

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received MAY 8 1980

date entered JUN 9 1980

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Estate Little Princess

and/or common Estate Little Princessa

## 2. Location

street &amp; number Northwest of Christiansted not for publication

city, town Christiansted  vicinity of congressional district 1

state Virgin Islands code 78 county St. Croix code 0200

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Nature Conservancy

street &amp; number 1800 N. Kent Street

city, town Arlington vicinity of state Virginia

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street &amp; number Government House

city, town Christiansted, St. Croix state U. S. Virgin Islands

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Virgin Islands Inventory of  
Historic Placeshas this property been determined eligible?  yes  nodate  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Virgin Islands Planning Office

city, town Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, state U. S. Virgin Islands

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>April 1, 1980</u>

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Estate Little Princess is located approximately one and three-quarter miles west of the town of Christiansted, St. Croix, just within the outer limits of Christiansted Harbor. The Estate presently consists of: two great houses, dating approximately one hundred years apart; an overseer's house; a former steam-powered sugar factory and rum distillery; the remains of a wind-powered sugar mill and well tower; and several outbuildings, including the remains of the original slave village immediately to the west of the original manor house.

The first and older of the two greathouses (photo 1) is two-stories in height and "T" shaped in plan, consisting of a rectangular central core (the top of the "T"), measuring 28 by 58 feet and projecting bay, now a kitchen, measuring about 15 by 10 feet. The single roof is hipped and covered with corrugated sheet metal. An impressive two-story arcaded gallery spans the south side of the building, providing access by means of a restored masonry staircase, contained within the eastern most of the six bays, to the second floor residence. The lower floor is presently--and was no doubt originally--used for storage. Bearing walls are of rubble masonry, with brick reinforcement at the splayed window and door openings. Brick also forms the voussoirs of the elliptical arches of the double arcade. The walls throughout are covered with lime plaster and cement except in some areas where the under-lying materials were exposed more recently for decorative effect.

The structure has in fact been altered considerably over the years, most recently during renovations carried out in 1956-57 when the then abandoned property was acquired by the present residents. The roof of the gallery, originally framed, was replaced with reinforced concrete as were the gallery's originally wood floors; however, since the building was open to the elements at the time, the owners felt they had little other choice. Other changes included the provision of a small guest house and one-story garage in the projection to the north of the original building (photo 2). A number of original sheds and out-buildings were apparently incorporated within this addition. Changes on the interior included: The provision of a new tray ceiling, based on examples elsewhere; the provision of a small kitchen and bathroom in the two-bay northern projection; and the installation of modern screens and adjustable jalousies replacing what were no doubt the original casement louvers and storm shutters. None of these changes, however, seriously detract from the overall appearance and historic character of the building--and none are fully unalterable.

The second great-house (photo 3 and 4) is located approximately 25 feet to the east on the same axis as the first. Unlike the original house, which it resembles in basic outline and dimensions, this second slightly more elaborate and larger building is roughly "L" shaped in plan (with an additional Kitchen and smaller wing balancing the ell) and one and one half stories high. The arcade gallery is likewise "L" shaped, running in this case along the south and east facades. The front, or south facade, was originally seven bays wide with a centered entrance served by a limestone of "coral" staircase. A later, one bay wide room has since been added to the southwest corner adding in effect an eighth bay to the south facade and, therefore, to the original gallery. The gallery on the east facade is likewise eight bays wide, corresponding to the projecting arm of the ell.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Estate Little Princess is an outstanding example of a sugar plantation and factory dating from the early period of Danish Colonization in the West Indies. Together with Butler Bay to the west--similar in terms of its architecture and other details--it is also one of the best preserved, its later alterations merely serving to extend the property's life and not to fully alter its original appearance.

Deed records suggest that Little Princess was first established in 1749, or 16 years after the purchase of St. Croix by the Danish Crown, by two young planters, Frederik Moth and Peter Heyliger, both later to become prominent in the political life of the island, Moth eventually serving as governor. Little Princess was perhaps typical of plantations of its kind, designed to help supplement other commercial ventures on the island or within the Danish Colonies. The original complex includes a great house, windmill (built as early as 1749) well and probably the slave village. Moth, born in Copenhagen in 1694 and moving to St. Thomas in 1722 as a merchant in Danish West India Company, apparently moved into the complex soon afterwards. Accompanying him were probably his wife, the daughter of Lucas van Beverhout, a prominent St. Thomas planter, and their children. His youngest daughter, Alette Moth, eventually inherited the estate following her marriage to Peter Heylinger Junior. For a short time before this, however, Moth's ownership came into question when the crown took over title of the property from the company in 1754. Improved by Moth with company funds for many years, it is obvious that there was considerable resentment over this-- although in the end Moth appears to have gained control once again.

The name, Little Princess, appeared for the first time in 1802; it was also known as Little Princessa. In 1834, Robert Innes Grant, who had purchased it several years before, sold 18 1/2 acres of the estate to Governor Peter von Scholten, who undertook the second phase of improvements. From 1879 to 1915, the Estate was owned by Emil Switzer who entertained a number of internationally known scientists there.

As a plantation and factory Little Princess followed the standard pattern of success and decline. By 1900, while the Estate was still turning out "muscovado" and making an occasional profit, there was little hope of its survival as a major producer. During the 1950's, the buildings long in ruins-- the roof of the original great house was destroyed in the famous 1928 hurricane which devastated the island--and all its land turned over to grazing, the property was acquired by Clayton and Opal Shoemaker for a vacation home. In 1970 the property, including an additional 5 acre lot to the north was donated to the Nature Conservancy to insure the continued preservation of the site.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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

## 10. Geographical Data UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 19.598

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_ 17° 45' 34" North Latitude Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UMT References 64° 43' 33" West Longitude

A 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

B 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

C 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

D 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing				

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is located at #52 Estate Little Princess.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/a code N/a county N/a code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

(Architectural Historian)

name/title Mr. Russell Wright, Mr. Philip Lader, Mr. William Chapman

organization Virgin Islands Planning Office date June 6, 1977 / April 12, 1980

street & number P. O. Box 2606 telephone (809) 774-1730

city or town Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas state U. S. Virgin Islands

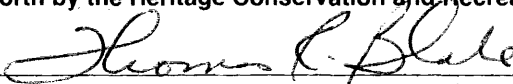
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_ national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director of Planning

date 7/22/80

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

  
Keeper of the National Register

date 6/9/80

Attest:   
Chief of Registration

date 6/6/80

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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A second "welcoming arms" staircase, similar to that on the south, approaches from the east. The coral stone and rubber walls throughout are covered with lime plaster patched with cement. Square-headed window and door openings are again flat arched and splayed, the openings and arches being defined by bricks. The roof, sheathed in corrugated sheet metal, follows the conventional pattern: hipped for the main house; sheds for the gallery and southwest extension.

As with the first great house, the interior of the second has been substantially altered and now consists of a single large room running on the eastwest axis with a study projecting at the western corner. A single tray ceiling of later composition board spans the area. Bedrooms, three in number, are located in the ell, the kitchen, as explained, projects from the northwest corner. The latter, which retains its original charcoal stove and pyramidal range hood, has been conscientiously adapted for modern use (photo 5).

A third residential building, originally the overseer's house, is located approximately 100 feet to the south east (photo 6). This one-story double residence of roughed coursed coral follows a standard regional model, including the traditional hipped roof of corrugated sheet metal. The total dimensions are 16 by 21 and 2/3 feet. The walls rise 10 and 2/3 feet from the ground level. The paired doors of the south facade are matched by a double set of windows on the north. Windows and doors have in turn been altered through the addition of modern louvers. Otherwise, the building remains substantially unchanged.

North and west of the overseer's house is the windmill (photos 6 and 7), of the first sugar factory. Typical of windmills in the West Indies, it is conical in shape and is completed by a flat platform to receive the windshaft housing. Built of coral block and originally covered with lime plaster of which traces remain, the structure's cleaning openings and entrance were blocked when the crushing mill was converted to a cistern some time after the introduction of a steam-power--and a second factory--after 1850.

The well-tower with its own windmill to power the winch, is located southeast of the canemill and factory. Approximately 40 feet high, the tapered circular structure, now overgrown with vegetation and barely accessible, is 11 feet in diameter at its base. Rubble walls are as much as 30 inches thick. The round-headed entrance and two window openings are, as with other buildings in the complex, lined with brick. There is also a corbelled brick platform near the top of the tower for the guidepole used in turning the sails into the wind. The winch platform also remains.

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The ruins of the second sugar factory and rum distillery are located approximately 160 feet southeast of the second great house (photos 8, 9, and 10). Part of the factory has been converted into a garden terrace and swimming pool, but this has been done sympathetically and does not completely interrupt the original appearance of the structure. Also, most of the original fabric remains intact.

In plan, the factory consists of two long parallel sections running on the north-south axis with a third element, a wagon loading platform, appended to the southend of the east wall and a fourth conjoining element,--a cooperage and large cistern--added to the southend of the west wall. The eastern section of the factory, measuring 29 feet 7 inches by 85 feet 9 inches, features a ten-bay-long arcade on the west balanced by six segmentially arched windows on the east. The south wall is punctured by two windows; the corresponding north wall has only a single wide entrance. The ten arched openings of the west wall are built of dressed coral block; all other opening are defined by brick. This part of the factory also includes the remains of a timber-framed roof as well as the remains of a portion of the original brick floor.

This first section was originally used as the actual processing room of the sugar factory and would have included a number of iron pans or coppers no longer in evidence. The southend, now the swimming pool, was the shipping and packing area. Ruins of the original wagon loading platform, retained above, are appended to the southeast corner. The other wing of the factory was, as suggested, originally the site of the distillery and cooperage. Although slightly narrower--13 and 1/2 feet compared to about 20--this section conforms in basic outline to the other, again possessing a gable roof and internally arched window openings. Rather than an arcade, however, there are only three large windows on the west and two small square-headed windows on the south walls. All windows include slots for the original wood security bars, now deteriorated and lost.

This second section encompasses the original distillery or "still house", the boiling room and the coal-storage area. The still room is located at the southend with its floor set a full level below grade.

Part of the still remains, elevated on a low brick platform with the furnace below. The boiler room is set behind the massive chimney (photo 8) at the northend. The chimney itself is typical in design. As with the rest of the factory, it is constructed of rough, course rubble with certain elements--in this case the cornice band and cap--constructed of brick.

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A final two-story wing, measuring 45 by 23 feet, is appended, as explained, to the southwest corner of the distillery area. This was originally the cooperage and there is evidence of a pipe line connecting it to the pot still of the distillery. Immediately adjacent is an 18 by 22 feet vaulted cistern.

The ruins of an extensive slave village (photos 11 and 12) are located approximately 150 feet to the west of the original great house. Only one of what are estimated as originally thirty houses is standing, having been altered through an addition on the north and the provision of new windows and fixtures for use as a servant's residence during the 1950's. The rest consist of low rubble walls, some barely visible. The whole area is over-grown and now accessible only with difficulty.

As with so many other plantations of the period, Little Princess, possesses a certain amount of potential as an archaeological site. The owner has discovered a number of examples of 19C delft and other ceramic ware, as well as a number of American Indian artifacts, including flint tools, scattered about the surface. The area is included in the VI Inventory of archaeological sites, as well, although the boundaries of the potential archaeological site are as yet undefined by tests. These are contemplated in the future.

As an historical site, the boundaries of the property are relatively well-defined, based on the existing boundaries of the lot containing the whole complex. Totalling nearly 20 acres, this lot is considered sufficient to protect the integrity of all visible remains as well as any potential resources within the immediate area.

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Architecturally, the Estate is more important for its typically than for its exceptional features. The double arcade of the older great house is a typical element and in fact occurs a number of other plantation great houses of the area, most notably Butler Bay to the west.

The second greathouse of 1850 is likewise typical; nor was it entirely unusual for a second house to have been constructed once tastes and needs changed during the mid-Nineteenth Century. The essentially "T" shaped sugar factory, also built around 1850, while more elaborate than most, conformed as well as to the general pattern, as did the earlier conical windmill. Overall Little Princess is an exceptionally well preserved site, its donation to the Nature Conservancy helping to further insure this. The full potential of the site in terms of both prehistoric and historic remains has yet to be fully established.



FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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

Westergaard, Waldemar Christian. The Danish West Indies Under  
Company Rule (1671 ) 1754), With a Supplementary Chapter, New York,  
1917.

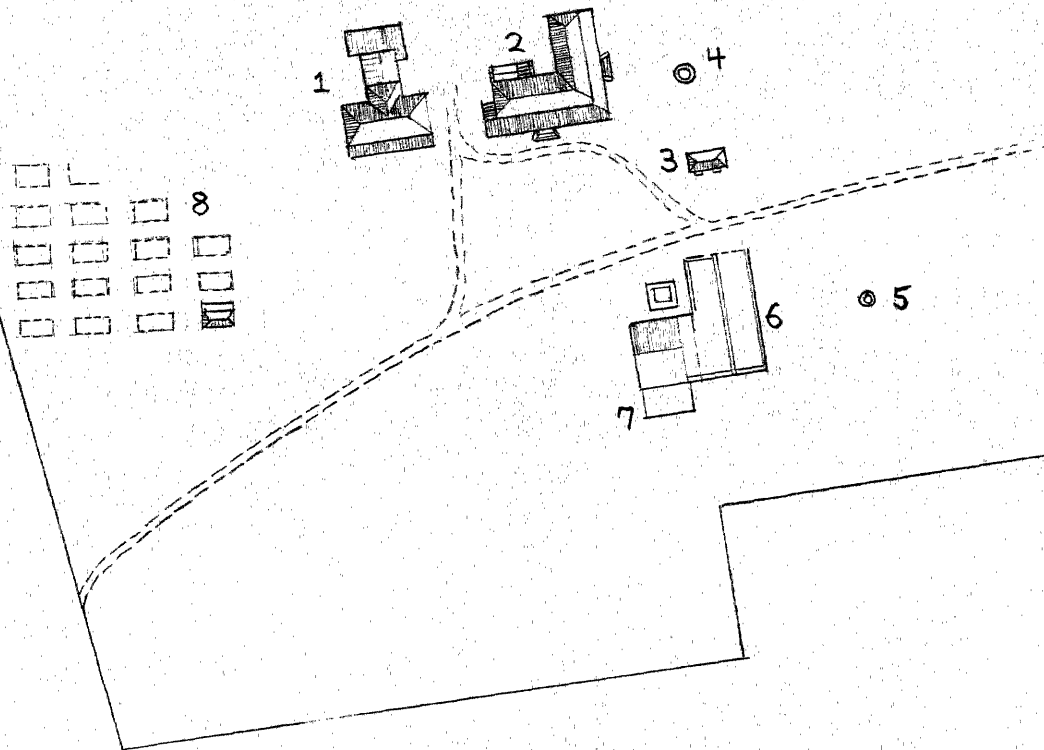
Interview with Mr. Clayton Shoemaker by Mr. William Chapman,  
February 15, 1980.

Interview with Mrs. Opal Shoemaker by Annie Hillary, November 22, 1976.

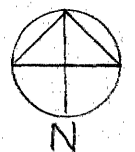
- 1 OLD GREAT HOUSE
- 2 NEW GREAT HOUSE
- 3 OVERSEERS HOUSE
- 4 WINDMILL
- 5 WELL
- 6 FACTORY
- 7 CISTERN
- 8 SLAVE VILLAGE

LOT NO. 52

CARIBBEAN SEA



ESTATE LITTLE PRINCESS , C'STED , ST. CROIX



1"=150'

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