

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received APR 13 1987

date entered MAY 14 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name 19th Century Civil Architecture in Ponce - Thematic Nomination

historic Antigo Hospital Militar Español de Ponce (Old Spanish Military Hospital of Ponce)

and/or common Asilo de Ciegos de Ponce (Ponce's Asylum for the Blind)

2. Location

street & number León, Atocha and Bondad Streets ~~N/A~~not for publication

city, town Ponce — vicinity of N / A

state Puerto Rico code 072 county N/A code 00760

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: NOT IN USE

4. Owner of Property

name Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Department of Social Services

street & number Government Center (Ponce Branch)

city, town Ponce — vicinity of N/A state Puerto Rico

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Ponce Registry of Deeds

street & number Ponce Government Center

city, town Ponce state Puerto Rico

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Hist. Arch. Survey of Ponce has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date July, 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records P.R.S.H.P.O.

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This one story building is a very good example of Neoclassic style in Ponce and the only one single storey one in the area. It preserves its simple lines typical of the 19th century institutional or military construction in the Island. Its proportions and elegant simplicity make it worthy of merit and recognition. Contributing elements to the style are its massive and sober exterior elements consisting of wide walls and pilasters crowned with tuscan order capitols, planar window surrounds and a set of steps giving access to the main portico which projects from the main facade. A simple cornice crowns the building in all facades. Series of arched windows originally closed by wood louvers and glass panel transoms, complete the facade (these windows were replaced with metal blinds in the mid 1960's and have been vandalised in recent years).

The main entrance is highlighted by a projecting portico of attractive proportions. It has main central arch flanked by smaller ones to the sides. These arches and the other two lateral ones are ornamented with tuscan order pilasters. Four tuscan order pilasters, a simple frieze, cornice and parapet complete the portico's decoration giving it the appearance of being slightly taller than the rest of the building.

The structure was erected around a rectangular central patio with arched galleries on all sides that serve as transitional elements to the office and room areas located throughout its periphery, all of which are typical of the period and style. A small fountain in the center of the patio served the dual purposes of ornamentation and water supply. This element no longer exists.

The building was constructed of brick and a mixture of rubblework and stone. A series of symmetrically placed thick walls carrying wooden beams, probably of ausubo or other Puerto Rican hard wood, support the brick roof. This structure has a basement, an uncommon element in this type of construction, on its south side.

Many of the windows and parts of the roof as well as many wooden parts have been vandalized in recent years since the structure has not been in use. However, the main structural and ornamental elements of the building are in good shape and could be restored.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1897-1905 **Builder/Architect** Spanish Royal Engineering Corps

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The structure commonly known as the "Asilo de Ciegos" (Home of the Blind) was built between 1896 and 1897 to serve as hospital for the city of Ponce's military garrison. The Royal Spanish Engineering Corps constructed this building in the then popular neoclassic style which was common to the old San Juan area, but was not at the time prevalent in Ponce. This building, together with "El Castillo" (Ponce's Military headquarters), "Hospital Tricoche" (Ponce's Municipal Hospital), and the City Hall are the only remaining buildings representative of the Spanish Crown's interest in other areas of the Island besides San Juan.

It is of architectural significance since it is the only one storey building of this style remaining in the city of Ponce and one of the best examples in the Island.

The hospital served the military community stationed in Ponce and in the southern region and could be used by the civilian population in case of emergencies and natural disasters, thus solving a social necessity in the southern part of the Island. In 1905 the property was given to the state government to be used as an asylum for the blind. It gave shelter to the many poor blind in the south. Here they taught skills that could help them support themselves in the future. In other instances those who could not be rehabilitated were given a home and free meals thus keeping them from the streets where they could be in danger. The social functions carried out in this building continued until the mid 1970's when the structure was closed.

The people of Ponce consider this structure to be important to the community's history for its role as hospital and asylum.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Fortuño Janeiro, Luis; Album Histórico de Ponce, Ponce 1934

Newmann, Eduardo; Verdadera y auténtica historia de la ciudad de Ponce; San Juan, 1913

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4,000 m² = 1.07 acres

Quadrangle name Ponce

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

A

1	9	7	5	2	5	2	5	1	9	9	4	0	5	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See enclosed location plan

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Félix Julián del Campo, State Historian / Joaquín Acevedo, State Architect

organization P.R.S.H.P.O

date February, 1987

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city or town San Juan

state Puerto Rico

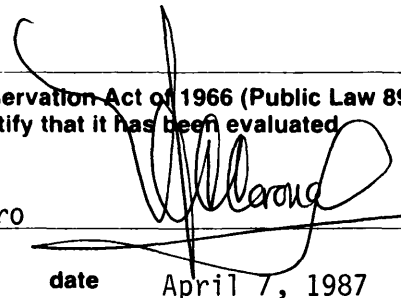
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Mariano G. Coronas Castro

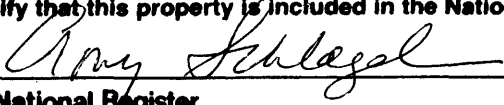


title State Historic Preservation Officer

date April 7, 1987

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register



date 5/14/87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation sheet

Item number 10

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Location Plan

Scale 1:2000