence (1770), Sarah (1772), Robert (1773), Rebecca (1774), Cecil (1776), William Thomas (1777). and Nicholas (1780) [Holsoe (2009)].
- ¹⁵ WIC 1787-1799, Vol. 789, FHL #0426944. <http://www.progenealogists.com/westindies/1771viwl.htm>.
- ¹⁶ "History of the Anglican Church in Barbados," accessed 18 December, 2006. www.barbados.anglican.org.
- ¹⁷ Hutson (Communication, 30 May, 1919); Colmore (1919:300n.).
- ¹⁸ "C.G.A.O." was the Moravian missions-inspector and historian Christian Georg Andreas Oldendorp, who resided on St. Croix 1767-1769 (Oldendorp 1777 1: "Aufsicht von Friedensthal von der Westseite.")
- ¹⁹ *Matrikler* 1773.
- ²⁰ For further details about the hurricane, see RDAG (1772:September 9) and *Gentleman's Magazine* (1772 II:590).
- ²¹ The letter can be found in RDAG (1772:October 7).
- ²² Cissel's (2004:fns. 66-69, 108, and 2007) For a scholarly treatment of Hamilton's time and his relationships on St. Croix, as well as critical analyses of and corrections to (wherever appropriate) local legends related to him.
- ²³ Oxholm Plan No. 2 (1779).
- ²⁴ "St. John's Church" (*op Cit.*).
- ²⁵ *Matrikler* 1780.
- ²⁶ Vestry Minutes, 1788 *et seq.*; *Bicentennial* (1960:7); *St. John's* (1995:44).
- ²⁷ For early instances of surviving Vestry records regarding the health of rectors and/or their families, see Vestry Minutes (1791:June 21 and 1796:September); regarding salary in arrears, see Vestry Minutes (1799:September 27).
- ²⁸ West (1793:50).
- ²⁹ Lloyd (1839:130).
- ³⁰ Anonymous (1843:182-183).
- ³¹ Colonial Law of 1856, Article VII; Parsons (1856:24, 26).
- ³² Vestry Minutes (1792:July 3). As early as 1789, we find the Clerk discharged because of "...the great dissatisfaction of [his] incapacity in officiating ...by the Congregation..." (Vestry Minutes 1789:December 18; ref. 1784:September 2).
- ³³ Vestry Minutes (1831:June 7). This request was made during the vacancy that resulted from the death of the Rector, the Revd. W. J. Bulkley (*q.v.*).
- ³⁴ Communication, Cissel to Eisenhauer (June 27, 1984).
- ³⁵ Vestry Minutes (1801:April 14; 1811:August 17).
- ³⁶ "Register...commencing September 1st 1799".
- ³⁷ West (*loc Cit.*).

³⁸ Regarding approval of pew-rent for the Free Colored, see Vestry Minutes (1794:April 21; 1797:May 22). For the rescinding of that authorization, see Vestry Minutes (1810:May 4).

³⁹ Lloyd (1839:130).

⁴⁰ For early references to legacies and similar bequests for the poor, see Vestry Minutes (1792:March 12), (1797:February 28, May 22), (1799:March 24, September 27), (1801:April 14), and (1819:June 16). For references to a "Poor School," see Vestry Minutes (1792:March 12) and 1796:September); for a "Poor House," see Vestry Minutes (1810:September 6).

⁴¹ Smith (1840:67-68).

⁴² Gurney (1840:22-23). That Sunday School program for St. John's was reportedly begun on January 10, 1836 (Merwin 2001:6).

⁴³ Vestry Minutes (1858:July 20).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Chapman and Taylor (1986:75).

⁴⁶ Offprint of Palm Sunday sermon, 1854.

⁴⁷ Lucas was the owner of Estate Mount Pleasant, Nos. 36 and 37 Prince's Quarter (McGuire 1925:131).

⁴⁸ "Interments of White Persons and free people of Colour for the Year 1830." St. John's Church, Christiansted. The Revd. Bulkley had died the day before.

⁴⁹ Vestry Minutes (1854:October 29).

⁵⁰ Vestry Minutes (1854:October 28).

⁵¹ "...our beautiful church now completed": Vestry Minutes (1858:July 10).

⁵² "We [the Vestry] do place over the Northern Door thereof a marble tablet bearing the following inscription — Saint John's Church / Rebuilt and Enlarged by the Congregation / under the personal Direction and Exertions / of their esteemed Rector / The Reverend F. J. Hawley D.D. / completed / A:D. 1858" (*Ibid.*).

⁵³ The increase in the communicant strength of St. John's Church can be traced through Vestry Minutes (1849: April 5, June 7; 1852:January 16; 1854:October 29; 1858:April 10, July 10, 20).

⁵⁴ Denominational membership on St. Croix in 1850 was: Episcopal, 7,219; Roman Catholic, 6,653; Moravian, 5,669; and Lutheran, 4,016 (Larsen 1950:196, 215). See also Will (1981:67).

⁵⁵ Vestry Minutes (1858:July 10).

⁵⁶ Details of previous major fires in Christiansted (1819 and 1834) and the origins of the 1866 conflagration are found in Avis (1866:April 3 and February 6, respectively).

⁵⁷ Avis (1866:February 9; April 13); Taylor (1888:147; Svensson (1980:57).

⁵⁸ Avis (1866:February 16).

⁵⁹ The first indication of the Revd. Almon's "having left the Island" is found in the Avis (1866:April 27).

⁶⁰ Avis (1866:June 8).

⁶¹ Wording from a marble memorial plaque in the church.

⁶² Taylor 1888:170.

⁶³ At the time, Ferris resided at 46-47 Queen Street, Frederiksted, with his family (Avis 1866:July 6). His obituary in the Avis (1870: January 2) provides remarkable insight and details of his contributions to so many architectural landmarks on St. Croix, otherwise

ignored: the new Moravian churches at “Friedensthal” and “Friedensborg”; St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Church, Frederiksted; St. John’s and St. Paul’s Anglican churches; rural schools; and “splendid buildings in the country.”

⁶⁴ Avis (1867:November 19).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Lewisohn (1970:294-295).

⁶⁷ The Avis last reported a “very severe shock” on December 13.

⁶⁸ Avis (1867:December 3).

⁶⁹ Severe tropical weather systems impacting St. Croix after 1848: (a) hurricanes--1866, 1867, 1871, 1876, 1893, 1899, 1916, 1928, and 1989; (b) tropical storms—1855, 1867, 1891, 1978(x2), 1984 (Andersen (1954), De Booy (1918), Dookhan (1974), Lewisohn (1970), Olsen (1960), St. Croix Avis (1867, 1899), St. Croix Bulletin (1899), Taylor (1888 and 1896), and Zabriskie (1918).

⁷⁰ The three were: the Christmas Eve riot at Christiansted in 1852 (Cissel 2005); the Labor Riot, called the “Fireburn,” October 1-5, 1878, which began in Frederiksted (Taylor 1888:151-166); and lead-up and general strike by agricultural laborers by the St. Croix Labor Union between November, 1915 and February, 1916 (Lewisohn 1970:358-360).

⁷¹ (a) John James Lang, a 35 year old planter, of Estate Hope [Nos. 31b and 42 Queen’s Quarter; see McGuire 1925:96]; a native of Ireland and a widower, he died on October 3. Lang was buried in the Christiansted public cemetery (St. John’s General Register, No. 845, Page 106). (b) Edward Lawder, a 36-year old planter residing in Christiansted; also a native of Ireland, he was married and died the following day, October 4. Lawder was also buried in the public cemetery. [St. John’s General Register, No. 846, Page 106].

⁷² Shot on October 7: James Da Silva (born in Antigua and residing at Estate Upper Love) [Avis, 1878:9 October]. Shot on October 9: Augustus George (born in St. Croix and residing at Estate Castle [Bourke]); John Adam (born in St. Thomas and residing at Estate Morningstar); and Henry James (born in St. Eustatius and residing at Estate Windsor) [Avis, 1878:12 October].

⁷³ Hill (1971:56).

⁷⁴ Tansill (1932).

⁷⁵ The Rt. Rev. Charles Blayney Colmore was consecrated as the second bishop of Puerto Rico in 1913. Until 1919, Bishop Colmore also had oversight of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. He served as Bishop of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands until 1949 (“Bishop” 1928:611).

⁷⁶ Vestry Minutes (1917:June 27); communication, the Wardens and Vestry to the Right Revered Edward Hutson, D.D., 15 May 1919.

⁷⁷ Communication, the Rt. Rev. Edward Hutson to the Wardens and Vestrymen of St. John’s Church, 15 May, 1919.

⁷⁸ Communications, the Rt. Rev. Edward Hutson to the Wardens and Vestrymen of St. Paul’s and St. John’s, 30 May, 1919.

⁷⁹ Colmore (1919:300n.).

⁸⁰ Colmore (1919:300n., 385).

⁸¹ Colmore (191:385). “The... parish churches are quite large and there is adequate equipment [i.e., facilities] for the work of the Church, such as Sunday-school rooms with auditorium and stage, etc., in each.... Saint John’s [will hold] 1,500....”

⁸² Colmore (1919:385). The statistics for “color or race” in the U.S. Virgin Islands, per the 1917 census, were 1,922 white (7.4%); 19,523 Negro (74.9%); 4,563 ‘Mixed’ (17.5%); and 43 ‘All other’ (0.2%). For the rural districts on St. Croix, they were, in the same order, 259 (3.6%); 6,373 (88.7%); 536 (7.5%); and 15 (0.2%)—the latter likely Indian coolies who chose to remain after the expiration of their labor contract (Census 1918:45 [Table 5] and 46 [Table 6]).

⁸³ Colmore (1919:300).

⁸⁴ Hoster (1926:25).

⁸⁵ The Revd. Henry St. Clair Whitehead (1882-1932) “...got along very well with his parishioners....[He] was from a rich family[,...a Harvard graduate and] a classmate of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He was always dressed in tailored Palm Beach suits, white shoes and a planter’s hat. He had a butler. His sermons were usually scientific in character and some parishioners found them hard to follow....[The] subjects were always in connection with...Africa or the practice of voodoo in Haiti....Before coming to St. Croix, Father Whitehead had been in Africa,...[and had been] made a blood brother to the chief of an African tribe” (Richardson 1984:40, 41-42). He played classical piano, and had an affinity for writing short stories and essays on the supernatural. Several were set on St. Croix, and dealt with various practices of *obeah* that he had either learned about or observed. His most important works were collected and published, after his death, in Jumbee (1944) and West India Lights (1946).

⁸⁶ Whitehead (1926:299-300).

⁸⁷ “Bishop” (1928:612).

⁸⁸ “Virgin Islands” (1940:15).

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Bicentennial [of] St. John's Church Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. 1760-1960.
Christiansted: Brodhurst's Printery. 1960.
Rev. Fletcher John Hawley [p. 3]

St. John's Church archives.
Photograph, "the Rt. Rev. Charles J. Branch"
[also found in Bicentennial (1960), p. 4]

William F. Cissel collection.
photographic print (B/W; vertical format). St. John's Church, viewed from the
northwest. Ca. 1900.
[appearance after the fire of 1866].

photographic postcard (sepia; horizontal format). "Christiansted, St. Croix,
D.W.I. English Adult School Procession, King Street." Ca. 1910.
[includes 2 clergy and 2 flags!]

Oldendorp, Christian Georg Andreas.
"Aufsicht von Friedensthal von der Westseite." Nürnberg. 1768.
[detail contains only known depiction of original wooden church, 1760-1772].

Oxholm, Peter Lotharius.
"No. 2 Grundriss af Byen Christianstæd med derudi liggende Fort Christiansværn
opmaælt i Aaret 1779." Rigsarkiv, Copenhagen.
[town plan, showing individual lots and "footprint" of existing buildings].

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Comments for St. Johns Episcopal Church

The nomination did a good job of explaining the unique role the church had in the island's culture, especially as it relates to racial unity/division. I found the role of the church compelling, especially after the transfer from the English to American church hierarchy. The fact that the American diocese allowed a mixed-race communion during an era of otherwise strict segregation is very important, and tells a lot about the state of race relations on the island.

The nomination did have a number of technical errors, and a couple of substantive errors, that could have warranted a return. We chose, however, to accept the nomination and provide comments as a learning tool, so that similar such errors can be avoided.

The nomination was submitted under three National Register criteria: A, B, and C, with five areas of significance (religion, architecture, education, social history, and ethnic history). Three criteria considerations were checked: A, D, and E (religious affiliation, cemetery, and reconstruction). While the property may be significant in all of these areas, the nomination does not explicitly address the. Using a supplementary listing record (SLR), I removed one criterion (B) and one criteria consideration (E). I'll start with an explanation of why I deleted Criterion B, but before I do, much of my reasoning can be found in two of our National Register bulletins – *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (formerly Bulletin 15)* and *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form (formerly Bulletin 16A)*.

The nomination cited Criterion B and noted Alexander Hamilton and his mother, Rachel Faucett, as significant persons. Criterion B is the hardest of the four criteria to establish, since it requires you to do two things – to establish the person as being significant (not merely famous), and to tie that person (and their significance) to specific locations. You can refer to Bulletin 15, pages 15-16 for more detail, but in essence you need to first describe the activities that make the person a significant figure in history. You then must identify places that are directly associated with that person during their productive life. You then create a hierarchy, where you note those places that have a direct association with the person and the significant activities, and ascertain whether these places still exist, and if they do, if they have integrity as it pertains to the period of association. For example, you have a local

industrialist whose business activities had a profound influence on the economic and political development of a community. You might note that his house, his office, his factory, and the local opera house that he donated money for all still exist, but that his house has been converted into a commercial space. In assessing a hierarchy of importance, his office, where he performed the work that made him important would be at the top. His home might be second – that is where he lived, and probably where he also worked and planned. The factory might be third – it is not likely that he did much work in the factory, but it otherwise does have a direct association. The opera house would be last – other than him attending, and donating, it has no real association with him and the important work he did. We most likely would list the office, and maybe the factory if the office had problems. Since the house was converted to a new use, and that new use might have compromised the interior spaces (where the industrialist did his work), it might have lost too much integrity. The opera house would not qualify under B.

This is the case with the Church and Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton achieved his importance after he left the island. The church has no relationship with his productive years. Also, the church that stands today is not the same church Hamilton attended, so even if there was a direct and significant association with the church building, we still could not list it since the building Hamilton attended no longer exists.

Criteria Consideration D is not necessary for this nomination. The cemetery is part of the overall property and is not the primary focus of the nomination. See Bulletin 15, page 34.

Criteria Consideration E does not apply in this case. The building was reconstructed, but that is one aspect of its history and falls within the period of significance. Since part of the reason this building is significant is its architectural design, the “reconstruction” is actually the important aspect. This criteria consideration is meant for districts or other groups of buildings where a modern (more or less) ancillary building that helps support the significance of the property is accurately reconstructed as part of an overall preservation and interpretive plan. St. John’s was reconstructed as part of its historical use, and is defined by its own character.

Each area of significance chosen must be explicitly defended in the narrative of Section 8. Choosing multiple areas of significance, but not addressing them in the narrative is a common problem we see here. It seems that by claiming 3, 4, 5, or even more areas of significance, that the nomination authors are trying to convince us just how important the property is. But it only takes one criterion and one area of significance to be listed. If you do choose multiple areas of significance, please make sure that each area is identified, placed into its proper context, and justified in Section 8. The St. John’s nomination did not do that, did not explicitly lay out the case for significance in Religion and Education, and much of the argument for significance in Ethnic and Social history was merely implied.

One way to structure a nomination is to use the summary paragraph as an outline for Section 8. Note the criteria and areas of significance in the summary, then provide a case-by-case explanation of each area of significance in its own section in the narrative. So, for example, the nomination could have provide a section on the church’s significant role in education by explaining what other educational opportunities existed on the island, assessing the need for expanded educational opportunities (perhaps

education was not free, or limited to children of landowners, etc.), and then by explaining what educational activities the church provided to fill this need. It is this lack of context where so many nominations fall short.

Too many nominations provide extensive (and often interesting) histories, but lack putting those historical facts into a proper evaluative context. The purpose of a nomination is to answer one simple question: "Why is this property important?" If, after reading through the nomination, you can't answer that, then the nomination does not do its job. If you cannot provide a compelling argument for the importance of the property within the appropriate context, you may wish to delete that area of significance and concentrate on another, more defensible area. It is okay to keep the information in the nomination, but maybe not as support for a claim of significance.

Another issue with this nomination is the description found in Section 7. The level of detail expected in a nomination depends somewhat on which criteria are used. For any Criterion C nomination, where the claim of significance is tied to the architecture of the building, it is imperative that the description provide more than just a rudimentary overview. Since the standard for Criterion C is "embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period, type, or method of construction," the nomination should identify what those distinctive characteristics are and then describe the property's attributes. The integrity of design, of materials, and of workmanship should be assessed and addressed, since these are the most important of the seven aspects of integrity that relate to Criterion C nominations. Any alterations, additions, or removals should be noted and assessed for their effect on the property. In the case of St. John's, there is no real description of the cemetery, and the description of the church itself is rather cursory. In Section 8, some level of comparative context should be provided, that places the property within its architectural context. This was not done for St. John's.

St. John's was previously listed as part of the Christiansted Historic District. We typically discourage individual listing for a property that is listed as part of a district unless the new listing adds significant information that is unrelated to the district. Here, that is the case. Please, though, if another such property is nominated, to check the box "previously listed in National Register" in Section 9, and do not count it in the resource count of Section 5 (since it is already accounted for in the district).

Please note that in Section 3, the nominating authority, which in this case is the SHPO, signs the first box, thereby certifying that all procedural requirements were met, that the nomination or determination of eligibility meets or does not meet the criteria, and at what level. The second signature box is for a commenting official. This is used when there is a Federal nomination; the SHPO is the commenting official, or a state nomination where there is Federal property (a concurrent nomination). See Appendix VII in Bulletin 16A.