

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name "LA CASA BLANCA"
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 17 José I. Quintón St. Corner of Ruiz Belvis not for publication N/A
city, town Coamo vicinity N/A
state Puerto Rico code P.R. county N/A code N/A zip code 00640

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Arch. Mariano G. Coronas-Castro
Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Patrick Andrus _____ 4/28/92 _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Other; Spanish Creole

foundation Masonrywalls Weatherboard and Masonryroof Corrugated Zincother Wrought Iron

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The building known as "La Casa Blanca" (the white house) acquired its name due to the fact that it has been painted white since its construction in 1865. It is a wooden, one story house raised on a podium/basement detached structure, located at 17 José Quintón St. corner of Ruíz Belvis St., in the town of Coamo, Puerto Rico.

The house belongs to the Spanish-Creole (Criollo) vernacular, urban, and residential typology. The major characteristic of these type are: raised, wooden construction; main living core with rear service wing usually called "martillo" or "hammer", forming an "L" shaped plan with an interior courtyard, full length frontal balcony or veranda, hipped or side-gabled, usually high-pitched roof covered with ceramic or corrugated zinc. Due to the detached nature of the house, the "martillo" opens out into the grounds at the southeast corner of the lot and not into an interior courtyard.

The main volume of the house is raised upon masonry columns and walls. Under the main volume of the house, there is a basement which serves as wine cellar and visitors/service quarters.

The main, or north facade of the residential structure, has a series of four identical, generously proportioned and evenly-spaced rectangular door and windows. These windows which were originally doors. Each consists of two slender, vertical wood panels with jalousies at the center and vertical glass lights above and at the sides.

The main core is sheltered by a high, corrugated-zinc, hipped roof, A section of the low masonry basement level projects forward creating a frontal balcony. This balcony is enclosed by wood balustrade rythmically articulated by eight columns, one at each of the extremities of the balcony with the rest of the columns between them and three more columns in the frontal balcony. This elegant composition supports a hipped balcony roof with a ridge which butts against the weatherboard facade slightly below the eaves of the main roof of the structure.

At the front facade, two wrought iron gates provide entrance to the two marble stairways of the house. These two gates are flanked by masonry pillars. From the east and west of the front facade runs a six foot high wall of stone and masonry. The wall was constructed by a Royal Decree, in an effort to contain the spread of fires due to the fact that the houses were then built of wood. At the eastern extreme of this wall there is an entrance gate consisting of two solid iron doors that served as the access to the old cochere which no longer in exists. One of the doors has a smaller door that allows a person to enter the premises without opening the huge gate.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1865

1865

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Camprubí, Raymundo

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Casa Blanca is architecturally significant to the city of Coamo as an excellent example of the Spanish Creole vernacular style built in Puerto Rico during the XIX century and as an accomplished and intact example of the larger urban-type house representative of the tastes the upper classes in Puerto Rico. It has remained as the most prominent of Coamo's architectural heritage.

The residence's style is an excellent example of the Spanish Creole architecture of the upper classes in XIX century Puerto Rico. The building is bigger and much more classical in its form and detailing than the creole style usually built by the lower classes, was commonly employed by Puerto Rican architects in the XIX century when designing for houses. The Casa Blanca exhibits all the stylistic features usually associated with this style.

An architectural survey conducted by Carol F. Jopling from December 1978 to April 1979 and later published in her book Puerto Rican Houses (1988) identified only two surviving examples of the larger creole type of these two, the Casa Blanca is the only one built of wood and having with a typical "Martillo" plan.

Although very little is known of architect Campubri his knowledge of creole building is here made evident.

The use of classical elements like the podium, the symmetrical stairs at the main entrance, the projecting porch and the monumental scale makes this house and excellent example of what has come to be known as grand spanish creole building.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jopling, Carol F., Puerto Rican Houses in Socio Historical Perspective, Knoxville; University of Tennessee Press, 1988.

Rigau, Jorge. "Modernismo: Architecture in Puerto Rico at the Turn of the Century (1890-1930)", A Historic Context with Selective Supporting Inventory for the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, July 1988.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one (1) acre.

UTM References

A

1	2
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7	8	0	2	5
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2	0	0	1	1	4	2
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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* Not available for Coamo.

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The house is bounded on the North side by José Quintón St.
 The house is bounded on the South side by No. 18 Federico Santiago St.
 The house is bounded on the East side by Ruiz Belvis St.
 The house is bounded on the West side by No. 19 José Quintón St.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city block that has historically and is currently associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title José Ramírez, Architectural Historian
 organization State Historic Preservation Office date September 18, 1991
 street & number 109 San José St. telephone (809) 721-3737
 city or town San Juan state Puerto Rico zip code 00901

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Once inside, a large living room leads into a vestibule which provides access to the main room. This vestibule is divided from the living room by a wall which has at each end high double doors with four glass squares each.

In the main volume of the house there are four chambers with one door each which consists of two slender, vertical ornamental wood panels below and four glass squares which give access to the living room. Each pair of chambers, east and west, are interconnected by a door. For every two chambers, there is a bathroom. Each bathroom has another connecting door to a smaller corridor linking to the vestibule from where access is gained to the gardens.

In the "martillo" there is a pantry which leads to a small altar. This pantry has a door connecting to the dining room, behind it there is another pantry room which was used as the servant's dining room. The servant's dining room connects to the kitchen. The kitchen has a brick ceiling 20 feet high. Behind the kitchen there is a servant's bathroom. In front of the servant's bathroom there is a small room for ironing. The access to both, the bathroom and the ironing room is through the balcony. This small ironing room is an addition to the original plan of the house. There is a solid doors in each of this rooms giving access to the balcony.

The ground level or lower part of the "martillo" has a wide corridor that runs along a room with its own private bathroom. This room is followed by a large room and two separate toilet rooms to be use by guests. This is variation to the original plan of the house. On the rear part there is another small room, presumably for storage and now used as a sauna bath.

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The U.T.M. for the Coamo are currently not available. Therefore, to locate the building utilize latitude 18° 04' 55" North of the Equator and longitude 66° 21' 07" west of greenwich.

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92000379

Date Listed: 4/28/92

Casa Blanca
Property Name

Coamo
County

PUERTO RICO
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patrick Andrus

Signature of the Keeper

5/4/92

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8: This nomination is amended to show the date of construction (1865) as the period of significance, as well as a significant date.

Section No. 10: It is also amended to clarify that the property being nominated is a city lot (as defined by the verbal boundary description and shown in the site map), rather than a city block (as is stated in the boundary justification).

These changes have been confirmed by phone with the PR SHPO (5/1/92).

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)