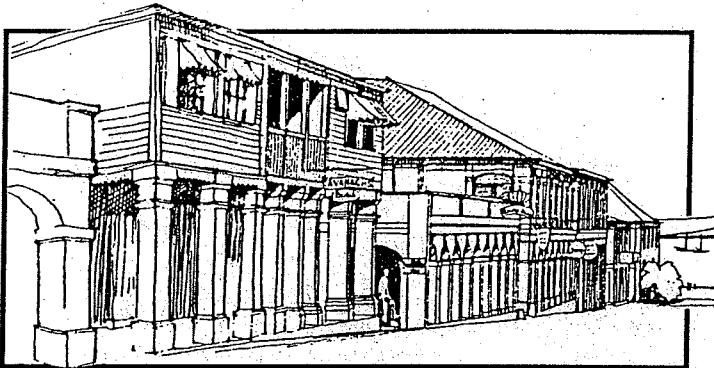
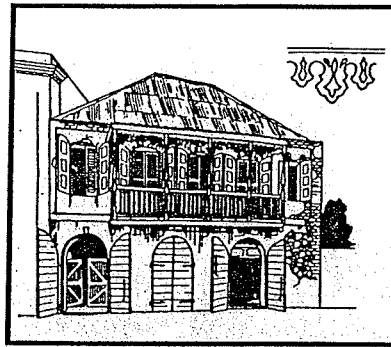


PORCHES, BALCONIES, AND ARCADES

Porches, balconies, and arcades are original to many buildings in the Virgin Islands and elsewhere in the Caribbean. Their origins probably go back to the intermeshing of Spanish and northern European culture in the Caribbean, with possible influence as well from the West African coast.



Porches, balconies, and arcades are basic features of Virgin Islands historic districts. Existing examples should be preserved whenever possible.

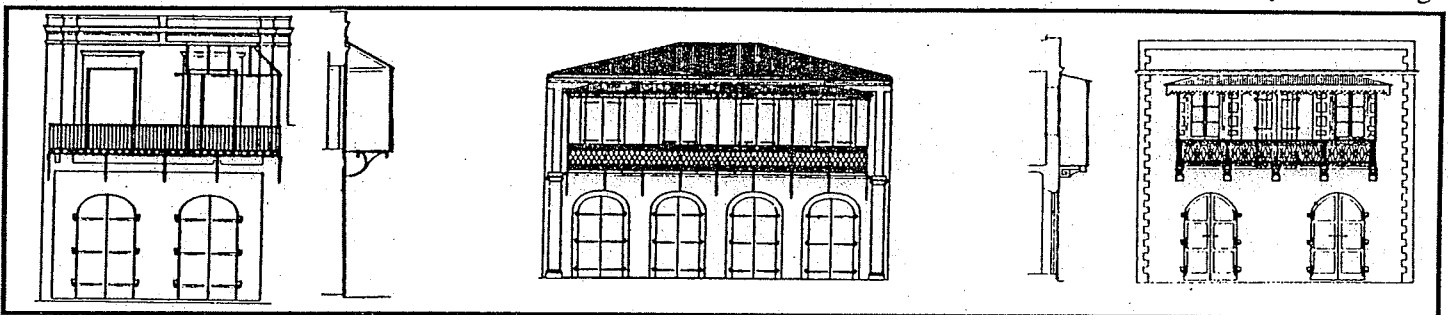


A wood balcony on metal brackets. Kronprindsensgade 68, drawing Pamela Gosner, *Historic Architecture of the Virgin Islands*. Note bargeboard (valence) detail. While a distinctive feature of Virgin Islands buildings, balconies should rarely be added to existing historic buildings unless their prior presence can be documented.

repairs, the repair or preservation of architectural metals, and also separate guidelines on masonry repairs.

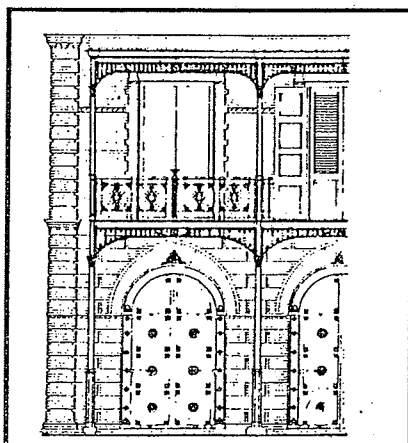
The addition of new porches, balconies or arcades to old buildings is generally discouraged. In some instances, however, new porches may be added and, similarly, balconies may be added where there were none before. Rarely, a masonry arcade may be required where past

evidence of a similar arcade is available. The main concerns are whether such an addition will alter the overall character of the building or not and the overall "authenticity" of the change.



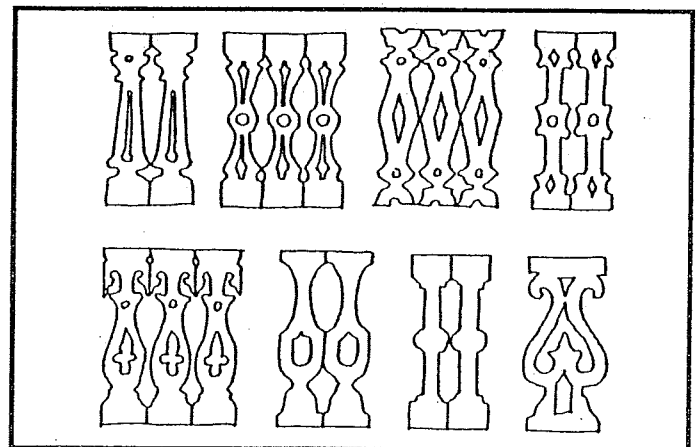
Some outstanding wrought and cast iron balconies.

Repairs to Existing Porches, Balconies, and Arcades

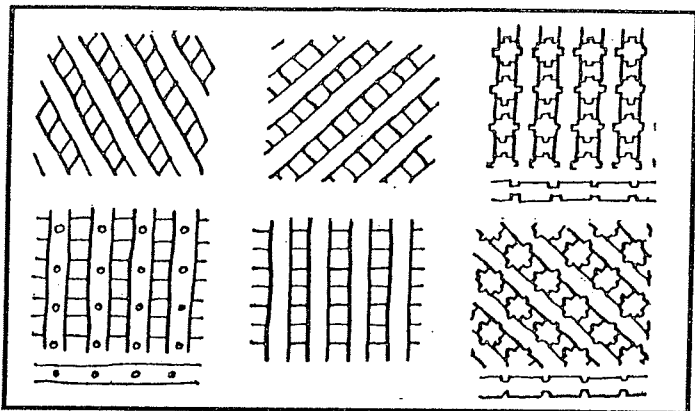


A metal double arcade (two-story), on the former St. Thomas Bank, Charlotte Amalie.

For porch, balcony, or arcade repairs, owners should follow the same procedures as those for wood, metal, and masonry repairs in general: original materials should be saved whenever possible; replacement materials should come as close to the original as possible. Reference should be made to guidelines on wood

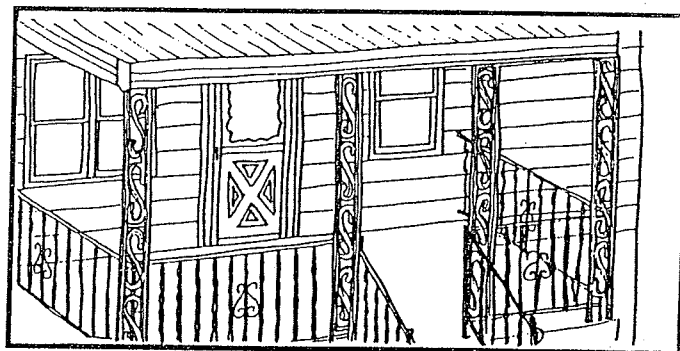


Some common sawn-work balusters. Care should carefully duplicate original patterns when repairing or replacing wood balconies.

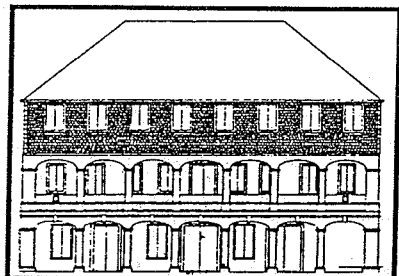


Some common lattice patterns. Lattice was often used instead of balusters for both balconies and verandas.

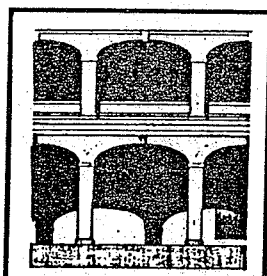
strikingly "contemporary" designs are also acceptable, provided they follow basic rules of sympathetic materials, scale, and overall quality.



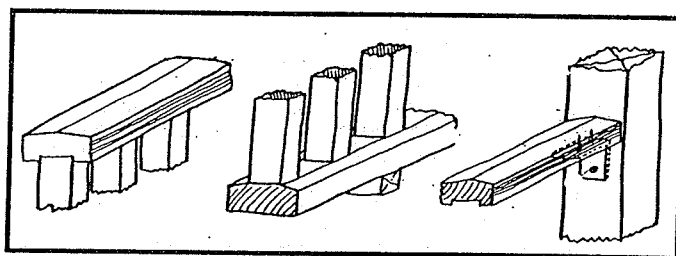
Do not use modern metal posts, rails, or balusters. These detract from a building's historic character.



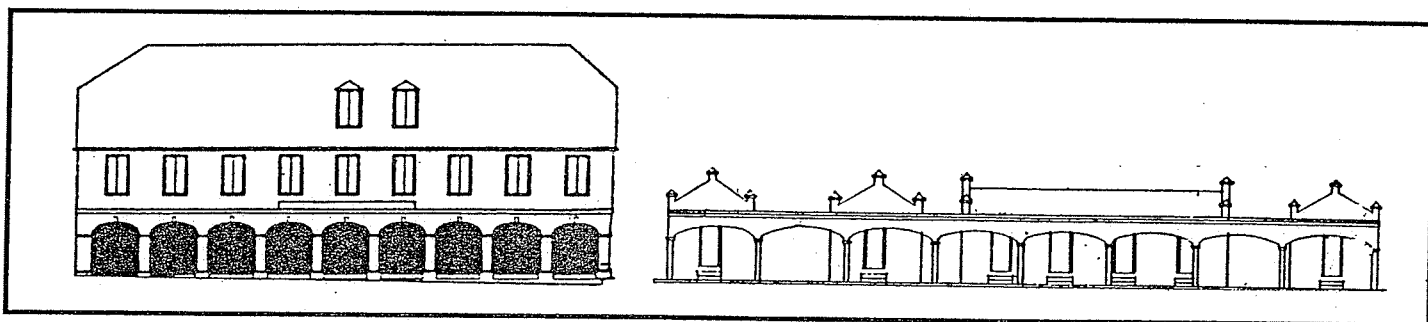
Arcades are important to the historic character of Christiansted and Frederiksted. Every effort should be made to retain existing examples, and replace damaged arcades with new arcades to match.



Plaster and other details of historic arcades must be carefully duplicated.



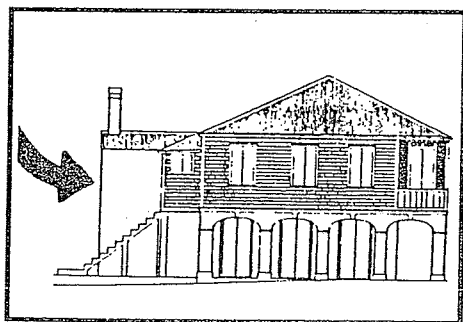
Typical detailing for a simple rail and baluster.



More recent arcades often fail to duplicate essential features of historic examples. The modern arcade in the right hand picture -- built of reinforced concrete -- allows too great a span for arches, which in turn rest on columns too small (visually) to support them.

Placement

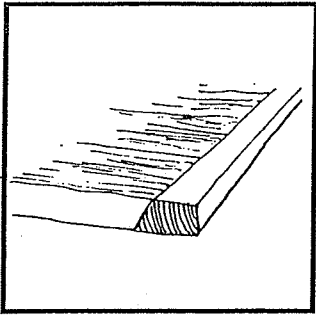
Placement of new porches, balconies, and arcades is obviously an important factor, especially if the concern with character change for the original building is taken into account. Ideally,



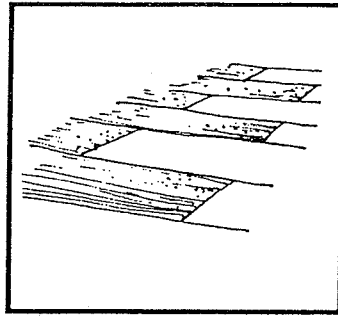
New porches or balconies should be added to rear elevations only -- unless there is historic precedent that can be documented.

new porches and balconies (as opposed to the replacement of existing examples) should be added to the rear of buildings, where they are less in the public view. Their design should be simple and, generally, should follow historic precedent. More

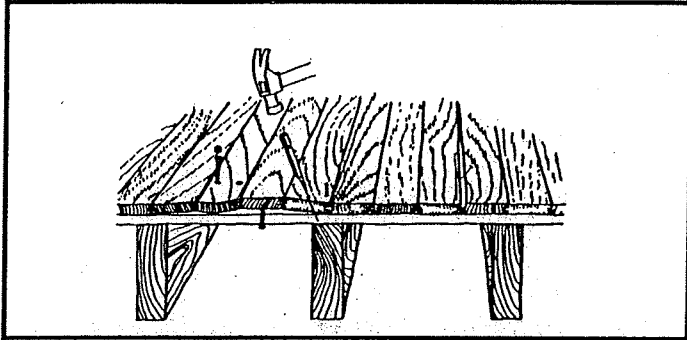
For new porches and balconies on street facades, even more care must be taken. Generally, new porches or balconies on facades of historic buildings should only be added when there is some evidence of their presence historically on that building. When uncertain of the original design, historic reproductions based on comparable examples are recommended. Care must be taken to duplicate the placement, size, and known details of historic porches, balconies, or arcades whenever adding these as a replacement of previously existing features. Modern materials, such as reinforced concrete or concrete block must not be used, nor should modern decorative ironwork be employed for either posts or balusters.



Nosing at the edge of floor decking can help cut down on water penetration.



If repairing rotted decking, attempt to splice in replacement boards.



Warped or lifting decking can often be repaired. Always try to repair existing materials rather than replacing wholesale.

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