

Government House
Kongens Gade 21-22
Charlotte Amalie
St. Thomas
Virgin Islands

HABS No. VI-17

HABS
VI
3-CHAM,
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

HABS No. VI-17

HABS
VI
3-CHAM
8-

Address: Kongens Gade 21-22, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Present Owner: Government of the Virgin Islands.

Present Occupant: Governor of the Virgin Islands.

Present Use: Governor's office and residence.

Statement of Significance: This large, imposing building has been the center of official life in St. Thomas since its erection in the mid 1860's.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: The Government House was built originally by the Colonial Council of St. Thomas and St. John, the governing body of the island under the Danish rule, as a residence for the Vice Governor of the Danish West Indies who served also as President of the Colonial Council of St. Thomas and St. John. The Vice Governor resided in Charlotte Amalie, the Governor resided in St. Croix. The building continued to serve its original use after transfer of the Islands to the United States in 1917, and became the residence of the Governor under United States administration in the 1930's.
2. Date of erection: Discussions on replacing the existing Government House of 1819, which was in dilapidated condition, began in the Colonial Council in the Spring of 1864. The first proposal, to buy the late Vice-Governor Berg's house, "Catharineberg" (now called Denmark Hill, see HABS write-up No. VI-12), was rejected after discussion. The earliest known formal proposal (to build the present building on the site of the earlier one) by the Commission for the construction of the new Government House is dated 10 June 1864. Work on the new building began in August 1864 and the cornerstone laid in a ceremony on 8 April 1865. Work was interrupted with the death of the original contractor, Richard Bright, in 1866, and the building was finally completed and in use September 1867.

3. Architect: The Colonial Council took direct control of the building of the new Government house, appointing special commissions to various purposes as indicated in the documents below. The commission report of 10 June 1864 was signed by four men: "Strandgaard, Geo Tucker, R. Bright, Otto Marstrand." There are several references to an unlocated drawing by Otto Marstrand who apparently was chiefly responsible for the design. He was not a professional architect, but a merchant and a member of the Council. Strandgaard, a Major in the Danish army, was Building Inspector for St. Thomas and St. John. He was frequently consulted in the course of construction, and should probably be credited with the detailed execution of Marstrand's plan. Richard Bright was a master carpenter ("tømmermester"), and took the original contract for the construction of the building. Richard Bright died in July or August 1866 at which point the roof was on and the floors in, but finishing and interior work uncompleted. Bright was replaced by George Nunes and Co.
4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: See documents in primary sources of Information.
5. Notes on original plan and construction of building: See documents in Primary sources of information.
6. Notes on known alterations and additions: The interior of the building has been heavily remodeled as noted in the description. Among other items (mentioned in the documents on the construction of the house) that have been lost in this remodeling are the murals painted in the entrance vestibule by the itinerant Danish painter Frederick Visby.

B. Sources of Information

Primary sources

1. The following transcriptions are extracted from Proceedings of the Colonial Council of St. Thomas and St. John. The Proceedings were published in Danish, with an official English translation in parallel columns for the convenience of those members of the Council who did not understand Danish. The following quotes are from the official English translation. The Proceedings were consulted on microfilm in the St.

Thomas Public Library.

a. Draft of the Colonial Budget. . . for the
Financial Year from the 1st of April, 1864, to
the 31st of March, 1865:

.
H. For Buildings and Uncertain Expenses. . . \$26,700
.

2. 18 April 1864: . . .

3rd member for St. Thomas [PHILIPS] . . . At the
same time he spoke against the purchase of Vice-
Governor Berg's late residence for a Government
House and requested the right of having his ob-
jections entered in full in the protocol.

1st member for St. Thomas [ROSENSTAND] replied that
that the honorable last speaker as member of the Com-
mittee had already had sufficient opportunity to ex-
press himself in the report: With regard to his re-
marks concerning the miserable condition of the house
and road leading to it, he did not think them well
founded, but would not deny that it is very flatter-
ing to the Vice-Governor to learn that the public
was so interested in him not to see him reside so
far from them, but that there were certain moments
when having terminated the work he would be wishfull
to retire from public life for a while. . . .

4th member for St. Thomas [BENNETT]. . .The idea of
purchasing Vice-Governor Berg's house he also dis-
approved and recommended to build a Government House
on the same spot where the present one now stands.

.

The amount of \$12,000 demanded for Vice-Governor Berg's
house was not at all high as the building is strong and
solid and was not built for less than the tripple of
that amount, and when the requisite additional build-
ing was made, the community would have a handsome and
not too far distant Government House for about \$19,000,
which would save a great deal as the erection of a new
Government House by persons able to judge was esti-
mated to cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000, besides
which it would be much against his wish to have his

private dwelling in the same buildings as the public offices.

Herewith the first discussion was closed.

3. 21 April 1864: . . .

The Chairman produced the different amendments ad IIC. viz:

-
- d) from the majority of the Committee, proposing the erection of a Government House on the same site where the present building is standing.

The Vice-Governor With regard to the proposed purchase of late Vice-Governor Berg's house, he proved that this would be a clear profit to the community of \$13000 in comparison to the other proposal, viz: the pulling down of the present Government House and the erecting of a new one, which work besides, would last at least two years, during which time he had to rent a suitable private dwelling in town. Finally he mentioned that in the West Indies the Governors generally reside outside of town.

3rd Member for St. Thomas (PHILIPS) stuck to his former opinion with regard to the purchase of Governor Berg's house, and remarked that the surrounding ground was now partly divided in small parcels, which by degrees would be filled with small negro houses, which would not embellish it situation. Besides, he referred to his former expressions, and decidedly disrecommended the purchase.

1st Member of St. Thomas (ROSENSTAND) defended his vote of minority in the committee report, and showed that the community in buying Vice-Governor Berg's house, with little difficulty and proportionally small expenses would acquire a Government house with even a better road leading to it than that leading to the present Government House, and that, if the road was found to be too narrow it could easily be made broader with little expense. This proposal he considered the cheapest and besides the quickest manner to procure the President a suitable dwelling, and worthy of recommendation.

2nd Member for St. Thomas (LUCCHETTI) would not absolutely insist upon the President's residing in town, but would only disrecommend the purchase of the beforementioned house on account of its unfit position for a Government House; he did not think it difficult to find another more suitable residence, either in the town itself, or in the vicinity of the same, and remarked, that in case the purchase of this house should be resolved upon it would be quite contrary to the general wish of the population.

The final discussion closed and the amendments were put to a vote.

- d) the amendment of the majority of the committee concerning the purchase of late Vice-Governor Berg's property was adopted by 5 votes against 2.

The 2nd member for St. Thomas abstained from voting on the last subject.

The 1st member for St. Thomas (ROSENSTAND) reserved his vote of minority to be inserted in the final Report on the proposed purchase of late Vice-Governor Berg's property.

4. 23 April 1864: . . .

1. The Council's Report on the Budget for St. Thomas and St. John's for the financial year 1864-65.
2. The Report from the minority in the Committee concerning the Government House.

Ad H. Buildings and other uncertain expenses:--

In the item of \$26,700 is included \$8000, as explained in the motives as part of the purchase sum of \$12,000 for the purchase of the late Vice-Governor Berg's property, which it is proposed to buy as a residence for the Vice-Governor, \$7000 for a required additional building and \$2500 for furniture. To this arrangement the Government has given its preference rather than to what was earlier contemplated, namely to erect a three story building for the Vice-Governor on the site where the old and delapidated Government House now stands; in addition to which the Government has contemplated that the spot where the last mentioned building stands, could be later used for the erection thereon of a building to contain office for the Vice-

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 6)

Governor, an assembly room for the Colonial Council, and rooms for offices for all the employes under the administration, which would then in reality become the Government House, while the abovementioned house to be purchased would become the Vice-Governor's dwelling.

On this subject, two different opinions have arisen in the Council, viz: a majority of 5 and a minority of 2 members.

The majority must remark that the purchase sum asked for the property of the late Vice-Governor Berg, is more than the real value of the property; in as much as the building is old and in certain respects dilapidated, and the 10 acres land,--some say only 7--both in consequence of its situation and nature, is not of much value, besides which, it does not afford a convenient place for additional buildings. The expenses to be incurred for arranging a commodious private dwelling for the Vice-Governor, would, in the opinion of the majority, far exceed what has been estimated according to the statement afforded, which, in as far as can be seen is not based on any precise and detailed examination. But independent of the foregoing the majority must declare itself opposed to the purchase of the property for the use intended. It would naturally become the place, wherein the Vice-Governor on festive occasions, would give dinner parties and balls, for which latter purpose the house does not afford a saloon sufficiently large, nor can such a one be brought about in consequence of the arrangement of the building. But besides this there is this important circumstance to be noticed, the house is situated too remote for that part of the public, who are to participate in the festivities. From the Main Street in town, which must be regarded as the starting point for the plurality, the road leading to the house is about an English mile, running along a slope of the hill; this road is so narrow that two carriages cannot pass each other; and it can only be enlarged by cutting in the hill at considerable outlay, as also the keeping it in repair would entail no inconsiderable expense. Even the surroundings of the place are everything but agreeable. On the one side the land is parcelled out in small lots, on which small and not embellishing houses will be erected, and on the other side a stock estate to which the road is the same

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 7)

that is to be used to and from the property in question. The other alternative, namely the erection of a Government House on the site where the present one exists, is preferable. On this spot a handsome, airy and commodious dwelling can be erected which can at the same time be used for the festivities consequent on the official charge of the Vice-Governor; the access to the spot is easy for the public, even for those going thither on foot. The majority has not contemplated that the public offices should be contained in that building, but for the erection of a building for public offices, &c. more convenient and easier of access to the public, the Government has at its disposal the necessary land, on the spot called the "Old Commandant-hill," which spot has earlier been selected for such a building. With regard to the expenses attendant on either of the two places, the majority considers it doubtful, whether they would, every thing maturely considered, be much greater if the proposal of the majority is adopted, but even if such should be the case, it is opined, it ought not to be rejected, for the tax-payers would rather submit to an increased expense towards the realisation of the proposal of the majority, than to see the plan for the purchase of Berg's property carried through. Our daily intercourse with the public, has convinced us that our views on the matter is general.

In consequence of the foregoing the majority would beg to submit that the purchase of the late Vice-Governor Berg's house as a dwelling for the Vice-Governor be not carried into effect, but that a new and suitable dwelling for him be erected on the site where the old Government House now stands.

The minority (ROSENSTAND AND MOURIER) must remark:

In order to procure the Vice-Governor a suitable dwelling as also room for the Presidency's offices and an assembly hall for the Colonial Council, the majority of the Council has proposed that the present Government House be pulled down and on its site a three story building be erected, which is estimated to cost \$25000.

The Government has proposed the purchase of the late Vice-Governor Berg house with adjoining land, which can

be obtained for the sum of \$12000, but which will require an additional building estimated to cost \$7000, in all \$19000, an arrangement that will render the present Government House available for offices, &c. The plan of the majority will cost \$6000, plus the Government House, more, than the plan of the Government. The new Government House proposed by the majority will not be ready for use at an earlier period than two years, during which time the Vice-Governor must be furnished with a temporary dwelling, whereas the house proposed by the Government can be immediately occupied. It can not be agreeable to the Vice-Governor to have his dwelling in the same building which will also contain public rooms. These rooms would be in the building proposed by the majority, necessarily become more confined than it, as proposed by the Government, the whole of the present Government House is disposable for that purpose. Now, therefore, the house recommended by the Government, being close to the town with a good carriage road leading to it, even better than to the present Government House, the minority can not judge otherwise, than that the plan of the Government is in every respect preferable to that proposed by the majority.

5. Colonial Council Budget Committee Report on the Draft of the Colonial Budget. . . for the Financial Year 1865-66:

.....

With regard to the buildings to be erected, your Committee proposes that a member of the Colonial Council be elected to join whoever may be charged with the control of those works and most especially the erection of the Government House, and building the newly projected King's Wharf, . . .

Ad. G.--Expenses for buildings and other uncertain expenses. 29,300 00

REMARKS.--SPECIFICATION OF ITEM G.

For completing the new dwelling for the President.....	\$11,556 97
Furniture &c. for the same.....	1,600 00
For extending the so called King's Wharf.....	5,527 00

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 9)

Various Repairs to Buildings &c.....	1,900 00
The bridge across Lange's Gut.....	725 00
Rent of buildings and public offices.....	3,854 50
For attending to the cemeteries &c.....	400 00
Uncertain Expenses.....	3,400 00
For promoting the cultivation of bees	<u>320 00</u>

\$29,283 47

11. Proposed by the Committee.

Ad G.--To be added: "to be used in accordance with the specification in the remarks to the Money Bill."

"The grant of the money herein posted for the accomplishment of the Government house and for the extension of the King's Wharf to be made on condition that a member of the Council be appointed to join the controlling committees for the proper execution of these Works."

6. 19 October 1865: . . .

The Council thereafter proceeded to the 4th item on the order of the day.

"Interrogation of the 4th member for St. Thomas
"and St. John's to the Vice-Governor concerning
"the discontinuation of the works at the new Government house."

The Council having silently consented to the interrogation announced by the 4th member for St. Thomas, said member stated, that since he had written the letter, that had been read by the Secretary, a commission had been appointed to give an opinion on certain questions concerning the new Government house. The honor had been conferred on him to be nominated a member thereof owing to the resignation of the Chairman, who had thought it better to insinuate to the Governor, that the 4th member might be put in his place. This he had not been aware of, when he accepted of his nomination. The motives, however, for which he had expressed the wish to ask for some information about the suspension of the works at the new Government house, did yet exist. The works had been stopped for more than a month and none of the members of the Council knew as yet the cause, why the Government had taken such a determination. The Council, he believed, had a right to be informed, the moment the order to suspend the works had been given, because the Colonial Council had voted the funds for the erection of

said building, and if additional funds should be required-- as it had the appearance--in order to finish the building, the demand would have to be made to the Colonial Council. Therefore the Council should not have been kept ignorant of what had happened, but ought to have been immediately informed of the difficulties, which had arisen and had caused the suspension of the works.

From the proceedings of the Colonial Council of last year, he further said it could be ascertained that two opinions had divided the Council--the minority advising to purchase the residence of the late Vice-Governor Berg, and the majority proposing to allow \$25000 to rebuild a Government house on the spot of the old one. The latter opinion had been adopted, but nothing indicated that a plan had ever been presented to the Colonial Council. If such had been omitted it was a fault, because all the blame and all the responsibility must now fall exclusively on those who had accepted the plan, whilst otherwise the responsibility could have been shared with the Colonial Council, if that body had given its sanction to it.

The same member asked further, why the undertaking of the work had not been announced for general competition, why no tenders had been called in as customary for all public works. The authorities having deviated from that rule, the 4th member thought, he had a right to presume that, if it had been observed, \$4,000 to \$5,000 could have been saved. A fact which supported his supposition was this, that four or five months after having signed the contract with the President the contractor had consented to another contract by which he promised to take over a certain quantity of materials at prices, which the speaker could not all consider advantageous for him, as for instance a lot of galvanized iron--without any specification of quantity--which, to judge from the purchase sum, must contain the double quantity of what would suffice to cover the roof of the Government house.

His remarks the speaker finally comprised into the following three questions:

Why the plan of the building had not been submitted to the Colonial Council, before the works were commenced?

Why the erection of the building had not been offered for competition? and

Why the Council had not in due time been informed of the cause, why the works were suspended?

The President stated, that the examination of the matter, which had occasioned this interrogation, was at present by the Administration referred to a Committee, which the 4th member for St. Thomas at the Presidency's request had joined.

The report of said Committee ought to be awaited and would later, when received be brought to the knowledge of the Council together with different other questions concerning the same subject.

7. 2 December 1865: . . .

Thereafter came a proposal from the Chairman, that all members of the Council should go in a committee to examine: The contract about the erection of the Government house, the contract with the firm GEO. NUNES & Co., &c. The proposal was recommended by the 3rd and 7th members for St. Thomas, whilst the 4th Member stated his doubts of the expediency of the intended measure. At the voting the proposal was unanimously adopted.

8. 19 January 1866: . . .

His Excellency having requested the word before the Council entered upon the order of the day, then said, that the Presidency believed that it owed to the Council a communication with regard to the cause of the interruption in the erection of the Government house, which had been decided upon some months ago. This as the Council are aware, was mainly occasioned by it being found, that the staircase proposed to lead to the second story of the building, would not fulfill the demands which ought to be made for such an edifice, partly owing to the construction being unsuitable, and partly owing to its position and light. As said deficiencies were unanimously acknowledged to exist by a commission, whose opinion had been requested on the matter, who also examined another plan for the construction of the stair-case and which the majority then thought that it could recommend. As a negotiation had been entered into with the Contractor for the work about the expenses attending the erection of this stair-case, it appeared that these, in several ways, would surpass the amount for the building, as stipulated by

the contract, and cause an increase in the sum fixed for buildings, by the Budget for 1865-66. The same it was presumed, would be the case with regard to divers other plans for the building of other stair-cases, which were also made matters for consideration. As a sketch was then received from Mr. MARSTRAND,--who had drawn the adopted plan for the building,--according to which a stair-case could be built at the same cost as originally estimated, and which, according to the opinion of the Inspector of buildings and other judges of the matter,--would believe the deficiencies with regard to position and light from which the original stair-case suffered and which would not occupy a larger space of the building, than the latter,--it was resolved upon to adopt the erection as recommended by Mr. MARSTRAND, and which the Contractor was willing to execute, without any increase in the amount contracted. The few very insignificant modifications, which the re-commencement of the work made necessary, have thence been fixed by an addition to the contract, which is signed by the Presidency, and MR. BRIGHT,--in accordance with which the work has already been recommended, and will be continued after the originally approved plan, and without going beyond the amount which has been entered on the Budget. The modified sketch as well as the aforesaid addition to the contract would be communicated the Council.

9. 18 May 1866

"Letter from the Presidency, dated 13th April 1866, whereby the Council's sanction is solicited for the renewal of the Contract with Mr. W. C. Carpenter, concerning the rent of the President's temporary residence for one year, and for a monthly rent of \$100."

The Vice-Governor explained, that the owner of the said residence had given the three months' notice to leave according to the Contract; but that he was willing to renew it for an enhanced rent; that he had been treated with in consequence thereof, and that he demands the present monthly rent of \$75 augmented to \$100 from the 1st July next. As it is considered very in-opportune, and expensive to move and as the Government house will soon be completed, be solicited the Council's sanction to renew the contract for one year, and with the monthly rent of \$1000, as demanded, from 1st July ensuing.

The 7th member for St. Thomas [Hjernö] said, that according to the contract for the erection of the Government-house, the roof was to have been laid before the 31st March 1865, and the building to have been finished previous to the 31st March this year. He would thank His Excellency for some elucidation when it could be expected to see the Government-house completed.

The Vice-Governor replied, that he was not at present prepared to give any such elucidations. The work, as was well-known, had been stopped for several months, but notwithstanding that, it would hardly be expected that the work would be completed before the expiration of a year; the roof had now been laid, and the works on the interior part of the building, were being proceeded with without any interruption.

10. Draft of the Colonial Budget. . . for the Financial Year 1866-67: . . .
G. Buildings and other Uncertain Expenses. . . \$25,660.00
11. 9 August 1866: . . .

The Council then proceeded to as No. 10.

Letter from the Presidency of 4th August 1866, communicating to the Council, that the surplus with which the actual revenues of the Colonial Treasury exceeded the expenditures in the past financial year, instead of bring as stated \$11,653 35cs, it is now \$9,653 35cs, owing to, that the 3rd instalment of the sum under contract for the erection of the Government House, and which was paid to the undertaker on the 21st April 1865, must be considered as appertaining to the Colonial Budget for 1865-66.

Reports from the 4th Member for St. Thomas (Lange), which, in accordance with resolution of the Council are entered in the its printed proceedings.

CONCERNING THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

The works at Government house were advancing fast, when almost suddenly the Builder, Mr. Bright was taken away from this world.

The building stands to-day in this position. The floor and the divisions of the second story are finished, and all the wainscots are laid upon the walls. On the third story a great part of the floor is also laid. The staircase, which had been the cause of a long interruption in the works, is placed. Almost all the pipes for the gas-lights are fixed in the interior of the building, but the mode adopted for the work, has caused some remarks to be made by me of the danger it presents to the inhabitants of the house. These remarks have not as yet been taken into consideration. The cistern has been commenced, which according to the Contract was to contain 100 puncheons of water; but the Controlling Committee has thought that, it would be better to use all the space towards the west of the building, and five feet can be gained there. These five feet would give an addition to the Cistern of from 25 to 30 puncheons of water more, and besides that, the pantry which is to be erected over the cistern would also gain 5 feet more in length. This improvement has been suggested by the Commission to His Excellency the President, together with a proposal for a covered gallery with standing jalousies being erected to the east of the pantry, and thereby to establish a communication between the kitchen and dining-hall. Without this gallery the service will have to be performed in the open yard. The President has approved of the proposal, with the exception of the covered gallery, which as he has justly stated, can at any time be erected. The extension of the cistern and pantry is calculated to cost \$450.

A wall will have to be built towards the west of the lot to keep up the ground and the large blocks of stone, which lie there in an inclined course, on account of the trench which has been dug on that side of the building. After the heavy rains on the 27th and 28th June last, some of these rocks parted from the hill and slipped down in the alley and filled it up to the height of the windows. A wall to resist against the pressure of these inclined rocks should be not less than two feet thick. It will be a costly work and entirely unforeseen in the contract.

I must observe that the principal cause why the work has been prolonged much beyond the time fixed with the builder is that many points have been left undecided in the contract, for instance the number of doors in the interior divisions of the different stories, their dimensions and the arrangements in the yard. But above all it was to select a better spot for the staircase, the one in the original plan having

been considered defective as much on account of the spot designated, as of the plan of the staircase itself. In conclusion I must report that the opinion of the builder was that the building would be completed by the end of September next. Now nothing can be said in that respect; it depends upon what length of time will yet elapse before the Government decides about the resumption of the work.

12. Colonial Council Budget Committee Report on the Draft of the Colonial Budget. . .for the Financial Year 1866-67:...

Sub item G., Building's and other uncertain expenses.

1. The first item \$9,031 09 for completing the President's dwelling house, Your Committee would recommend may pass.

2. As regards the 2nd item \$1,400 for furniture for the President's dwelling house, Your Committee would also recommend that it pass; expecting, that statements of the articles already purchased, and of those to be purchased, will be laid before the Colonial Council.

.....
In conformity with the foregoing, this Money-bill as recommended by Your Committee will read as follows:--

For completing the President's dwelling.....\$9,031 09
" Furniture for the same..... 1,400 00
.....

13. 25 September 1866:.. .

The Vice-Governor said, that the Presidency intends bring forward several amendments at the 2nd discussion. With regard to the amount posted for completing the new President-dwelling he had no remarks to make. Concerning the item \$1400 for Chandeliers, Mirrors and Furniture, of which a part can be considered as fixtures,--he would for the present withdraw it. There will be laid before the Council later, a Money Bill for the said articles and for gas. At the same time a list of the inventory which has already been procured, and of the additional furniture, which the larger locality will make necessary, will also be produced. The matter has been entrusted to the Committee for controlling the works at Government-house, for which Committee the Council is requested to elect one more of its members, whilst another member will be elected by the Presidency.

.....

The Vice-Governor then requested the Council to elect a member from its midst for together with the commission controlling the works at Government house, and one member elected by himself to investigate and appraise the inventory at present appertaining to the President's dwelling, and also to report on what is further necessary to be procured. The Council gave its sanction tacitly and elected the 2nd member for St. Thomas (S. Lucchetti) with 7 votes.

14. 4 October 1866: . . .

1. 2nd. discussion on Money Bill for Expenses under the Budget for 1866-67 sub Item G. with additional Money bill to No. 1, "for completing the new Presidents-dwelling," additional Money Bills sub No. 3 "for extending the King's Wharf;" along with amendments to No. 3, 5, 6 and 8 in the Money Bill.

The Chairman put each item of the Money Bill separately under discussion; and then to the vote, namely,

No. 1 "For completing the new President -dwelling-
As none of the members took the word, the additional money bill for this item in the Bill \$912 49 was put to the vote, and carried un-
animously.

The amount..... \$9031 09
was then put to the vote, and as it was adopted unanimously the total amount granted will then be. \$9943 58

No. 2. "Inventory for the new President dwelling" \$1400 00

The Vice-Governor withdrew this item in the money bill.

15. 5 November 1866: . . .

3. First discussion on Money Bill for Expenses under the Budget for 1866-67 sub item G2 "Furniture for the President's dwelling."

The Vice-Governor referred to the remarks, which accompanied the Money Bill and to the report on the matter by the Controlling Commission; and added, that an additional Money Bill for Gas, would be laid before the Council; but however, not before the Budget was finally discussed and closed.

16. 7 November 1866: . . .

2. Second discussion on Money-bill for Expenses under the Budget for 1866-67 sub item G. 1. "Furniture for the new President-dwelling."

The Vice-Governor requested the Council to take notice, that the matter does not concern him personally, but the office which he fills, and that the Commission had recommended that the furniture found necessary for the official part of the building be procured.

The 4th member for St. Thomas (Lange) as member of the Commission to report on what furniture it was yet found necessary to procure for the new President dwelling, said that the Commission had endeavored to execute the trust which was confided to it, with economy; but that it had also had its attention directed to what was becoming. The statement which was then framed, had circulated between the members of the Council, and as the Commission was convinced, that the necessary furniture could not be procured cheaper than for the prices stated by it he recommended the money bill for adoption.

The amount for procuring furniture for the

President dwelling \$2,400
was then put to the vote, and passed with 9 votes to 2.

17. 18 December 1866: . . .

3. First discussion on additional Money Bill for expenses under the Budget for 1866-67 sub item G. 1. "For completing the new Presidential residence."

At the request of the Chairman, the Secretary read out the additional Money Bill.

The Vice-Governor said, that if the additional Money Bill as produced, gave the hope, that the proposed \$1500 would be the last moneys, which would be demanded, then he must even now explain, that a further amount would be necessary for the establishing of gas.

The works specified in the proposal, and which could not be calculated previously to the completion of the building, but which, however, it was supposed would be necessary, have been proposed by the Commission that superintends the building works, which has also given up the amounts specified. He was, however, of the opinion, that the works could require some modifications; but viewed it nevertheless as being more regular, that the Presidency be authorised, after deliberating with the building commission and without being bound by the specification, to employ until \$1500 in the execution of all the works proposed, in the best and cheapest manner.

On a proposal from the Chairman the matter passed to a second discussion.

18. 8 January 1867: . . .

1. 2nd discussion on additional money bill under the budget for 1866-67 Item G.

"Building--and other uncertain expenses," for laying of gaspipes and thereto belonging to lighting apparatuses for the Presidential Residence.

The 7th Member for St. Thomas (Hjernö) said he was of the opinion, that the title of the bill, as additional money bill under the budget for 1866-67, was incorrect. The budget is a statement of the revenue and disbursements of the municipality for a financial year, and the Council cannot grant any amount as "addition to a budget" which is already passed, as thus fixed as the budget for the year. He, the speaker, had of course, no objection to the money bill itself; but he was against its being put forward as it has been, and it was of course to be expected, that a so loosely framed budget as the one for the present year, would make several extra grants necessary; but such are not parts of the year's budget.

The 1st Crown Member (Krebs) said, that the Council was probably, not against the bill itself; but that he was of the same opinion as the 7th Member (Hjernö) that the title was incorrect. The Budget for 1866-67 was closed, no draft of a new budget had been received and if the Council pass the present title then the budget ought to be altered.

The 7th Member for St. Thomas (Hjernö) said that what he wished for is an alteration in the title, namely, that instead of additional money-bill under the budget for 1866-67, it be denominated "an extra grant for completing the government-house, or the President's official residence."

The 2nd member for St. Thomas [S. Lucchetti] referred to 58 in the Colonial Law, according to which a special extra-grant is necessary for an expenditure, which is not entered on the Budget.

The 7th Member [Hjernö] opined, that the Vice-Governor ought not to hesitate in conceding to so simple a request of the Council's and was further of the opinion, that the Superior Authority would often gain by showing the Council a little more courtesy.

The 1st and 4th Members for St. Thomas [Benner and Lunge] also spoke for the opinion set forth by the 7th Member [Hjernö.]

The Chairman asked the Vice Governor if he had any objection to alter the title of the bill.

The Vice Governor replied that he was not at present prepared to do so; since he must be of the opinion that a budget is fixed for an entire financial year, and when property craves larger amounts than those posted therein, then they must naturally come under as additional money bills. He would, however, if the Council desired it, request that the discussion be deferred until the next meeting, when he would express his views after having considered the matter.

The Council tacitly adopted to defer the present discussion until the next meeting.

19. 25 January 1867: . . .

1. Second discussion on an additional Money Bill to the Budget for 1866-67, sub Expenditure "G" Buildings and other uncertain expenses."

On a motion from the 1st Crown-Member (Krebs) and as none of the other Members took the word, the Chairman put the bill to the vote as follows:

..for laying gas pipes and for the thereto belonging lighting apparata are hereby granted an amount of until.....\$1697

It was carried with 9 votes to 3.

20. 12 March 1867: . . .

2. A Proposal from the Presidency for a grant of \$500 for an artistical decoration of the vestibule in the new Government-house.

The Chairman said, that the matter had been forwarded to him rather late, but that as it had circulated it would be put under discussion, provided, however, that the Council had no objections.

The Vice-Governor said that the proposal from the Committee controlling the building-works at Government house, by a mistake had been transmitted to the Government, without any copy thereof previously having been taken.

The Chairman put the question to the Council, if the present proposal is to be treated as a money-bill, and if this discussion, shall be considered as a first discussion; to which the Council tacitly gave its acquiescence.

The 7th Member for St. Thomas (Hjernö) said that he thought the thanks of the Council were due to the Controlling-Committee for having made the present proposal for an artistical decoration of the vestibule, whereby its excessive ugliness and other deficiencies, in part would be amended and concealed.

The 1st Member for St. Thomas (Benners) asked, if the artistical decoration of the vestibule would not create a disparity to the other decorations of the building;-- he was of the opinion, that the whole building should be decorated artistically, so as to bring it in unison, or not at all.

The 7th Member for St. Thomas (Hjerno) said, that all over the world it will be found, that vestibules are decorated differently from the other parts of the building--to which, in this especial case, must be added the necessity of repairing the vestibule's architectural disproportions.

The 4th Member for St. Thomas (Lange) said, that the building-commission had recommended the artistical decoration in question, and that there will be no want of

harmony between the vestibule and the rest of the decorations; the hall will be adorned with a costly tapestry, and will have a tasteful cornice, and there will thus be a very good harmony.

The 1st Crown Member (Krebs) said, that the only danger in adopting the present proposal was, that the amounts for the works on Government house come in in small portions; he had long ago expressed it as his opinion, that the building would eventually cost much more than what it was estimated at. Perhaps the President could even yet prevail upon the building-commission to bring in an elaborate plan of all still necessary, and unfinished works and of the expenses for the same. Although he admitted, that the vestibule required some such decoration as the one proposed, to conceal its gloominess, and although he also intended to vote for the proposal; he would nevertheless ask, how the amount will be posted, if before the 1st April? But the present financial year will then have expired, and it will be too late to use the money; and if it is to be posted for the next financial year, then the amount cannot be granted.

The Vice-Governor replied, that it would not be possible for the present, to say what other works or amounts would be necessary; for instance it is supposed that the balcony, which has not arrived as yet will cost \$200 or \$300 more. Bright's estate has also a claim to some indemnity for extra work, but what the amount will be, can not be decided before the work is completed. We have been obliged to proceed in this manner because we could only take decision by degrees as the work advanced. With respect to what financial year the amount proposed is to be used in the question now is only if the Council will or will not adopt the proposal for the decoration of the vestibule; but the manner in which, or when, the money will be used, must be left to the executive. Of course it is the rule that amounts, which have been granted, and not used in the financial year go back in the Colonial-Treasury and must be asked for a-new.

The 7th member for St. Thomas (Hjerno) asked, if His Excellency means, if the money be not granted that the artist will leave the Island?

The Vice Governor. Yes!

The 1st member for St. John's (Elliott) said that as the moneys, if they even be granted--cannot be used before the expiration of the financial year; but

must be asked for a-new; there could be no danger in granting the amount and that to him it appeared reasonable, that the President must desire to know if the Council agreed with him, and the controlling Commission.

The 1st member for St. Thomas, (Benmers) said that he perfectly agreed with the 1st Crown-member (Krebs) with regard to the introduction of the proposal; but the honorable member would certainly admit that this is an entirely exceptional case; when it is taken into consideration, that the amount in question could not be foreseen whilst the vestibule was building, and as it now was seen, that something must be done to make it even tolerable. Neither must it be forgotten that we can now get an artist to do the work, which was a rare thing here. He hoped that the honorable member would agree with him, that the case was exceptional, and moved, that it be submitted to the vote, if the vestibule is to be decorated as propose.

The 7th member (Hjernö) agreed entirely with the last speaker, and recommended his proposal.

The 6th member for St. Thomas (Lagarde) found the remarks of the 1st Crown member (Krebs) sound and perfect, and added that if the artist in question should be forced to leave the Island before the question is decided, then the work could be put up for competition, and he felt assured, that artists would come here from Martinique and other places.

The Chairman said, that he would consider the first discussion closed, and requested the Vice-Governor, previous to the second discussion, to bring in the proposal in form of an extra money-bill, which the Vice-Governor promised to do.

The matter passed to a second discussion.

21. 12 March 1867: . . .

The 4th Member for St. Thomas (Lange) as member of the Commission controlling the works at the new presidential residence reported, that the works there progress very slowly, and not at all in a satisfactory manner, it appears that a system of economy has been adopted, which very often acts to the detriment of the

building. He would only point out the exceeding plainness of the jealousies, the tapestry on the bare cloth without being firstly covered with brown paper, the use of iron nails instead of galvanized nails to the ceiling. All the ceilings are, on account of the want of a conscientious control, a complete failure, and this is especially the case with the ceiling in the reception-hall. He had called the attention of the two superintendants to the bad manner to which this work was proceeding; the one had replied, that it was difficult to get workmen, and the other, that the painting would hide the defects of the work; but this hope had not been fulfilled, for after two coats of paint the ceiling in the solemnity-hall had shown itself to be so defective, that they were obliged to use the plain to endeavour to give it a more even surface. There is still left to be done the tapestrying of the whole of the interior part of the building, the erection of the balcony on the facade, and one work outside the building etc. etc. The balcony has not arrived as yet, but is expected, the furniture for the official rooms, and the chambers etc. have been ordered also. He begged to assure the Council that it was no pleasant task to be a member of such a commission, for in general one's opinion is not asked, and when one finds occasion to make remarks concerning the work it is too late, the work has proceeded too far to amend what is then acknowledged to be defective.

22. 4 April 1867: . . .

2. Second discussion on an extra money bill to the budget for 1866-67--for an artistical decoration of the vestibule in the new presidential dwelling \$500.

The Vice-Governor pointed out, that the drawings of the proposed decoration of the Vestibule, executed by the artist Visby, had been laid before the Council, and as the Commission controlling the works on the presidential dwelling had recommended the said decoration, he would advise that the rare opportunity, which now offers itself by the artist Visby's presence, be used, and that the Council therefore will grant the amount.

The 1st Member for St. Thomas (Benness) said that he since the matter had been laid before the Council, had

heard, that the proposed decoration is to be executed on paper;--he did not know how far this was true, but in his opinion the work, if executed on paper, cannot be lasting, it would not resist dampness which finally would destroy the painting. He believed it would not take any very considerable expense to have the decoration executed so as to last for a longer period.

The Vice-Governor said, that the honorable member probably entertained the opinion, that the decoration ought to be executed with the so called stucco work; but that would be very difficult and was seldom lasting, it had been tried in St. Croix, but had failed. With respect to the proposed decoration being executed on paper, he said it would be a matter of course that the board for the casings would be plained off as smoothly as possible and then first covered with brown and afterwards with paper. He had seen several pieces of work in this manner done very excellently by the artist in question. The honorable member's remarks deserved however, to be taken into consideration, and if it was found, that the work could be executed on wood, it would also be done,--the additional expenses would not amount to much;--but this in his opinion, ought not to prevent the Council from granting the proposed amount.

The 4th member for St. Thomas (Lange) said in reply to the 1st member (Benners) that the painting could not be executed on wood, as it is entirely impossible to join boards so closely together, that seams will not be perceived. The only way will therefore be to join the boards as closely as possible then cover them with brown and paper, and thereon execute the decoration, which will last at least for twenty years.

The 1st Corwn member (Krebs) said, that he had not altered his views, and that he must maintain that the moneys can not be used in the period for which they are asked. He intended to vote against the extra money-bill, as he could not get a clear idea of how money can be granted for a financial year, which has already expired, and as every member of the Council, and the Vice-Governor himself must know, that the amount cannot be used. He asked why the amount had not been entered on

the draft of a budget for 1867-68, which had been distributed to-day.

The Vice-Governor replied that the amount had not been entered on the draft of a new budget, as it was a question of formality which was of no importance; he would, however, have nothing against the amount being entered for the new financial year, if he was convinced, that the Council would grant the amount or declare itself in favor of the proposal; as the Presidency otherwise could not be certain to secure the services of the artist.

The 1st Member for St. Thomas (Benners) said, that he did not entirely agree with the 4th member (Lange) as to the difficulty being removed in the manner as the member had pointed out; he, the speaker was of the opinion, that it was wrong to execute a decoration on paper, which ought to be stucco-work. With regard to the remarks of the 1st Crown member (Krebs) he considered, that the honorable member ought to submit to the circumstances of the case, as it ought to be taken into consideration, that the artist's time was precious to him, and that he must leave the place if he be not engaged.

The Chairman said, that as he probably was the only one who had such a decoration in his house, as the one in question, he could perhaps give some elucidation. It was perfectly correct as advanced by the honorable 4th member for St. Thomas (Lange), that it was the sole, and best manner to clothe the boards with brown and then with paper for thereon to execute the work. To put the decoration on wood would be impossible, as the boards which are worked up here are never so thoroughly dried or ripe as not to shrink after a short while;-- wood to be used for the purpose, must lie a very long time, probably for years. Experience has thus taught him, that a decoration as the one mentioned, could not be executed in any other manner than the one proposed, which will also last for many years.

The 6th member for St. Thomas (Lagarde) said, that the question of the decoration being executed on wood was of less significance, and that he would not contest the abilities of the artist in question; but that he must maintain, that all public work ought to be put

up for competition, and that it would be found, that many artists from many other places would come here, and offer their services.

The Chairman closed the discussions and put the extra money-bill to the vote. It passed with 9 votes to 3.

23. 25 January 1868: . . .

5. Draft of an extra Money-Bill to the Budget for the financial year 1867-68.

In addition to the expenses under the Budget-- item G. Building and other uncertain expenses, are granted: For additional buildings and repairs at the President's dwelling. . . . \$800.

The 8th Member for St. Thomas (Hingelberg) would only remark, that the privy mentioned in the draft and which is to cost \$450, will be a very costly affair that a couple of small houses could be built for that amount; he therefore found it to be exorbitant, and would, unless he saw a proper estimate, vote against the amount.

The 6th Member for St. Thomas (Desbas) asked, if at the time that the Presidential residence was being erected, there had been made no mention of building a privy!

The Vice-Governor replied, that as the inhabitants in the Government-house then enjoyed a sort of privilege in having the use of the privy in the Danish Parsonage, there was no mention made of building a privy at the time, he added (in reply to a question put by the 7th Member for St. Thomas (Krebs) that some objections had lately arisen on the side of the Danish Parson; and that it had also been considered necessary that a building like the President's dwelling ought to have a privy of its own. It was very likely, that the amount as proposed was estimated too highly; still he had heard the opinion of two architects, according to which the amount was not sufficient.

The 5th Member for St. Thomas (Rosenstand) said, that if the 7th Member for St. Thomas (Krebs) would also keep the accounts for this enterprise, he would vote for the amount.

The 3rd Crown-Member (Marstrand) explained that the locality which was hitherto used is the property of the Church, and that the use of it could not under the altered relations continue. With regard to the expenses he said, that it was impossible beforehand to say what work would have to be executed, and what it will cost as it entirely depends on the blasting of the rocky bottom to a sufficient depth.

The 1st Crown Member [Meiðno], and the 7th Member for St. Thomas [Krebs] spoke in favour of the so-called deodorising closets being introduced as the most proper, and suitable to the very limited yard-room at the presidential dwelling.

The draft then passed to a 2nd discussion.

24. 7 February 1868: . . .

3. Second discussion on draft of an extra Money-Bill to the budget for 1867-68, sub item G. Building and other uncertain expenses, to wit: In addition to the expenses under item G. Building and other uncertain expenses are granted: For additional building, and repairs at the President's dwelling. \$800.

The 7th Member for St. Thomas [Krebs] said, that he had expected to see a specified estimate of item No. 1 in the draft, namely \$450 for erecting a privy at the President's dwelling; which, although not directly promised, still under the former discussion on the matter, had been considered as requisite; whilst it is also mentioned in the remarks to the draft, that the amount is based upon an estimate. The two other items in the draft appear to be of lesser significance, although he must observe, that the whole painting work at the hospital was executed for \$150. He moved, that the present discussion be deferred until a specified estimate be laid before the Council.

The Vice-Governor's Delegate [Andersen] also proposed, in behalf of the Presidency that the further discussion on the matter be deferred to a subsequent meeting, previous to which he promised that the requisite estimate should be laid before the Council.

The Council tacitly acquiesced, whereupon the matter was deferred.

25. 5 March 1868: . . .

1. Second discussion on draft of an extra Money-Bill to the Budget for 1867-68, sub Item G. Building and other uncertain Expenses: for additional repairs and buildings at Government-house..\$800. to which Amendments have been proposed by the Presidency.

The Chairman read the Amendments, as follows:

"DRAFT OF AMENDMENTS.

" proposed by the Presidency at the 2nd discussion
" on draft of an additional Money-Bill to the
" budget for the municipality of St. Thomas and St.
" Johns for the financial year 1867-68, to wit:

" In addition to the expenses under Item G. Build-
" ings and other uncertain expenses are granted:

"For additional buildings, and repairs at Govern-
"ment house..... \$800.
" 1 that the item be posted with...\$480.
" 2 that further be granted for
"repairs to the engine-houses..495.
"3 that the total amount of the
"extra money-bill be posted
"with. 975."

Amendment No. 1 was put under discussion.

The Vice-Governor explained the reason for the reduction proposed, namely that the convenience mentioned in the original proposal is now estimated to cost \$130, as it is intended to be erected of wood. He recommended the amendment.

As none of the members took the word, the amendment No. 1, was put to the vote, and passed unanimously.

The following articles are from Sanct Thomae Tidende (official Government newspaper published on St. Thomas). Consulted on microfilm in the St. Thomas Public Library:

1. 8 April 1865:

This day being the forty-seventh anniversary of the birth of His Most Gracious Majesty, King Christian the Ninth, Fort Christian early this morning fired a Royal salute, the Military band playing at the same time the National Anthem. At noon a Levee was held at the "Masonic Hall," there being at present no Government House. On His Majesty's health being proposed and drank, Fort Christian fired another salute. After His Majesty's health had been drunk, the Vice-Governor read a Royal Rescript from the King, responsive to two Addresses, one from the Colonial Council of St. Croix on the opening of its session, and one from the Colonial Council of this Island on the occasion of His Majesty's last anniversary, both of which through the Government of St. Croix and the Presidency here, had been respectfully laid before His Majesty. Our space to-day prevents our insertion of the Royal letter, but in our next will appear.

After the Levee had concluded the Vice-Governor and the assembled company proceeded to the site of the old Government House, and where the new one is to be erected, for the purpose of performing the ceremony of laying the corner-stone, which was done by the Vice-Governor. As usual a bottle was deposited within the stone; we are however unable to do more than briefly refer to it to-day. This also shall have our attention. The Vice-Governor entertains at his residence this evening a select company of gentlemen to dinner.

2. 12 April 1865:

We also put before our readers a copy of the memorandum placed within the corner stone of the new Government-house, which as we said in our last was laid on the 8th instant by the Vice-Governor, viz:--

"This Stone was on this day the forty-seventh anniversary of Our Most Gracious King Christian the Ninth laid as a Corner-stone for the building to be constructed to serve as the residence of the President of St. Thomas and St. Johns on the same ground on which the former Government House was standing. The erection is ordered by the law voted by the Imperial Council of Denmark and confirmed by the King on the 4th of June, 1864.

"His Excellency W. Birch, Knight of Dannebrog and Dannebrogsmænd, is Governor of the Danish West India Islands, and Chamberlain LOUIS ROTHE, Knight of Dannebrog, President of St. Thomas and St. Johns.

"The Colonial Council for St. Thomas and St. Johns which most submissively advised on the place for the erection of this building consisted of:--

Messrs. Ohsten, Riise, Rosenstand, Lucchetti, Philips, Benners, Delatte, Nunes, Mourier, and Hjardemaal.

"The erection of the building is undertaken by Mr. RICHARD BRIGHT, a native of St. Croix.

"God grant that justice, honest endeavours for the welfare of this community and a christian domestic life may ever dwell under the roof of this building."

St. Thomas, 8th of April 1865.

3. 7 September 1867: Reports the observance of the Queen's birthday with a levee at the new Government House with Vice-Governor Stakeman (who had just replaced Vice-Governor Rothe under whose administration the house was built) as host. This is the earliest discovered evidence of the new government house being in use.
3. The following notations are from documents in the U. S. National Archives, Washington, D. C., Records Group 55, Virgin Island Records, Office of the Building Inspector, St. Thomas, Letters Received. . . 1860-73:
 - a. 1862: Various bills for minor repairs to the old government house.
 - b. 10 June 1864:

"We the undersigned have by the request of Governor Rothe held several meetings to deliberate on the subject of the erection of a new Governmenthouse in S. Thomas and have decided as follows:

"That the building be erected on the site of the present Governmenthouse, three stories in height, 64 feet in length, & 52 feet in width, all of wall work faced with white bricks, and inner part of stone, with exception of the upper

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 31)

story, which must be all of bricks in and out, according to the plan laid before us, which we recommend be adopted, with the alteration of an additional entrance to the east in order to have a better light in the basement story--an area of 5 or 6 feet be left from the street to the westward.

"The walls to be as follows, Foundation 2 feet 8 inches, basement story 2 feet, next story 1-2/3 feet (twenty inches) & third story 1 foot 6 inches in thickness.

"The heights of the ceilings as follows: basement story eleven feet, 1st floor fourteen feet, second floor 10 feet in the clear--Windows and doors in proportion to each story, with jealousies & glazed sashes where required--an iron covered balcony the full length of the building to the south as pr plan.

"The beams of flooring joists for the floor above the basement 4 x 12 inches, upper floor 3 x 12 inches, all the floors to be of narrow pitch pine boards, not exceeding six inches in width--the cost of the above mentioned building we estimate will be from twenty thousand to twenty five thousand Dollars.

"S. Thomas 10th June 1864
Strandgaard Geo Tucker R. Bright
Otto Marstrand"

13 October 1864: to the Building Inspector from L. Rothe:

Advising that the Finance Minister has allowed \$15,000 for the coming year's budget for demolishing the old government house and building a new one on the same site, in accordance with the vote of the majority of the Council and the executed plan by Marstrand. Continues with a long discussion of planning and financial considerations.

26 October 1864: to Building Inspector Strandgaard from L. Rothe:

Refers to a drawing by Merchant [Otto] Marstrand. Continues with a long discussion of cost estimates referring to a bid from "Tommermester" (Master

carpenter) Bright for \$24,800, and an unidentified and undated estimate for \$25,009.

26 February 1866: from Rothe to Strandgaard:

on a tile roof for the government house to be made of "Marseille Tiles."

3 June 1866: from Rothe to the Commission for contracting the works at the new government house: on the pantry and kitchen.

5 June 1866: from Rothe to the Commission: requesting a scheme for yard and entrances; with reply giving an estimate of \$1500.00.

20 June 1866: from the Commissioners to the President: regarding the upper story; ". . .there will be 11 sets of panelled double doors, of which one will be a blind one, all 4'4" by 8'10" in the clear; & 2 pillars in the hall. . ."

30 June 1866: letter from Rothe to the Commission: on the arrangement of rooms in the "upper story," with a sketch by Building Inspector Strandgaard. The sketch shows a rectangular plan 7 bays wide (east-west) by 6 bays deep; an open-well stairway in the northwest corner 2 bays by 2 bays; a central hallway running east-west 2 bays wide with a square room partitioned off from it at the east end; 2 rooms along the north wall 2 bays deep, the northeast room 3 bays wide the room at the center taking up the remaining 2 bays; 3 rooms along the south wall 2 bays deep, the center room one bay wide, the corner rooms 3 bays wide.

26 June 1866: from L. Rothe to the Commission: requesting advice about the outbuildings, particularly the pantry and kitchen.

30 June 1866: answer to above (no. 10), signed by Lange and Marstrand; suggesting each building be 16' by 17' with a 8' passage, making use of the existing kitchen and remodelling it later if need be.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 33)

July 1866: rough sketch for a new cistern at government house.

7 July 1866: from Rothe to the Commission: asking for a sloping roadway for horses in the east side yard of government house in place of steps.

7 July 1866: an offer from John Stevens to furnish gas lights for government house, installed, \$1450.00

30 July 1866: an account of work still to be done on the new government house, mainly finishing and interior work, total estimate \$6520.25.

28 August 1866: from L. Rothe to the Commission for the building of a new government house: notification that master carpenter John Hall has assumed the obligations of the late master carpenter Bright, and that work on the "residence for the president" will be taken up again.

5 December 1866: sketch of the Commission's proposal for cisterns and walls, showing also the arrangement of the entire site: the sketch shows the new government house occupying about one-third the area of the site and located at the southwest corner; a kitchen 29' long (east-west) is located at the northwest, joined to the rear wall of the house at the west side by a pantry 19' x 17'; a cistern is shown adjoining the kitchen to the east along the rear wall of the lot; a large entrance courtyard is shown to the east of the house; servants rooms at the northeast corner of the site; the enclosure of the entire site is completed by walls joining the buildings.

The following are from documents in the U. S. National Archives, Records Group 55, Virgin Islands Records, Book-keeper St. Thomas, General Ledger for the Municipality of St. Thomas-St. John:

31 March 1866: according to the contract for the new government house of 19 November 1864 an initial sum of \$4,525.88 was transferred to the treasury for various payments.

13 January 1866: to Richard Bright, a cash advance against the amount of \$5,400 that will fall due to him according to the supplementary contract of 9 January 1866 for beginning again the work, \$1,509.23.

31 March 1866: cash advance according to the contract of 9 January 1866, \$1,016.65.

31 March 1866: third payment on the contract sum on Government house construction, \$2,000.00 with notation "when roof is on and covered" and that the total consisted of \$989 due Bright on the contract and \$1,011 for materials.

8 June 1866: to Richard Bright, \$989.00

5 July 1866: to Richard Bright "when floors are laid in all three stories," \$1,300.00

6 August 1866: to O. Marstrand for securing doors and windows at hurricane season, \$24.81.

6 August 1866: to the probate court that handled the late Richard Bright's estate, \$200.00

The following installments on the contract sum were paid to the probate court for Richard Bright's estate:

8 September 1866	\$300	
15 September 1866	300	
22 September 1866	300	
30 September 1866	<u>300</u>	Total \$1,200.00
5 October 1866	300	
13 October 1866	300	
20 October 1866	600	
27 October 1866	<u>300</u>	1,500.00
1 November 1866	600	
17 November 1866	600	
24 November 1866	600	
30 November 1866	<u>400</u>	2,200.00
8 December 1866	300	
15 December 1866	300	
22 December 1866	300	
30 December 1866	<u>200</u>	1,100.00

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 35)

12 January 1867	200	
26 January 1867	<u>100</u>	300.00
2 February 1867	150	
16 February 1867	<u>25</u>	175.00

31 March 1867: to John Hall, advance on contract sum (\$632), \$200.00; the same again, \$200.00

31 March 1867: to Briscoe McDougal for iron balcony, \$1,200.00

31 May 1867: to painter Visby for decoration in the vestibule, \$100.00

31 May 1867: to Stevens, for gas fixtures, on contract of \$1,697, paid \$500.00

22 June 1867: to Visby, second installment, \$100.00

16 July 1867: to Visby, balance, \$300.00

20 July 1867: to Stevens, balance, \$1,197.00

20 July 1867: to Master Carpenter Hall, for completed work, \$200.00

31 July 1867: to W. Dennis for a new pump, \$25.20.

1 August 1867: to the Probate Court for Richard Bright's Estate, \$460.00.

3 August 1867: to J. Hall for completed work, \$200.00

17 August 1867: to J. Hall for completed work, \$100.00

29 August 1867: to Briscoe McDougal, balance of contract for balcony, \$737.80.

29 August 1867: to J. Hall, balance of contract (\$632), \$232.00

31 August 1867: to J. Hall, for additional work, \$189.00.

13 September 1867: to John Stevens, for lampposts, etc., \$64.87.

Secondary and published sources:

Brønsted, Johannes (ed.). Vore Gamle Topekolonier. Vol. II: Dansk Vestindien. Copenhagen: Westermann, 1953. p. 310, illustration of the earlier building erected on this site in 1819; p. 421, "Von Scholten's old governor's house in St. Thomas" unfit by 1848 was demolished in 1865.

Hingelberg map: "The Measure Brief Record of Charlotte Amalie Divided in Quarters, Drawn and Annotated November 1836-March 1837," by Frederick Christian Peter Hingelberg, consulted on microfilm at the St. Thomas Public Library. The map for this section of the town shows a site plan for the 1819 building, fully dimensioned, with all the various outbuildings.

Larsen, Kay. Dansk Vestindien, 1666-1917. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1928. Larsen, presumably working with documents in Denmark, reports on p. 286 the same key dates: work started August 1864, foundation stone laid 8 April 1865, completed September 1867, cost \$33,605.79.

Taylor, Charles Edwin. Leaflets from the Danish West Indies. London: The Author, 1888. Corroborates on p. 20 the date for the planning of the new government house in 1864, and the laying of the cornerstone 8 April 1865.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
August 1965.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Government House is a large, formal building that has been the focus of official life on St. Thomas. It was built in the mid-1860's in an academic classical tradition which had always remained dominant in the area, even throughout the 19th century.
2. Condition of fabric: Good; continuously maintained as official residence and offices of the Governor. Renovated 1930's.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: Three stories, brick load-bearing walls, rectangular shape with rear wing. 64' (seven-bay front) x 52' (six bays).
2. Foundations: Brick masonry.
3. Wall construction: Buff brick, stretcher bond headers every fourth course, Painted white. Corner quoins of three projecting courses. Joints between quoins simulated by fourth course projecting half as much from wall surface. Second and third stories divided by stringcourse of two projecting header courses with a separating stretcher course in same plane as wall.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Slightly projecting brick pilasters flank main doorway. These extend to a drip cap which is correspondingly larger than those over windows. Double wooden panel doors in wooden frame. Second floor (south) seven doors (glazed in-swinging with eight lights each leaf) open from formal reception hall to porch. Above each are in-swinging transoms with four lights each leaf. There are doors from the state dining room to patio on the second floor, north side. There are various exterior service doors at rear.
 - b. Windows and shutters: All windows have a concrete frame flush with the brick wall, and projecting sill. Flat brick arches above. First and second floor windows and doors have projecting neo-classical drip cap of brick with incipient brackets of two brick headers at each side. All windows have 1/4" metal shutters, plain on exterior and patterned on interior with projecting diagonal lozenges. Steel frame windows, double-hung, six lights each leaf. Three-light hopper (in-swinging) sash at bottom. Screens set in metal frame between shutters and glazed sash.
5. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Low, hipped roof with corrugated metal covering.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 38)

- b. Cornice, eaves: Elaborate projecting cornice of brick with dentil course. Brick parapet above with roof behind. Low pediment over three center bays on south elevation. Top brick course (coping) on parapet projects slightly. No eaves.
 - c. Dormers: None.
- 6. Chimneys: None for heating. Various kitchen and soil stacks. Elaborate television antenna at top center of roof.
 - 7. Porches: Ornate cast-iron porch across front (south side) on first and second stories. First deck and approach steps are of square marble tile. Cast-iron openwork railing on both floors; set on brick base first floor. Cast-iron fluted columns on first floor, support box girder which supports cross "I" beams which in turn support wooden porch deck at second floor where columns are lighter but of same design as on first floor. They support wooden frame and plank roof with seven steel channels acting as tie rods. Five inside channels hold electric lights. Ornate cast-iron cornice around porch roof.

C. Description of Interior

- 1. Floor plans: First floor; heavily remodeled, large entrance lobby with offices to the east and west. Second floor; large formal reception hall, alcove on west, state dining room on northeast corner, and kitchen and pantry in lowest level of rear wing, which has no floor at lobby level. Third floor; Governor's residence, parlor, study, three bedrooms with bath, dining room with pantry and a terrace over the main kitchen and pantry covered with a wooden frame and corrugated metal roof.
- 2. Stairways: Monumental mahogany staircase. Concrete stair at northwest corner of house leads to upper floors.
- 3. Flooring: Square ceramic tile (buff matte finish) in lobby and offices. Second and third floors, are modern vinyl tile over a concrete base.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Hard (smooth) plaster painted white.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HABS No. VI-17 (Page 39)

5. Doorways and doors: Wooden frame, painted white.
6. Trim: Wooden baseboards and cornices; wooden molding around all openings. Painted white.
7. Hardware: Shutters have strap hinges bolted on and sitting in pintles. Two-bolt brackets on each shutter. "S" shutter holdbacks. Polished brass hardware on all interior doors.
8. Lighting: Electric fixtures throughout. Gas lamps flanking entry steps now electrified.
9. Heating: No facilities.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The Government House faces south on a lot which slopes up steeply to the rear; it is a freestanding building on Government Hill overlooking Charlotte Amalie harbor to the south. Public concrete steps to west separate it from Lutheran Parsonage. Garden to east.
2. Enclosures: Wrought-iron picket fence with plastered masonry posts on outside wall of areaway next to building on west. Same type fence across front (south side) of garden and between garden and patio at higher level of patio. Brick and rubble masonry retaining walls (plastered) in several lines as property slopes upward to north. Similar walls to east of property act as cheeks for brick steps leading to guest cottage. Brick steps lead up from garden to patio.
3. Outbuildings: On north side of lot is a wooden structure used for laundry and storage. On the northeast corner is a wooden frame cottage used as a guest house, which has a hipped gable, corrugated metal roof, wooden shutters, and masonry foundations.
4. Walks: Cast stone and brick walks through garden. Limestone flags in cement mortar in patio off state dining room with cistern beneath part of it.
5. Landscaping: Well-tended garden (to east) with mahogany,

flamboyant (poinciana), cedar, genipe and other
trees.

Prepared by Frederik C. Gjessing, Architect
and
Philip E. Gardner, Architect
National Park Service
1958