



**VIRGIN
ISLANDS**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY**

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**VOLUME I
1974**

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

founded and incorporated, January 1974, at St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands as a non-profit, scientific organization.

The object for which this corporate society is formed is to bring together those persons having a serious interest in archaeology, history and related studies; to explore, excavate (under the aegis and direction of the Territorial Archaeologist of the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands), chart and study the cultures of primitive peoples who once inhabited our Islands; to publish the Society's findings; to communicate with other archaeological and historical societies and disseminate knowledge acquired through such activities.

Membership in the Society is open to all persons having an abiding interest in the objectives of the Society and who adhere to the Society's Code of Ethics.

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Life	\$150
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All Members are entitled to cast a vote and to receive one copy of the Journal as issued.

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Applications for Membership to the Society, and Subscription to the Journal, and all general correspondence: Ms. Katheryne B. Kay, Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 4986, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00801.

Manuscripts, (drawings, charts, maps, photographs) submitted to the Society's Journal shall be in the English language, typewritten and doubled spaced; and shall become the property of the Society unless return is requested and accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. All correspondence deemed suitable for publication should be sent via air, certified mail: Kenneth C. Dick, Editor, High Road, Star Route, Vessup Bay Estates, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, 00801. The Society cannot guarantee publication of unsolicited articles and reserves the right to reject and/or edit all articles, in the best interests of the Society.

Copies of the Society's Journal or Journals will be sent, free of charge, to all members not in arrears. (One copy per Membership).

SOCIETY MEETING DATES: the 3rd Thursday of each month, 8 p.m. at the Society's headquarters, Havensight Road, St. Thomas.



OUR LOGO

According to the Spanish Friar Ramon Pane, the Taino believed that at the dawn of time all men lived in a cave called Cacibayagua, shying away from the sun; they were ruled in the darkness by a hero named Guaguyona. One day, Guaguyona sent a certain Yadrubava to gather an herb used in bathing; the sun rose as Yadrubava searched for the herbs, and he therefore turned into a bird that sang in the mornings, called Yahuba Bayael. Guaguyona, disgusted at Yadrubava's delay, resolved to leave for a fabled Matinino taking with him all the women and a great quantity of herbs. Along the way, in a land called Guanin, they abandoned all the children that were with them along a stream-side. The babies cried out hungrily for their mothers, asking for nourishment with the word *too* which means breast. Because of their crying, these first children of men were converted into small frog-like creatures named *tona*. This myth may explain why so many frog motifs appear in prehistoric West Indian art work; as the symbol of the first abandoned children of men, they are the logo of our Society. The effigy adopted is carved out of shell, was found in St. Croix, and is now in the Virgin Islands Museum at Fort Christian.

Logo Design: Edward Whitney

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Kay

VOYAGES AUX ISLES DE L'AMERIQUE

Antilles 1693-1705

Part 2

CHAPTER VI

The Author Goes to Cul-de-Sac Francis [Baie du Francois].

Description of a Carib Hut.

Translation by
A. Caron
and I. Dookhan

I left Macouba on December 12 after having officiated at mass. I charged my neighbor, Father Breton, with the care of my parish. I had lunch at Grande Anse (Le Lorrain) while passing through, and I arrived rather early at the village of La Trinite, at Mr. Marevil's. I then went with him and stayed overnight at Mr. Joyeux's on the Galion River.

The next morning we were on our way again. Since Mr. Joyeux did not live in the district where we were going, and since only a commander and some negroes lived in his home with regular supplies which would not have sufficed us, he had taken care to place provisions in his boat which we might need before finishing our business. This was a wise precaution which we came to appreciate three fourths of the way to Cul-de-Sac Robert [Havre de Robert], when we were caught by such a violent squall from the west that had we not reached La Rose Point for shelter, I don't know what might have happened to our boat and all those in it.

This La Rose Point represents the eastern-most side of Cul-de-Sac Robert. A Carib, who lives there, took this name or gave his, I don't know which; however, I do know quite well that this point was of great help to us. We beached our boat and while the negroes were unloading it to pull it higher up, we went into Mr. La Rose's hut. Except for the fright, I was not too unhappy about this adventure since it gave me the means to observe Caribs in their huts after having seen them in their pirogues.

The Carib La Rose is Christian, and so are his wife and ten or twelve children he had of her and some others whom he had before being baptized. He received us with great civility. He had linen drawers over his brand new scarlet suit covering him from head to toe, that is to say, he had just been roucoued as it was barely past nine in the morning when we entered his home. His wife wore a *pagne* around her waist which reached to her knees. We saw two of her daughters, fifteen to sixteen years old, who were clad in the old tribal garments worn when first visited by Europeans, that is to say, the "camisa" [fringed and beaded loin-cloth], gaiters, and the bracelets. However, a moment later, they appeared in *pagnes*. A *pagne* is a piece of linen which women use to wrap around themselves, except for the shoulders. They make two turns with the cloth and cross the ends which are generally tucked inside to hold it fast. The *pagne* generally reaches to the knees. There are shorter *pagnes*, but rarely longer ones. This kind of garment is quite practical; it can be taken on or off easily. Men and women use it equally all along the Guinea coast. La Rose had four big boys thoroughly roucoued with the loin cloth on the small rope [described in the previous chapter]. The other children were dressed as they had been when entering the world, except for their head band. We found a large group of people in this house. There were nearly thirty Caribs who were meeting for the occasion I will describe later.

Carib huts are called "carbets." I do not know the origin of that name. I have never heard it said that, in all of Martinique, there was another one like that of La Rose. This hut was about 60 feet long by 24 to 25 feet wide. It was built like a hall. The small posts reached nine feet above the ground on both sides, the lath was made of reeds, and the roof of thatch reached as low as the beams. One end of the house was completely enclosed with reeds and covered with thatch, except for an opening leading to the kitchen. The opposite end was almost completely open. Ten paces away from this building there was another one, about half its size; it was divided into two by a reed partition. We entered it; the first room served as a kitchen in which seven or eight women or girls were busy making cassava flour. The second room apparently served to house these ladies with their children who were not admitted into the larger hut. There was no furniture in this hut or the larger one other than baskets and hammocks. La Rose had a chest, a gun, a pistol, a saber, and a powder horn near his hammock. His four older sons also had arms and had discharged their duties well when the British attacked the island. A few Caribs were making baskets. It was there that I observed for the first time how they are made. I also saw two women weaving a hammock on a loom in the way I described earlier. The bows, the arrows, and the maces were there in great numbers neatly hanging from the beams. The floor was of beaten earth, quite flat and smooth, except along the edges where it was slightly sloped. There was a rather large fire about one third of the way inside the hut, around which eight or nine Caribs were squatted (just as though relieving themselves) and they were smoking while waiting for some fish, called trunkfish, to be cooked. These gentlemen paid me their usual civility, without changing posture, by saying: "Hello friend, you got tafia?" They knew Mr. Joyeux and liked him because, when they went to his sugar factory, he would give them some syrup to make their "ouicou" [wine made with cassava, sweet potato, banana, and sugar cane] and would never fail to invite them to drink; this is the surest way to gain their friendship.

The fish, I just mentioned, were pell-mell in the fire between the wood and the coals. At first, I mistook them for fire wood. I couldn't imagine that cooking could be done in such a strange manner. I said so to La Rose who answered me that it was their way and that after tasting the fish he was certain that I would find it delicious and that I would admit that Caribs are not as bad cooks as I imagined. Please forgive me if I haven't recorded his words precisely. The meaning should suffice and it is exactly as reported.

Meanwhile, lunch time was getting close and the sea air had given us a strong appetite. Therefore, I told Mr. Joyeux's two negroes to bring a tablecloth. Having seen a beautiful straw mat spread out in a corner of the hut, I assumed that it was where these gentlemen took their meals and that we might well use it ourselves while waiting for them to use it. I had the tablecloth spread over it with napkins. Bread, salt, and a platter of cold meats were brought out. Mr. de Mareuil and Mr. Joyeux urged me to take my place, that is, to sit on the mat. After the usual compliments, I sat down; these gentlemen did the same, and were already eating when we noticed that the Caribs were glowering at us and were talking with much emotion to La Rose. We asked him the reason. He told us there was a dead Carib under the mat where we were seated and that this had greatly angered his relatives. We immediately arose and had our things removed. La Rose had another mat brought in and spread elsewhere. We sat down and continued our meal leisurely and offered drinks to Mr. La Rose and all his company in order to erase the scandal we had caused by sitting on their dead. In this way, we again became friends as before.

During the conversation we had with La Rose while eating, we learned that all these Caribs had assembled at his house to attend the funeral of the Carib under the mat. They were waiting for the arrival of a few more relatives from St. Vincent to bury him together. It is necessary for all the relatives to verify that the Carib had died a natural death since if only one did not, all the others would be unable to persuade him. On the contrary, he would likely believe that they had all conspired to kill him and he would feel honor bound to kill one of them to avenge the dead relative. This extreme sense of honor seemed quite troublesome and impertinent. I believe that our host would have much preferred this Carib had not done him the honor of dying in his house as this large company was appreciably diminishing his manioc supply which was probably just enough for his own family.

After having had dinner, I asked whether, as friends of the deceased, we might not view him. La Rose told me yes and that it would please his company, especially if we were all to drink to his health. He immediately had the mat, as well as the boards which covered the trench, removed. It had been dug like a well, about four feet in diameter and six to seven feet deep. The body was almost in the same squatting posture which I described earlier for those Caribs around the fire. His elbows were pressed to his knees and the palms of his hands supported his cheeks. He was properly painted in red with black mustaches and stripes painted on with a stain other than the ordinary genipa. His hair was tied behind his head. His bow, arrows, mace, and knife were by his side. Sand had been poured up to his knees, enough seemingly to hold his posture, since he was not touching the sides of the pit. I asked whether I might touch him and was given permission to do so. I touched his hands, his face, and his back; all were very dry and did not give a bad odor, although I was assured that no precaution had been taken other than having him roucoued immediately after expiring, following which he was placed in the pit as we saw him. The first relatives to come had removed some sand to examine the body and it had not been replaced to save the trouble of removing it on the arrival of each new relative. We were told that when all have seen him, the pit would be completely filled. We did not fail to drink and toast the health of the dead man after which we replaced the boards to close the pit and respread the mat over it. He had died almost five months ago. We were hoping that some relatives might arrive while we were there so that we might witness their ceremonies, but none came.

Meantime, the fish in the fire was cooked, and since these gentlemen were hungry, the women brought two or three "matatous" [baskets] filled with fresh cassava still warm, as well as two large "couis" [calabash bowls] one of which was full of crab "tomalin" and the other of "pimentade" red pepper sauce. This was accompanied by a large basket of boiled crabs, the trunkfish that was in the fire, and some fish with large scales cooked in the same manner.

Although I had eaten well, I didn't fail to get close to the "matatou" in order to taste the fish and the sauce. They never beg anyone to eat with them, but, on the other hand, they never stop anyone from joining them. Mr. La Rose and his four boys crossed themselves and said the Benedicite. The others refrained as they were not Christians although they had been baptized and they were ready to be baptized as often as they might be given a glass of brandy.

I will explain what "tomalin" is when I mention the crabs. As for the pepper sauce, it is syrup of boiled manioc with lemon juice in which they mash a great quantity of red peppers which no one but they can eat. I have already mentioned that it is their favorite all-purpose sauce. It should be further mentioned that they never use salt. It isn't that they lack it, there are natural salt ponds in all the islands where they could obtain it -- but it isn't to their taste. Neither is boiled meat or fish. I learned from them that, except for crab which is their main food, they eat nothing which is cooked in water; everything is roasted or barbecued. The way they roast is to skewer cut meat or birds, is small, on a stick which is planted in the ground in front of the fire. When the meat is judged sufficiently cooked on one side they turn it over so that the other side may be cooked. However, if the birds are a bit large, such as parrots, doves, or chickens, they do not take the trouble to pluck or clean them. They throw them whole with feathers into the fire, and when the feathers are consumed, they place them on embers and ashes. They leave them in this fashion as long as they judge necessary to cook them, after which they remove them, peel off with ease the crust made up of feathers and skin, take out the guts and the crop, and eat them thus. On several occasions I have eaten some prepared in this fashion and I myself have prepared some as I have just described. I have always found the meat juicy and of admirable tenderness and delicateness. Those who don't believe me can do the experiment at little expense and convince themselves of the truth or falseness of what I am recounting.

I tasted the fish with the large scales [probably tarpon]; it had been scaled as though pulled out of a sheath. The flesh was very good, well cooked and so fat that one might have thought it full of butter. It is true that this fish is ordinarily rather fat but it must be admitted that when it is cooked without water, butter or oil mixed in, it cannot but taste much better.

The trunkfish is so named because it is enclosed in a thin, dry, and very hard shell. It has a triangular cross-section from head to tail, and seemingly has no joints. When I opened one of those served on the "matatou" along the sides, one might have thought that a hot *pate* had been opened. The odor was good, the flesh white and well-cooked. Although this fish is not considered one of the best, maybe because there are more bones than flesh, I found it very good and very succulent.

It was a real pleasure to watch this large group of Caribs, squatting on their haunches like monkeys, eating with an appetite which would have given one to a sick man, not uttering a single word, and eating the smallest crab leg with admirable skill and speed. They rose with as little ceremony as they had used sitting. Those who were thirsty went to quench their thirst with water, a few started to smoke, another group went to lie down, and the rest started a conversation which I could not follow because it was in Carib.

The women came to remove the "matatous" and the "couis", the girls cleaned the place where we had eaten, and all of them, including the young children, retired to the kitchen, where we went to see them eat in the same posture and with the same good appetite which the men had displayed. I was a little surprised that the women didn't eat with their husbands, and if this is a rule with those people, why wasn't an exception made for Mrs. La Rose, a Christian and the hostess. I conveyed my thoughts to her husband who answered that custom doesn't allow it, that wives should never eat with their husbands, and that, when alone, he eats only with his older boys while his wife, daughters, and the rest of the children eat in the kitchen. This custom, although seemingly extraordinary at first, is not so primitive. After some reflection, it seemed to me filled with common sense and quite appropriate to contain this beautiful sex within the bounds of the duties and respect they owe men. The Caribs are not the only ones to treat them thus. I will report elsewhere other examples which Europeans should follow to avoid many aggravations.

We stayed at La Rose's house until three in the afternoon. The wind had died down completely; only the seas were high and quite heavy. However, La Rose's oldest son offered to come with us, and three other Caribs, attracted by the prospect of brandy, made the same offer. We took them at their word and although we already had seven negroes in the boat, we decided that this help would not be useless, that the young La Rose would pilot better than Mr. Joyeux's negro and that the number of our paddlers being increased by four, we would go faster and in greater safety.

HISTORY OF VIRGIN ISLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

By Alfredo E. Figueredo

This is a historical account of the research done at prehistoric archaeological sites; it does not concern itself with work related to the time period after A.D. 1625 in St. Croix, and A.D. 1666 in the Virgin Islands proper, as these dates are the beginning of European settlement and written records. The 'protohistoric' period, that from A.D. 1493 (the Discovery) to the dates above, falls within the scope of this article due to a scarcity of testimony.

Since archaeological work has never been coincident in more than one island at a time, a strictly temporal organization has been adopted for this paper. Such an arrangement has the shortcoming that it obscures present or former political and cultural jurisdictions; however, it brings together all activity into a comprehensive sequence, thus demonstrating parallel development and emphasizing the distinct nature of archaeology in this Archipelago.

By 'archaeological work' we shall consider all reports, collections, and excavations of which notice has been taken. No distinction other than critical will be made between the work of scientists and that of amateurs, so that this is not a history only of the activities of competent field workers, but will include also the work done by untrained persons whose contributions, though below the standards of their day, were nonetheless significant.

The first report of archaeological remains occurs in 1587, still within the protohistoric period, when John White 'discovered pottery fragments made of the clay of that island' wherein he landed. This has been dubbed 'the last ethnographic and the first archaeological account of St. Croix' (Vescelius 1952: frontispiece).

Pere Labat (1722) observed the great conch shell heaps in eastern Anegada, and is so credited by Schomburgk (1832: 153), who adds some commentary. There are no more reports of Anegada for over a century. Both Labat and Schomburgk regard these mounds as the evidence of seasonal conch-harvesting by Indians, and do not feel that they represent permanent settlements. Schomburgk records the destruction of several such heaps as they were burnt for lime.

From at least the early part of the XIX Century, the petroglyphs at Reef Bay, St. John, were recognized as aboriginal (e.g., Knox 1852:17-18). Frederik von Scholten drew a romanticized sketch of them in 1833 (Danish West Indian Society 1967).

In 1854, a Danish antiquarian named Rafn published a note entitled *Caraibske Oldsager*, describing, among other artifacts, a stone axe from St. Croix (Vescelius n.d.:2)

Captain H.U. Ramsing of the Danish Engineers undertook the earliest recorded field work (Vescelius n.d.:2); in 1899, he conducted limited excavations at the Salt River Point midden, St. Croix, and donated his collections to the Danish National Museum (Hatt 1924:30, note2).

Slightly after Ramsing, Alphonse Pinart and Christian Branch effected additional excavations at Salt River (Fewkes 1922:167). In 1912, Jesse Walter Fewkes of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution undertook a survey of St. Croix, and collected a few hundred artifacts from the surface of several sites. This survey, as the work of Pinart and Branch, was never published.

Fewkes was the first archaeologist to categorically assign the prehistoric cultures of the Virgin Islands to the Puerto Rican, or Taino, area, and to note furthermore that the local assemblages were quite distinct from those of the Lesser Antilles (Fewkes 1922: 168). His concern, however, was of the type labelled 'museological' (Tabio and Rey 1966: 5), and isolated artifacts, largely taken out of context, were the subject given treatment. Field work at this time must be suspected of being unsystematic in general and, in the case of workers such as Fewkes, systematically antiquarian; the actual accounts of prehistory, however, are fuller and better reasoned than anything done before, and for this Fewkes may be considered 'the father of West Indian archaeology'.

In an earlier work, Fewkes (1914:667) defined the word 'Arawak' in cultural terms following Brinton's (1871:427) etymology; this definition is still of wide currency, and explains the use of that word in Virgin Islands prehistory. 'Arawak' has a broader and less precise cultural definition than 'Taino' (cf. Rouse 1952: 359-362).

Theodoor de Booy carried out the first systematic archaeological survey of the then Danish Virgin Islands for the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation; he began this work in 1916, and located some of the most important sites on those islands (de Booy 1917a); the first detailed report of the petroglyphs at Reef Bay, St. John, and Congo Cay, date from this survey (de Booy 1917b). Published posthumously (de Booy 1919), the New York archaeologist's monograph of this research was not complete; his exposition of field methods, however, allows us to trace the beginnings of a professional development (de Booy 1917a; de Booy and Faris 1918; de Booy 1919); his techniques are clearly obsolete today, and largely betray, as in Fewkes' case, the museological concern alluded to above.

Fewkes and de Booy disagreed over key points of Virgin Islands prehistory, particularly the ties Fewkes saw with the Puerto Rican area (de Booy 1919: 20-24; Fewkes 1922: 169, note 18); this argument has been resolved in favor of such ties (Vescelius n.d.:3).

A Dano-Dutch Archaeological Expedition came to St. Thomas in 1922; its two investigators were J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong of the Netherlands and Gudmund Hatt of Denmark (Hatt 1924: 29). After a brief stay, de Jong left for the Lesser Antilles, and Hatt continued the work on St. Thomas, expanding it into 1923 to include St. John, Tortola, and St. Croix. Both of these European archaeologists recognized stratigraphy and the seriation of pottery, so that their work is a decided improvement upon that of their predecessors. Modern archaeological work could be said to date from this time.

Gudmund Hatt (1924:31) divided Virgin Islands prehistory into three periods: I) a postulated preceramic culture, II) an early ceramic culture derived from the Lesser Antilles, and, III) a late ceramic culture derived from the Greater Antilles; these complexes he named Krum Bay, Coral Bay-Longford, and Mogens Bay-Salt River, respectively; this scheme is the same later elaborated for wider areas by Loven (1935), Rainey (1940), and Rouse (1952), and in a refined form is still basic to our local sequence of cultures.

The subject of a 'Carib' occupation in the Virgin Islands was first approached ethnohistorically by Gudmund Hatt (1924: 40-42), who considered it in terms of influence and not settlement; according to Hatt, the last inhabitants of this Archipelago were clearly Taino. This point of view has been upheld ever since then.

Amateur archaeologists have been present in St. Croix for a relatively long time; most of their work is roughly equivalent to pillage, with no catalogues or notes kept of their collections. During the twenties and thirties, however, two amateurs of diligence and intelligence won for themselves particular renown through their carefully recorded collections; these were Louise Bingham-Hark and Folmer Andersen.

Mrs. Hark collected artifacts from several Cruzan sites, some of which were reported on by professionals (Skinner 1925). Folmer Andersen, on the other hand, kept notes himself and corresponded with other archaeologists as a serious student of the subject. His very extensive collection forms the bulk of the National Park Museum in Christiansted.

Andersen's main contribution to the interpretation of local prehistory was his assessment that the lack of Carib artifacts may not disprove a Carib occupation, since women were the potters and it would be in keeping with historical sources to consider the women 'Arawak' and the men 'Carib' (Andersen 1954: 17-18). This view is unacceptable to anthropologists (cf. Vescelius n.d.: 7), and ethnohistorians may point to the testimony that Carib women were the preferred wives of Carib men (cf. Dr. Chanca's letter).

In 1933, J.R. Montalvo Guenard published the first reference to sites in Vieques; he did not excavate them, but interprets one as being Carib (Rouse 1952: 556).

During the middle thirties Willard V. King, a trustee of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, sponsored an archaeological expedition to St. Croix under Lewis J. Korn (Anonymous 1964:17). Nothing was published, but the collections obtained, including a few artifacts from Tortola, are kept at the mentioned Museum.

J.C. Trevor, an English anthropologist who was doing ethnological research among the Negroes of the Eastern Caribbean in 1936, discovered that same year that some burials had been found in Water Island; some excavation was done, and a report on the skeletal remains (Buxton, Trevor, and Julien 1938) and artifacts (Hatt 1938) followed. The English researchers thought the skeletons Negroid but Indian (Buxton, Trevor, and Julien 1938: 51), while, in a follow-up article, American anthropologist T. Dale Stewart (1939) thought them wholly Negro.

In 1937, Herbert W. Krieger of the United States National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, was sent to Anegada in order to verify reports of a large Indian shell heap; for this he was allotted a budget of \$1,000 and instructed to examine the other islands as well. Krieger (1938) surveyed Anegada and excavated in Tortola, St. Thomas, and St. Croix. His field techniques were substandard (he did not recognize stratigraphy or take field notes), and his conclusions were a cruder version of Gudmund Hatt's.

Irving Rouse of Yale University conducted a week-long survey of Vieques with some excavations in 1938 (Rouse 1952: 556); his research in the Virgin Islands, coupled with Hatt's earlier work, helped him to establish a very refined ceramic chronology for Puerto Rico. In Vieques, however, he only found preceramic and late ceramic sites.

During the summer of 1951, Gary Vescelius, Allan Croft, and Colin Eisler, then undergraduate students of Yale and Harvard Universities, conducted an exhaustive survey and some excavations on St. Croix (Rouse 1952:309). This work, done under the joint auspices of the Yale Peabody Museum and the St. Croix Museum, was reported by Gary Vescelius (1952), who is presently preparing an updated revision of it.

That same year, a Cuban Scientific Expedition visited St. Thomas and St. Croix, excavating briefly at Magens Bay and Salt River Point. A comprehensive report was published in Spanish (Morales Patino and others 1952).

Monica Flaherty, an amateur archaeologist attached to the former Virgin Islands Museum Inc., excavated extensively in St. Thomas during the early and middle fifties, and did considerable research on the Reef Bay, St. John, petroglyphs (Frassetto 1960). Her collection has fairly adequate provenience data and is very useful.

In 1958, the William L. Bryant Foundation of Orlando, Florida, commissioned Mr. and Mrs. Hugh N. Davis of Charlotte Amalie to do an archaeological survey of St. Thomas (Bullen 1962: 1). This work has not been published in full.

Ripley P. Bullen and Frederick W. Sleight did a modest amount of work for the William L. Bryant Foundation and the National Park Service in 1960; this resulted in some influential publications (Sleight 1962; Bullen 1962; Bullen and Sleight 1963) and the first radiocarbon dates obtained from the Virgin Islands (Bullen and Sleight 1963: 41). Technically, the work of these two gentlemen in St. Thomas and St. John is not up to the standards of the Dano-Dutch Archaeological Expedition thirty eight years before: gross artificial levels were used, and the presentation of data was largely inadequate and hopelessly confusing.

During the winter months of 1969-1970, Edward S. Rutsch of Fairleigh Dickinson University conducted salvage excavations at Cinnamon Bay, St. John, under a National Park Service contract. Rutsch has not yet submitted a final report on his very meticulous field work.

The Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, established a British Virgin Islands Archaeological Survey in 1972, and that same year conducted an exhaustive reconnaissance of Virgin Gorda (Figueredo 1972). Excavations were undertaken by this team during that and the following summer, refining thereby the local chronology.

At some point in the early seventies, Diana Lopez, a graduate student from the University of Mexico, conducted excavations in Vieques in order to obtain data for an academic thesis (Ricardo E. Alegria: personal communication).

In August of 1972, and largely through the efforts of Mr. Charles S. Rotenberg, the Department of Conservation and Cultural Affairs of the United States Virgin Islands contracted Alfredo E. Figueredo, Jeffrey M. Gross, and Jonathan R. Stone to effect salvage excavations at Magens Bay, St. Thomas, and do a cursory survey of St. Croix. This work is partially reported (Figueredo 1974). In December of that same year, Figueredo and Theodore E. Bradstreet conducted a site register for St. Thomas (Figueredo and Bradstreet 1973).

The Virgin Islands Museum has conducted several excavations in St. Thomas during 1973 and 1974 under its former curator; these have been the first strictly stratigraphic excavations in the Virgin Islands.

The Virgin Islands Archaeological Society was founded 30 January 1974 by a group of professionals, amateurs, students, and other interested persons; its object is to further the cause of archaeological research in the Virgin Islands. Later that same year, an Office of the Territorial Archaeologist was created for the United States Virgin Islands inaugurated with a staff of three (Alfredo E. Figueredo, Katheryne B. Kay, and Bruce E. Tilden), and a British Virgin Islands Archaeological Survey team surveyed Anegada and located two of the mounds originally reported by Labat (Schomburgk 1832:153).

In summary, then, Virgin Islands archaeology could be said to be three quarters of a century old: excavations began in 1899, modern research techniques in 1922, and official involvement in 1972; as a result, the prehistory of the Virgin Islands is among the best known in the world. The outstanding research collections are those of the Virgin Islands Territorial Museum, the National Park Service museums in Christiansted and Cruz Bay, the Smithsonian Institution, the Museum of the American Indian, the Danish National Museum, and the Yale Peabody Museum, with smaller collections present at the British Museum, the Goteborg Museum, the French Museum of Man, the Archaeological Museum of the University of Puerto Rico, the Anthropological Museum of Havana University, and the Florida State Museum. Through normal scientific exchange, the Territorial Museum hopes to increase the study collections abroad and negotiate the return of unique art objects and neglected collections to the Virgin Islands; this will be of great benefit to both local and foreign scholars.

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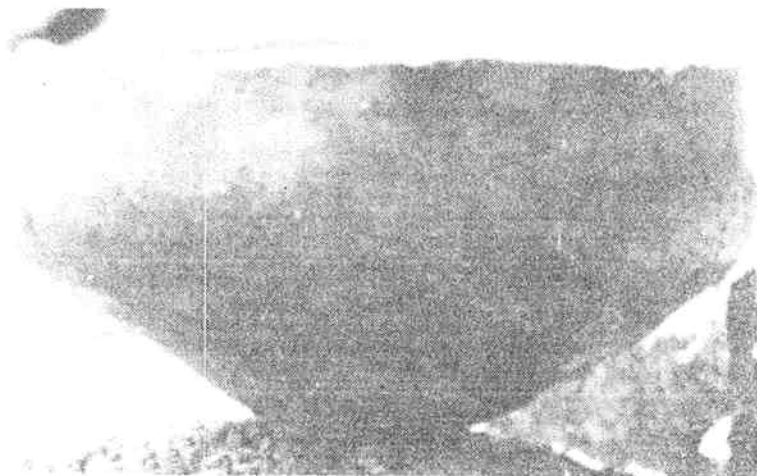
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HULL BAY POT



The discovery of a new archaeological area at the Hull Bay site began with the finding of the above clay vessel by Frederik Gjesing in September 1968 some 30 metres North Northeast of the site where skeletons were unearthed. The pot originally contained the bones of an infant. Tlenoid period, 950-1250 A.D.

Editor's Note:

One of the major archaeological finds this year in the Virgin Islands was the discovery of an ancient Indian burial site at Hull Bay, St. Thomas. The following photographs are but a prelude to a fully detailed and scientific report which will be published in a future issue of the Society's Journal, after all data have been studied and interpreted.

HULL BAY

From March 26 to May 31 1974, the Society cooperated with the Virgin Islands Museum in the excavation of this important site. A transitional assemblage of artifacts was present, bridging the Ostionoid and Elenoid cultures. Two extended human burials were also found. According to previous radio-carbon dates from Puerto Rico, the culture excavated should hark to about 1100 A.D. Two new radiocarbon assays from Hull Bay, however, yielded dates of 1220 ± 110 and 1310 ± 120 A.D., supporting a later temporal placement for the assemblage in question. A third date, obtained from human bone, presented an activity of 104%, and is therefore unacceptable. This is the first such site to be excavated stratigraphically, and these are the first radiocarbon dates for the ceramic period in the Virgin Islands.

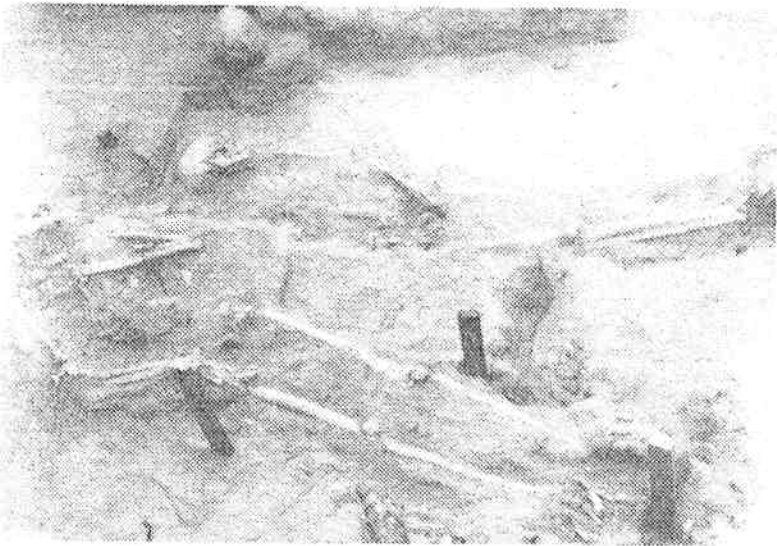


Fig. 1

Figures 1, 2, 3: Views of skeletons found at Hull Bay during course of excavations. Axis of left skeleton is aligned with feet facing true east. Also associated with ceramic vessel of the Elenoid period.

Figure 4: Elenoid pot fragment associated with first skeleton.

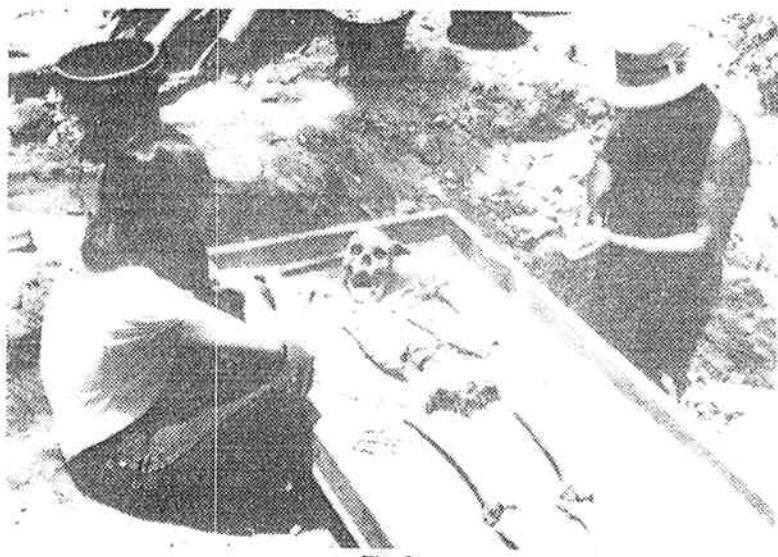


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

NOTES ON ARTIFACT ILLUSTRATION

By Jeffrey M. Gross

Drawings are an important means of presenting descriptive information about artifacts. Like other descriptive procedures, formal or informal, they enable the study and comparison of artifacts without direct reference to the original specimens. Hand drawings are generally preferable to photographs because they present detail more clearly (this is particularly true with lithic artifacts). These also, though not very analytical and of limited utility in formal systematic study, actually sidestep the methodological issues involved in a formal and analytical descriptive procedure while presenting implicitly all information relevant to it. Thus, drawings are especially useful to augment or even supplant informal or incomplete verbal descriptions.

Approaches to illustration may differ according to the type of artifact being considered. Lithic artifacts, for instance, since they are usually more irregular and their construction more fortuitous than pottery vessels, should not be illustrated in the same way as the latter, where the artifact design can be regularized or stylized, and comprehensive views of all parts are unnecessary because of an expectable symmetry. Besides, in the case of lithic artifacts, each specimen is studied not only as a finished and stable end product, but as representing one stage in the continuous process of manufacture, modification, and use; the draftsman must keep such considerations in mind when planning his drawings. Most importantly, illustrations should be done with sufficient care not to obscure or distort information preserved in the artifact itself.

Some specific instances may clarify the above. In the case of potsherds, a single view of the interior or exterior surface (where decorated) and a profile will disclose most important features of the artifact. These conventions change little enough with complete or nearly complete pottery vessels. More irregular and more complicated artifacts, however, most importantly lithic artifacts, require a more involved treatment. An example is shown in Figure 1. For a relatively complete presentation of this artifact, (a large hard-hammer percussion flake with a steeply retouched scraper edge), five separate views have been required. In the center panel is a dorsal view of the flake, showing the primary flake surface and secondary retouch. To the left, a view of the ventral flake surface presents features related to the manufacturing process, in particular the striking platform, bulb of percussion, and other marks of conchoidal fracture such as the bulbar scar and rippling. Above the central panel is a direct view of the proximal end of the flake (striking platform), shown more clearly than in the view of the ventral flake surface. For a similar reason a direct view of the distal end of the flake (the retouched scraper edge) is given below the central panel, showing features of retouch and use wear not visible from above. A longitudinal cross section illustrates additional aspects of form, manufacture and use, such as flake thickness, the orientation of the striking platform, and the angle of edge retouch.

Such drawings as these are executed in india ink with a fine tip steel pen. A pencilled outline of each view, with surface features also pencilled in, guides the final ink drawings. Some views of the artifact may be traced directly onto the surface of the drawing board, others (such as cross-sections and profiles) must be drawn by eye, or constructed by measurements. Wherever possible, the artifact should be drawn full size, and precise values of length, width, thickness, etc at all points checked against measurements taken from the artifact itself. With lithic artifacts, a number of techniques are used to indicate depth, shading, and the shape and direction of flake scars. Parallel hatching, used in Figure 1, is particularly well suited for flint, obsidian, and other glassy or smooth-grained stones, as it also mimics the ripples of conchoidal fracture. If the artifact is made of a more rough-textured stone such as quartz, quartzite, coarse basalt, etc., point stippling is more effective, being both more sensitive to surface irregularities and reproducing the coarse, grainy texture of the stone. The use of point stippling is shown in Figure 2. Stippling, parallel hatching, and cross-hatching are used to render pottery, although their use is generally limited to three dimensional decorative features, simple line drawings being otherwise sufficient.

Approaches to artifact illustration are determined not only according to the demands of a particular class of artifact (as discussed above), but according to the requirements of archaeological study and presentation. The drawings of the artifact in Figure 1 were arranged to show most comprehensively the features of its complex and irregular form, but they also emphasize its character as representing a formally devised artifact category, that of an end-scraper. To the extent that analysis of the artifact will be technological, as opposed to morphological or functional, features relating to manufacture and general stone technology have been highlighted. A whole series of similar artifacts might be handled differently according to whether the concern is with each as an individual piece, or as containing limited features of taxonomic interest. In the latter case, one or two might be comprehensively illustrated (such as in Figure 1), which would suffice to show the general structural tendencies of the remainder, illustrated only with respect to a taxonomically distinctive characteristic (such as a scraper edge). Just so, the illustration of a single artifact need not be arbitrarily comprehensive, distinguishing features of an artifact that have no great taxonomic or functional importance (such as the lateral edges of the artifact in Figure 1). The draftsman, in cooperation with the archaeologist, should strive for the greatest economy and clarity of presentation. What is to be presented, and how, is finally at the discretion of the archaeologist, who may be concerned with comparing several artifacts within a single illustration, demonstrating a classificatory scheme, or simply presenting a representative sample of artifacts from a particular cultural complex.

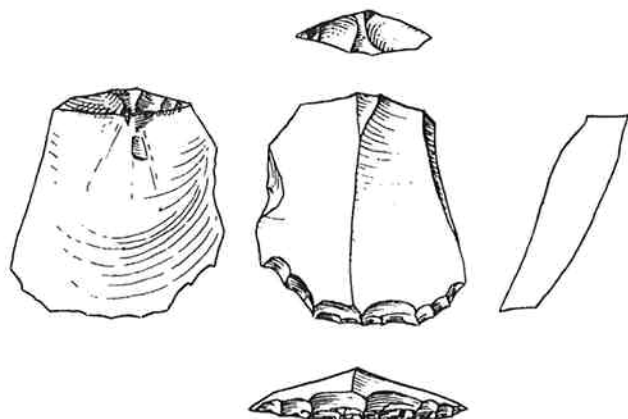


Fig. 1

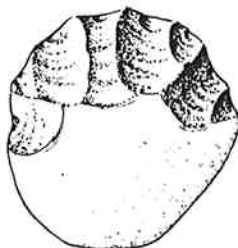


Fig. 2

REEF BAY GREAT HOUSE

By Frederik Gjessing

Reef Bay valley stretches from the main east-west ridge of St. John to a wide unprotected bay on the south coast. It is one of the more important valley systems of the island and has given the name to the south center quarter of St. John, one of the five administration divisions established by the Danish colonists of the Virgin Islands. At its head, the valley is little more than a ravine. Near the shoreline it opens on a small alluvial plain. For its entire length it is bounded by steep hills that towards the east rise to Bordeaux Mountain, the highest peak on St. John (approximate elevation 1280'). Although on the south and leeward side of the island with its relatively lesser rainfall, the valley as the drainage basin for the main ridge and the Bordeaux Mountain area is well watered by Virgin Islands standards and supports for most of its extent the same type of vegetation found on the damper north side of St. John. It was the last area of St. John to cultivate sugar cane and to support a sugar factory. In the early nineteen-hundreds, intensive cultivation was discontinued, and the valley has gradually reverted to a cover of woods and bush.

Reef Bay Great House is the name affixed to the structure that served as the residence of the former owner of Par Force and Reef Bay Estates. In addition to the main building, that housed the living quarters of the owner, there are four service buildings, the cook house, the servants quarter, a stable and an outbuilding.

The complex is located on a spur extending into Reef Bay valley from Bordeaux Mountain at an elevation of 280 feet. The site drops off steeply to the southwest and north from the very small plateau at the tip of the spur. (Illustration Number 1)

The Reef Bay Great House is considerably smaller than most Great Houses of plantations of equal size and value. Architecturally however, it is ambitious and the quality of its design and of its site planning is outstanding. Even in its present ruinous state its esthetic and architectural values are apparent.

The buildings, as if to underscore the potentials of the terrain, have been placed against the steeply rising hillside to the east leaving the small plot of relatively level land as garden and foreground for the impressive views from the Great House that commands the entire valley; to the north the narrow ravine at the head of the valley, to the south the small alluvial plain of the bay and the Caribbean beyond it. Immediately across the valley it faces the intermittent stream that drains the west center sector of St. John and enters Reef Bay valley over a series of cascades with a vertical drop of more than 150 feet.

A narrow road now nothing more than a footpath leads from the north and entrance side of the Great House around the tip of the spur and descends through a series of switch-backs on the south face of the hill to the Lameshure-Reef Bay Trail. 350 yards north and below this junction, the Lameshure Trail runs into the old Reef Bay Road connecting Reef Bay Estate Sugar Factory (3/4 miles south) and Centerline Road (1 1/2 miles north).

The steep hillsides, even by St. John standards, that flank Reef bay valley gives it an appearance of a ravine unsuited for any kind of cultivation. The appearance is deceptive, and the valley contains in addition to the small plain bordering the bay considerable acreage of near level land around the beds of the intermittent streams that wind through its floor. It has been valued as good farm land since St. John was first colonized by the Danish West Indies and Guinea Company in the early 18th century. "Old Works" at the head of the valley, one of the first sugar factories on St. John, testifies to the early settlers' appreciation of its agricultural properties.

In the 1700's the valley had six estates. Of these, the most important was Par Force that occupied the lower section of the valley including the site of the Reef Bay Great House. A smaller and less productive plantation called Reef Bay Estate adjoined it to the south and extended to the shoreline of the bay.

During the third and early years of the fourth quarter of the 18th century Par Force was owned by Anthony Zytzema. The estate had a factory as well as other buildings necessary for the production of sugar. Following Zytzema's death, Par Force was sold by the executors of his will (7th of February, 1792) to Jurco Vriehuis. Reef Bay Estate was then owned by C. Weyle, who raised cattle and cultivated cotton. Sometime prior to 1830, both estates came into the possession of John Vetter and the entire holding was devoted to the cultivation of sugar cane and went by the name of Par Force. It was inherited by A.K. Vetter in 1833. In 1844, it was acquired by A.M. Porth, who sold it the same year to L.D. Smith. Eleven years later it was taken over by O.J. Bergeest and Company and in 1864, this firm sold it by public auction to William H. Marsh, an Englishman from Tortola, who at the time was the estate manager for O.J. Bergeest and Company. He was able and acquisitive and succeeded subsequently in acquiring practically all the lands of Reef Bay valley as well as Lameshure and Carolina Estates. He made his home in the Great House of Par Force Estate but as this plantation gradually expanded to include the entire valley the name Par Force went out of use and was superseded by Reef Bay Estate.

After his death in 1909, Reef Bay Estate was inherited by his daughters. In 1951, it was sold to Frank Faulk and it was subsequently acquired by Jackson Hole Preserve and donated to the government of the United States as part of the Virgin Islands National Park.

The documentary information on the Reef Bay Great House is very sparse. The present buildings have the character and architectural details of early 19th century structures and the gate posts at the entrance bear the date of 1844. This most likely is the date of the completion of the standing structure. The cook house in front and west of the main building however predates the Great House and there are traces of an earlier structure within the basement of the main building.

From 1864 to 1951, the house was in continuous use by William Marsh and his descendants. In the latter years of occupancy by his daughters, the main building had been allowed to deteriorate and by 1951 only a section of it was habitable. The service buildings had been abandoned earlier. When the Danish architect Tyge Hvass visited Reef Bay in 1925, these buildings were already in a ruinous condition. In March 1951 the caretaker for Frank Faulk, Ridge Folk, moved in and lived there with his wife until April 1953. Although some work was done to rehabilitate the main house during their stay, it was not extensive enough to halt the effect of the near half-century of neglect.

Of the five buildings that comprise the Great House complex, two, the stable and the outbuilding, have deteriorated to a point where their original purpose is not readily discernible. Both ruins are behind and to the northeast of the main structure.

The outbuilding was a 10 foot by 10'-6", one story, masonry structure with a door on the northwest side and probably a small window in each one of the three other sides. The building was stuccoed and its cornice and the doorway had slightly projecting stucco bands, a treatment preserved in the other buildings of the site. The south corner stands to a height of 6'-9", but other walls have tumbled and only footings and wall fragments remain.

The stable is a one story masonry building measuring 14'-4" by 39'-1". It was built into the side of the hill and its near southeast wall also served as a retaining wall. Both end walls have a centered window opening 3'-0" by 3'-9" high. The front wall that has collapsed appears to have had either two or three large openings, base and top of walls were accentuated by slightly projecting stucco bands. The two remaining walls stand partially to their full height and the roof appears to have been hipped.

The cook house is located in front and to the west of the main house 10 feet below its first floor level. It was a one story masonry structure 24'-2" by 14'-2" with a dutch oven built onto the west side of the building 3'-10" from the southwest corner, 6'-2" wide and projecting 4'-3" from the outside face of the wall. The exterior walls vary in thickness from 2'-3" to 2'-6"; the interior was divided into two almost equal sized rooms without interior communication. The room to the north contained the kitchen proper with a range along the west wall and a 4' wall vent slit in the wall above it. Two doors in the east and north wall respectively provided light and additional ventilation to the interior. The south

room has one door in the east wall. There are traces of an opening in the opposite wall now blocked by the dutch oven. The south end wall of the cook house now stands only 2'-6" above the original floor level and any window opening that may have existed is lost without trace.

The cook house was plastered throughout and had the same banding of corners and openings as the other buildings of the complex.

The main interest of the cook house lies in its relative antiquity. It is indicated by the dimensions of its walls, the different texture of its masonry and the traces of remodeling in the masonry fabric as well as the signs of parging and earlier plastering under the 1844 stucco.

The servants' quarters are the best preserved of the four utility buildings. It measures 18'-5" x 14'-4" and is lined up with the cook house 8' north of it. It is a one story masonry building standing on an accentuated base, plastered throughout and with an exterior decorative banding of windows, corners and eaves. Wrought iron hitching rings at sill level are anchored in the north wall. All walls stand to full height although damaged and with only traces of the original finishes. Wood frames for the door and one of the windows are still in place. The roof was hipped and the interior floor finish was wood, both have disappeared completely but the anchorage of rafters and joists in the masonry have been preserved.

The principal building is one story with a partial basement under the north and west side of the structure. On the lower west side of the building the floor of the basement is on grade. On the south and east side the grade is at first floor level and slightly above. The building measures 35 feet by 56 feet, constructed in rubble masonry with brick lining of corners and around masonry openings. Except for pavements and steps all masonry surfaces are plastered or stuccoed. The roof is partially a flat brick roof of wood beams and partially a hipped wood roof with metal roofing. Floors are wood on wood beams. (Illustration Number 2). A large double masonry stairway leads to a small porch in front of the main entrance on the west face of the building. The brick roof of the porch is supported on four Tuscan columns. A smaller porch on two columns of similar design shields the rear entrance on the east side of the building.

Both the organization of the plan and the treatment of the elevation is unusual and without counterpart in the Virgin Islands. It is severely symmetrical around an east-west axis. Two arched galleries to the south and north flank a centercore that is accentuated by additional height and by its architectural details and the porches. The core is 4 by 5 bays with two windows on either side of the entrances and four doors leading from the interior to the south and north gallery respectively. The exterior bases and floor levels, as well as window and door openings, have stucco banding. A dentil course and a very simple *cyma recta* moulding form the cornice. The parapet wall above the cornice is divided into panels by stucco banding and the corners carry acroterions. The flanking galleries have stucco banding of corners and base, stucco panels above and below the arches, keystones, spring mouldings, parapet mouldings and on the parapet domed finials and acroterions. A similar detailing is given the porches. The plaster work is fairly well executed.

In the interior, a central hallway leads straight through the building. A long narrow room along the east wall connects the north and south galleries. In addition, there are two rooms on either side of the central hall. The trim around door and window openings of the interior, as well as cornice mouldings are in plaster. The design is sophisticated, extremely formal and carefully thought out in detail and would be somewhat formidable if it was not leavened by the equally carefully considered site planning.

A terrace in front of the main house separates it from the cook house and servants quarters built at the lower level. The terrace is bounded to the west by retaining walls from 1' to 12' high topped by circular masonry pillars that once were the posts for an iron fence. Access to the terrace is from the north by three steps and a gate between two 10'-3" ornamental masonry gateposts. Immediately inside the gate steps lead to a semicircular terrace centered on the north elevation. The front terrace continues 45 feet beyond the Great House and ends in a raised gazebo. A retaining wall and steps separated the yard south of the building from the front terrace.

The yard south of the building continues behind the building and was apparently intended to be approximately 7 feet above the front terrace. It is narrow and irregular in shape and bounded to the east by the steep hillside and exposed rock ledges. Immediately behind the house a 3' retaining wall parallel with the building and 16' from it gave definition to the rear yard. Steps in the northeast corner led down to the area north of the Great House and provided easy access to the stable and outbuilding to the east from the rear entrance of the building. The retaining walls and staircases, where they are still standing, have the same stucco band decoration as observed on the buildings.

The total effect, although very decorative, is saved from fuzziness by the restraint and rigidity of the architecture. These same qualities combine with the irregularity of the terrain to form an exceptionally successful design.

The main house is still under roof and with all walls standing. Although woodwork including rafters and beams have deteriorated beyond repair and exterior finishes and details are much coarsened by the general deterioration and in many cases are fragmentary only, it is still apparent that Reef Bay Great House is the most important architectural monument on St. John and a significant example of Virgin Islands architecture. Considered in connection with the remains of Reef Bay Sugar Factory and the various ruins within the confines of Reef Bay valley it ranks as the most complete exhibit of the plantation economy within the Virgin Islands.

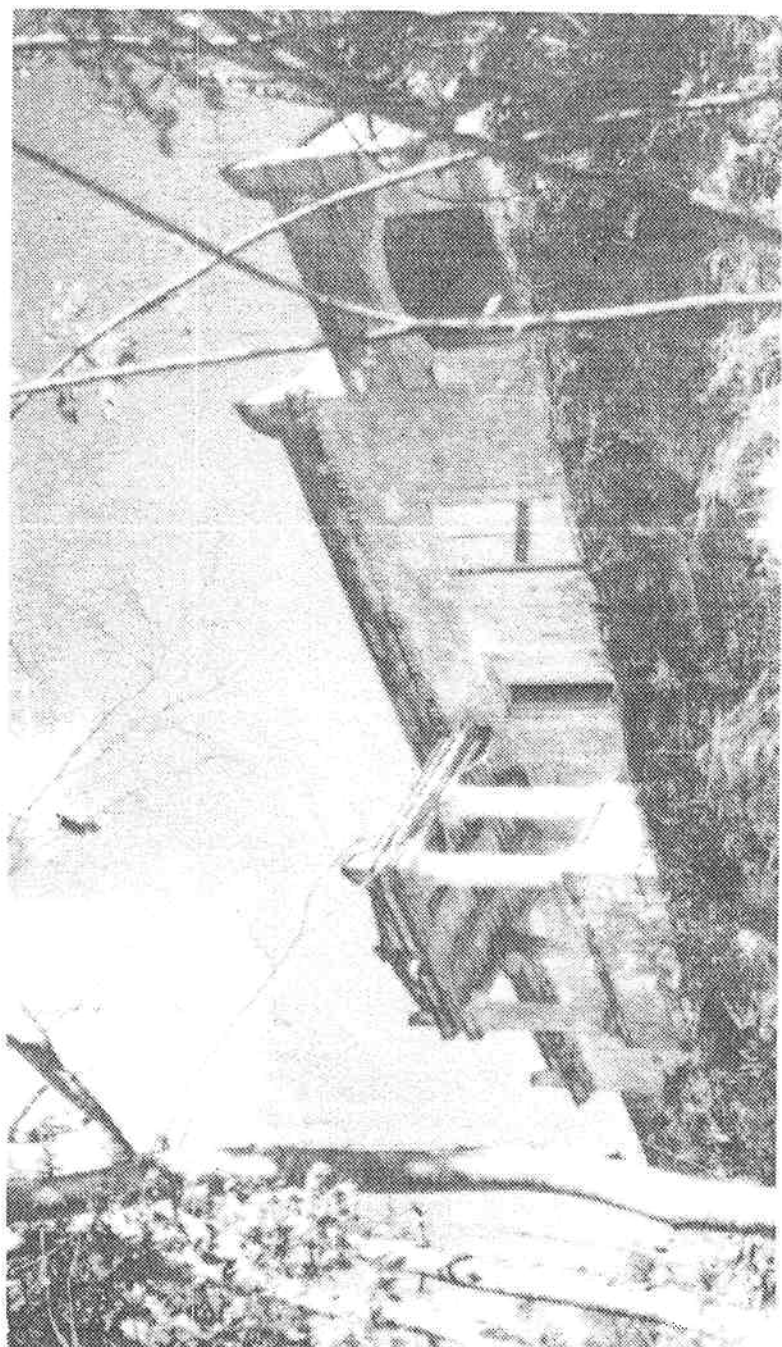
Its isolation and general inaccessibility has both protected the structure and precluded its restoration. Over the years the National Park Service has strapped the exterior walls, shored interior archways and taken other steps to insure the protection of the structure, and the building has been included in both the Historic American Building Survey and on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Great House viewed from the southwest. The staircase leading up to the front porch and the basement story is hidden by the retaining wall of the front terrace. Note the tracing of the stucco banding and the retaining wall (foreground) and the architectural treatment of the gallery and the porch.

Historic American Buildings Survey Photo

Photographer: Jack Boucher

January 1960



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A narrow road now nothing more than a footpath leads from the north and entrance side of the Great House around the tip of the spur and descends through a series of switch-backs on the south face of the hill to the Lameshure-Reef Bay Trail. 350 yards north and below this junction, the Lameshure Trail runs into the old Reef Bay Road connecting Reef Bay Estate Sugar Factory (3/4 miles south) and Centerline Road (1 1/2 miles north).

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The total effect, although very decorative, is saved from fuzziness by the restraint and rigidity of the architecture. These same qualities combine with the irregularity of the terrain to form an exceptionally successful design.

The main house is still under roof and with all walls standing. Although woodwork including rafters and beams have deteriorated beyond repair and exterior finishes and details are much coarsened by the general deterioration and in many cases are fragmentary only, it is still apparent that Reef Bay Great House is the most important architectural monument on St. John and a significant example of Virgin Islands architecture. Considered in connection with the remains of Reef Bay Sugar Factory and the various ruins within the confines of Reef Bay valley it ranks as the most complete exhibit of the plantation economy within the Virgin Islands.

Its isolation and general inaccessibility has both protected the structure and precluded its restoration. Over the years the National Park Service has strapped the exterior walls, shored interior archways and taken other steps to insure the protection of the structure, and the building has been included in both the Historic American Building Survey and on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Great House viewed from the southwest. The staircase leading up to the front porch and the basement story is hidden by the retaining wall of the front terrace. Note the tracing of the stucco banding and the retaining wall (foreground) and the architectural treatment of the gallery and the porch.

Historic American Buildings Survey Photo

Photographer: Jack Boucher

January 1960

