

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 31 1977

DATE ENTERED JUN 23 1978

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Lameshur Plantation

AND/OR COMMON

Lameshur

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Reef Bay Quarter, South Shore

CITY, TOWN

St. John

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Virgin Islands

STATE

Virgin Islands

CODE

078

COUNTY

St. John

CODE

0700

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☒ ENTERTAINMENT☒ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (if applicable)

Southeast Region, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

1895 Phoenix Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Atlanta

VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, Office of Lieutenant Governor

STREET & NUMBER

King Street, Government Hill

CITY, TOWN

Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas

STATE

Virgin Islands

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Resource Management Plan, Virgin Islands National Park

DATE

June 1973

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS

Virgin Islands National Park

CITY, TOWN

P. O. Box 806, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas

STATE

Virgin Islands

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☒ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Preservation

Lameshur Plantation H-22

Lameshur Plantation is located on the south shore of St. John behind Little Lameshur Bay. The remains of the buildings and structures of the plantation are clustered in two groups. One is located along the shoreline of the central and western section of the bay and the second on the hillside north of it. In general the condition of the remains is poor and in some cases so deteriorated that their original functions are no longer apparent. One building is presently occupied by a Park Ranger and it as well as the others, that until recent years were in use, have been considerably modified by alterations and additions. The ruins and other remains of the plantation represent a wide range of land uses from the agricultural pursuits of cultivation of cotton and sugar cane to bay oil production, retirement residence and park use as well as a time span stretching from the mid 18th century to the present. Although the remains are not distinctive or of architectural merit they are of interest as the reflection of a broad scope of St. John's development history.

1. Horsemill (H-22, 1)

The horsemill is an earthfill circular platform approximately 60 feet in diameter. Its east side is on the level of the existing grade while toward the south, west and north it is defined by the rubble slopes of its original retaining walls. Towards the south and southwest fragments of the original retaining wall have been preserved and a 5 foot section of the wall that carried the cane juice gutter extending from the horse mill to the factory towards the south is still standing. The horsemill was in existence by 1800 and the present structure probably dates from the mid-19th century.

Significance

Third Order

Recommended Treatment

Preservation

Preliminary Cost Estimate

\$2,800.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

2. Sugar Factory (H-22, 2)

The remains of the sugar factory is located 17 feet south of the horsemill. Although a section of the wall at the southern most corner of the factory still stand to plate height the original building is ill defined due to collapse or demolition of the east and the upper section of the south wall and due to later additions and adaptations of the remains.

The original layout of the factory included an enclosed boiling house 32 feet wide by 42 feet long with a boiling bench along the west wall. A 13 foot wide and 28 feet long firing

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☒ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☒ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☒ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Third Order

Lameshur Plantation was brought under cultivation early in the 18th century and by 1780 when it was owned by Octavius Nibbs it had the basic facilities for sugar production and approximately 100 acres under cultivation. On April 25, 1789 an advertisement in the Royal Danish American Gazette for the probation of the estate of Octavius Nibbs refers to Lameshur as a cotton plantation and later in the century when his heirs were forced to put the estate up for auction it is again referred to as a cotton plantation. Presumably the sugar production was found to be nonviable at an early date and the existing factory and horsemill are consequently early examples for St. John of these types of structures. Although the 1800 Oxholm map indicate that about a quarter of the cultivated land had reverted to bush, it also shows additional buildings on the east boundaries of the estate although remains of these have not been located. At an unknown date during the early or mid-1800s the present Lameshur Great House replaced the plantation house as the principal residence of the estate and presumably during the same period the emphasis was shifted from cotton to cattle and subsequently at the turn of the century to Bay Oil and Lime Oil production. Although the building remains of Lameshur Plantation are with three exceptions in poor condition and not distinctive or of special architectural merit they represent a wide variety of agricultural pursuits over more than one and half century.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Oxholm Survey of St. John 1780, National Archives, Copenhagen, Denmark
Oxholm May of St. John 1800, Congressional Library, Washington, D. C.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 25

UTM REFERENCES

A  ZONE  EASTING  NORTHING

C  ZONE  EASTING  NORTHING

B  

D  

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

NW	Latitude	Longitude
NW	18°19'28"	64°43'45"
NE	18°19'28"	64°43'33"
SW	18°19'17"	64°43'45"
SE	18°19'17"	64°43'33"

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Frederik C. Gjessing, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Virgin Islands National Park

DATE _____

June 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P. O. Box 806, Charlotte Amalie

(809) 775-2050

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

St. Thomas,

Virgin Islands

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X

NO_____

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is _____ National _____ State 1 Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE *[Signature]* MAY 25 1977

TITLE

DATE _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST:

~~DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE _____

DATE _____

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Lameshur Plantation

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER H-22, 2 PAGE 2

trench at a lower level terminated in a storage and curing room at the southwest corner of the building. The storage and curing room was converted into a cistern 13 feet square at a slightly lower level than the firing trench. The trench was roofed and the remains of the four 2 feet square piers that supported the roof are still apparent as are the remains of the footings of the flue and chimney at the northwest corner of the factory. At an unknown date after the discontinuance of the sugar production and after the collapse or demolition of the factory the south and north wall of the boiling house were extended eastward 15 feet and connected by a 4 foot high rubble masonry wall with a gate in the added east wall 8 feet from the northeast corner to form a cattle pen. The added east wall was extended 12 feet north to connect with a freestanding cistern 9 x 16 feet. Subsequently a wood shed 19 x 11 feet was erected against the old wall of the factory between it and the horsemill.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$3,000.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

3. Plantation House (H-22, 3)

A one story masonry building that until quite recently was used as a Park Ranger residence and is still under roof is located 35 feet east of the factory.

The main body of the building is a rectangle 31 by 17 feet covered by a low gable roof. A six foot wide masonry staircase that wraps around the southwest corner of the building provides access to a 16 by 11 foot terrace at near roof level on the south side of the building. The terrace is supported on heavy rubble masonry walls and a vaulted chambre on the ground floor level. A shed roof on wood posts anchored into the masonry railings of the terrace provides shade and protection against rain.

An eight by eleven foot cistern is built against the east wall of the terrace and the main body of the building and a still nine and a half by 12 feet adjoins the east side of the cistern giving the plantation house the overall dimensions of 44 x 28 feet. The walls of both the cistern and the still are 6 feet high or about half as high as the walls of the main body of the building except for the chimney of the still built against the southeast corner of the main body and rising 3 feet above its walls. Access to the single room interior of the main body is by two doors in respectively the east and west gable ends and ventilation is provided by one window in the south wall over the cistern and three windows in the north wall.

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Both the still and the cistern are additions to the original structure which seems to have been preserved in the main body and in the masonry staircase. In its original form the plantation house appears to have had a masonry ground floor (the main body) supporting a wood second floor that contained the residence proper and was reached by the very substantial and pretentious staircase.

The date of the original structure is not certain but it is assumed to be late 18th or early 19th century and the additions of the still and cistern mid to late nineteenth century.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$10,000.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

4. Residence (H-22,4)

Located 20 feet southeast of the plantation house is a one story rectangular rubble masonry building 19 by 28 feet still covered by a gable roof.

Although now used for storage it contained until recently the bath and two bedrooms of the Park Ranger's residence. Its original functions and age is not known but presumably it was part of the early development of the site.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$4,000.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

5. Unidentified Building No. 1 (H-22,5)

The barely discernible remains of a rectangular building is located 40 feet north east of the plantation house. It consists of a north-south rubble masonry wall approximately 36 feet long and parallel with it and 15' east of it a row of 2 feet square pillars about 9 feet apart. The remains just barely broke the surface of the existing grade and can not be traced to their full extent. The building may have been part of a stable or wagon shed.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$800.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

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6. Unidentified Building No. 2 (H-22, 6)

The remains of a rectangular building 35 by 12 feet oriented east-west is located 50 feet due south of the Plantation House. The rubble masonry walls of the southeast corner stand 4 feet above grade while the rest of the wall barely broke the surface of existing grade. Its function is not known. It appears to be an early construction and with the plantation (H-22, 3), residence (H-22, 4) and the factory (H-22, 2) formed a fairly well defined yard.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$800.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

7. Cattle Dip (H-22, 7)

A rectangular shallow sunken basin constructed in concrete measuring approximately 6 by 10 feet, with a ramp leading into the basin from the west side is located within the walls of unidentified building No. 2 (H-22, 6). It is a late addition to the site probably late 1800s or early 1900s and probably post dating the collapse of unidentified building No. 2 (H-22, 6).

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$100.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

8. Bay Oil Still (H-22, 8)

A fairly well preserved Bay Oil Still is located 17 feet north of the Plantation House (H-22, 3). It is a plastered brick and rubble masonry structure 9 by 20 feet raised from 3 to 5 feet above the sloping grade and with a 14 foot high 4 feet square chimney centered on the west long side. The two large circular straight sided pots of the still are in place while firing doors on the east face of the still have deteriorated and the masonry around them failed.

The structure probably dates from around the turn of the century.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$1,000.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

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CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER H-22, 9 PAGE 5

9. Well and Drinking Troughs (H22, 9)

A well and two drinking troughs are located 70 feet west north west of the factory in the flat below the hill on which the factory is sited.

The well is a circular plastered rubble masonry shaft 8 feet in diameter. A drinking trough 3 feet 6 inches wide circles the well. The trough is raised 2 feet above surrounding grade and the well shaft an additional 2 feet above the trough.

A second linear drinking trough 24' by 4 feet oriented north south is 7 feet north of the well. It is finished in a cement plaster and is of a later date than the well.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$300.00

Latitude 18°19'20" Longitude 64°43'40"

The factory site of Lameshur Plantation has in addition to the historic structures described above two recently added buildings. A 7 by 7 foot metal storage shed is located next to the horsemill just north of the factory and a trailer placed between the road and the Bay Oil Still and oriented southwest northeast. The trailer extends partially over the remains of Unidentified Building No. 1 (H-22, 5).

10. Great House (H-22, 10)

Lameshur Plantation Great House and its associated service buildings are located on a spur of the hillside 300 yards northeast of the factory. The Great House is a rectangular one story masonry structure 32 by 61 feet oriented east-west with a wing extending 13 feet south and 10 feet west of the main body of the building and connecting it with an above grade masonry covered cistern 11 by 21 feet on the sloping ground southwest of the building. The northern two-thirds of the main body of the great house has a hipped roof that on the south side continues into a shed roof. The wing to the south and west is covered with a shed roof sloping west. The roofing throughout is corrugated metal. The front of the building faces south and overlooks Lameshur Bay. Steps lead up to an enclosed porch that occupies the center half of the south side of the house and is embellished by four squat columns faintly reminiscent of ~~mayan~~ forebearers supporting the shed roof above it.

A 7 foot wide paved terrace runs along the northside of the building. Two masonry staircases lead from the terrace down to the lower grades north of the Great House.

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A 12 by 29 foot paved terrace extends east from the building and is defined by cast concrete balustrades. The terrace is covered by a pergola supported on square concrete posts. At its east end where the level of the terrace is 4 feet above the grade a masonry staircase leads down to the access road that from the Lameshur-Bordeaux trail west and north of the Great House branches off to pass east and south of the building.

Lameshur Great House in spite of several attractive features and a spectacular location is architecturally odd in character. There are obvious and numerous additions and alterations to the building to an extent that they have blurred its original plan and appearance. The building was last remodeled in the early 1950s to provide three bedrooms with individual baths which further obscured the plan organization of the structure.

It is in fair condition and currently serves as a Park Rangers residence.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$20,000.00

Latitude 18°19'26" Longitude 64°43'36"

11. Cook House (H-22, 11)

The ruins of a cook house is located approximately 40 feet east of the Great House. The rubble masonry walls of the north and east side of the building stand 6 feet above grade while the south and west walls have collapsed.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$800.00

Latitude 18°19'26" Longitude 64°43'36"

12. Service Building (H-22, 12)

The ruins of a building is located downhill and approximately 30 feet southeast of the Great House. Only two of its rubble masonry walls are still standing. Its original functions have not been determined. It may have been servants quarters or possibly a small stable.

Significance	Third Order
Recommended Treatment	Preservation
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$800.00

Latitude 18°19'26" Longitude 64°43'36"

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Lameshur Plantation H-22, 13)
CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER PAGE 7

13. Cemetery (H-22, 13)

A small undefined cemetery is located immediately east of the intersection between the Bordeaux-Lameshur trail and the roadway to the Great House. It contains 4 monuments two of a conventional sarcophagus type and two with arched tops and tapered sides. The monuments are in fair to poor condition.

Significance
Recommended Treatment
Preliminary Cost Estimate

Third Order
Preservation
\$400.00

Latitude 18°19'26" Longitude



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TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Lameshur Plantation

AND/OR COMMON

Lameshur

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN ^{Reef}
~~Coral~~ Bay Quarter

____ VICINITY OF

COUNTY
St. John

STATE
Virgin Islands

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT F. C. Gjessing

DATE OF PHOTO September, 1971

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Virgin Islands National Park

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
Bay Oil Still viewed from the east.

PHOTO NO.
1 of 8



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Reef
Coral Bay Quarter

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY

St. John

STATE

Virgin Islands

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

F. C. Gjessing

DATE OF PHOTO

September, 1971

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Old Plantation House viewed from the south with
Bay Oil Still to the right.

PHOTO NO.

2 of 36



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Reef Goral Bay Quarter

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3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

F. C. Gjessing

DATE OF PHOTO

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Storage wing of factory viewed from the east.

PHOTO NO.

3 of 3



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Great House H-22, 10 northside of Great House viewed from
the southwest.

PHOTO NO. 4 of 6



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East side of Great House H-22, 10 showing part of terrace
and pergola.

PHOTO NO. 5 of 6



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Cook House H-22, 11 viewed from the southwest.

PHOTO NO. 6 of 6