

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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AUG 31 1988

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Residencia Doña Antonia Ramirez  
other names/site number Residencia Hernández

2. Location

street & number State Road #693, Km. 7 Hm. 1  not for publication N/A  
city, town Municipality of Dorado  vicinity N/A  
state PR code PR county Dorado code 051 zip code 00646

3. Classification

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

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.

Mariano G. Coronas Castro June 30, 1988  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office  
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:)

Arny Schlager 10/16/88  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Country Mansion

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant(not in use)

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian (stalianate)

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls ConcreteWoodroof Metal zinc sheetsother Concrete balaustrade glass panels  
and transoms

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

This house, located on the countryside, presents a most unusual arrangement in terms of the floor plan, exhibiting an exotic octagonal entrance hall side by side with Puerto Rican formal architectural solutions, such as en enfilade room arrangement and gabled zinc sheet roof.

A pair of short staircases, located on both sides of the front facade, provide access to the balcony and, thus, to the interior of the house. The balcony, which envelops the house on almost all four sides, serves as a transitional space between the exterior and the interior. Although most rooms open directly upon this balcony, the formal entrance to the house is gained through the three-sided-bow-window-like-projection belonging to the octagonal hall. As mentioned before, the unusual octagonal shape is reflected on the front facade wall of the house by means of a bow-window treatment which, in turn, is reflected on the front and back balconies balaustrades by means of three-sided-projections. It should be noted, that the projection on the back balcony is not as deep as the one in the front. There is a short staircase that leads directly from the back balcony unto the exterior.

The traditional vernacular floor arrangement (rooms on both sides of a central wall with no formal interior corridor) is altered in this house by the spatial insertion of the octagonal hall. As a hall it connects four different spaces (balcony, two rooms and a second rectangular hall) becoming a core, as well as a space, by which adjacent rooms can be reached. The second hall opens unto a third hall-like space and then unto an interior corridor. This spatial sequence (octagonal hall, two rectangular halls and corridor) establish an internal thoroughfare that divides the house into two halves. It also connects the front and back balconies directly. Through this thoroughfare, human circulation, light and ventilation are distributed to other rooms which, in turn, connect directly to the balcony.

To the left and right of this thoroughfare there are rooms, some located en enfilade, all opening unto the balcony or the exterior. The kitchen and bathroom are located next to two short staircases, which provide direct access to the exterior, without the transition of a balcony.

While the exterior walls of the house and the pillars upon which it is erected are made of reinforced concrete, establishing a sense of mass by the use of quoins on the corners of the house proper, the interior walls are made of wood. All interior (and exterior) ceilings and floors are also made of wood. All doors are made out of wood and composed of two louvered leaves. Colored glass panels as well as transoms are used on some of the doors. The balcony and all of its architectural components

 See continuation sheet

**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

C 1900-1921

1921

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Muñoz, Camilo

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

The Municipal Archives of Dorado (Catastro de Fincas Rústicas) mentions this finca since 1896, when pasture and fruits were its major crops. An architectural plan, dated September 16, 1921 and signed by one Camilo (?) or Carmelo (?) Muñoz as draftsman, implies that the part of the house sporting an octagon was built by 1921, when the back part of the house was added. This new construction was paid by the owner of the finca at the time Don José Hernández.

The property's significance rests primarily on the vernacular adaptation of foreign motifs (octagonal hall) and new (at the time) materials (reinforced concrete) to traditional and native forms, with the objective of creating a country mansion -- which, specifically, served as a symbol of the owner's distinction and nobility. Located in the area known as Cuatro Calles (a curious place where two country roads meet at 90 degree angles, in city block fashion), it is indeed an architectural and social landmark in its rural milieu -- as an hacendado's country house.

In the agrarian culture of the time, such houses came to be viewed as symbols of power (and fortune). They were, visually and physically, the center of each one of these microcosms which each hacienda or finca formed, in spite of the fact that they were not lived on a yearly basis. The particular design of the balcony in this property, the numerous entrances (at least sixteen from the balcony unto the house), the storage area create under the house, all point out to distinct architectural responses to the informal yet active life which characterize haciendas and fincas such as this one.

It is difficult, when analyzing the use of this octagonal hall, a most unusual Puerto Rican architectural feature, not to relate it to Orson Fowler's 19th century concern with the octagonal form and its use in domestic architecture. While the use of the octagonal form in the United States was sponsored as early as the 18th century (by such eminent architects as Thomas Jefferson) due to its formal and aesthetic characteristics; fowler sponsored the form and its use as a functional and economical domestic architecture solution, important Victorian considerations. The fact that the octagonal hall at the Hernández House does create an unique core that facilitates ventilation, light and circulation, adheres quite closely to Fowler's recommendations. Houses as the Hernández were used in Puerto Rico not only as symbols and homes but

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Canino, Marcelino, Historia de el Dorado, Puerto Rico, San Juan, P.R., ESMACO Printers inc., 1987

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:  
Municipal Archives

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	9
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7	8	8	1	0	0
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2	0	3	9	9	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Seen enclosed plan.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the lot that has historically been associated with the house proper.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Arleen Pabón de Rocafort, Architect.  
organization Municipio de Dorado date September 1987  
street & number box 588 telephone 809-764-6040  
city or town Dorado state Puerto Rico zip code 00646

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( except the ceilings ) are made of reinforced concrete. Pre-fabricated faceted columns and balausters were used in the creation of the balcony. The use of pre-fabricated columns might explain the curious use of an impost-like element on top of the column's capitals, as an architectural solution on the facade.

The gable front end sports three small louvered windows of varying heights. While this composition might read as an attic, these windows help to create a current of air under the gables that, in turn, contribute to the ventilation of the house.

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also as storage and working places, specially the balconies which sometimes served as open and informal "offices" from which the owners conducted their daly business. The easy flow from one area unto the other and the facility in terms of access that the usual enfilade vernacular relationship created is further expanded in this unique building by the use of this unusual feature.

The house, then, summarizes Puerto Rican adaptations not only of new materials and new modes of construction but of new concerns and ideals such as the Victorian preoccupation with functionality, good ventilation, organization, among others.

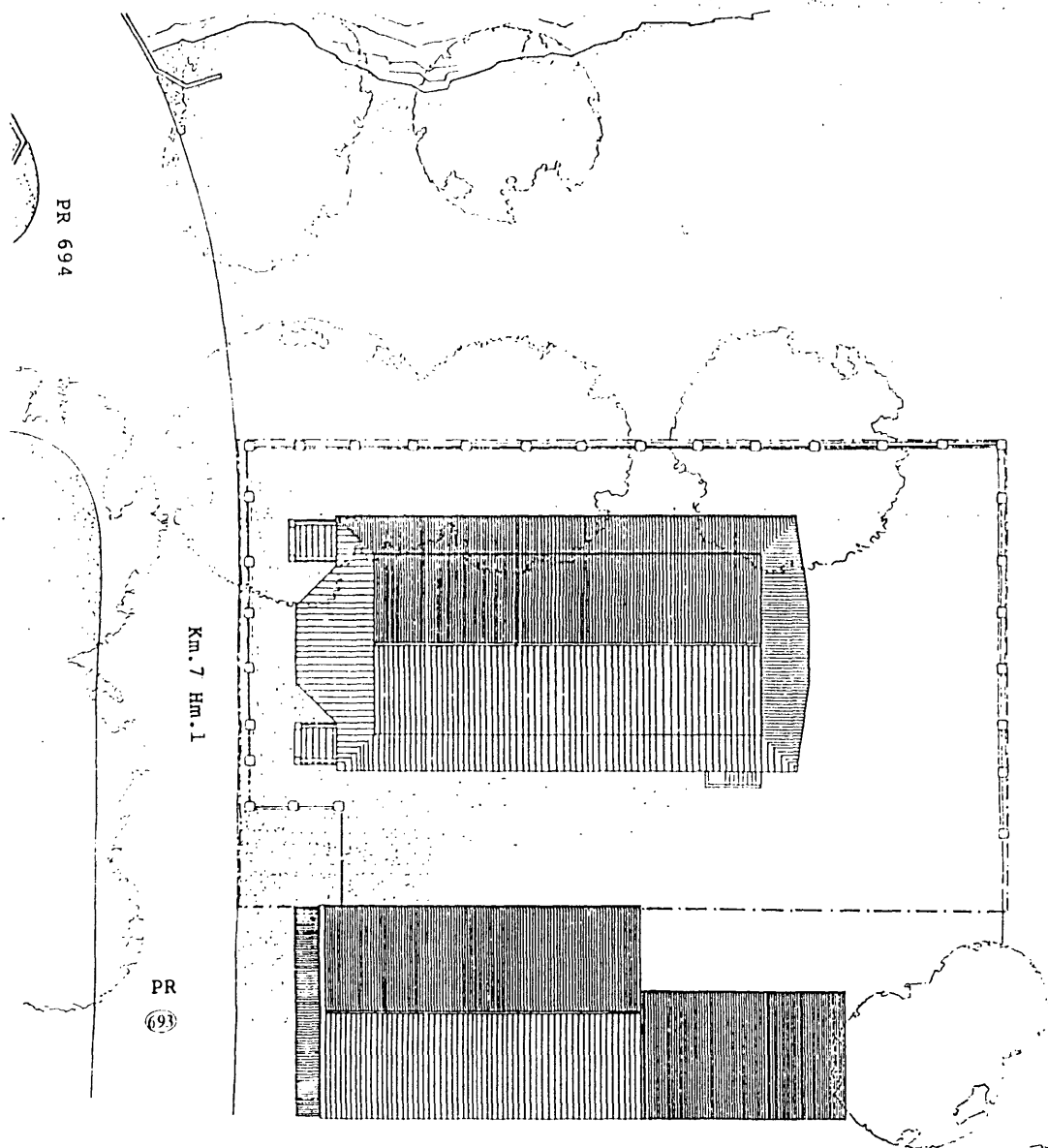
The sophisticated arrangement of these parts, the luxurious morphology ( evident in the use of the octagonal hall ) and the rich architectural detailing create an aesthetic organization which is not common to these agrarian locales. Curiously, this particular family had an other house close by, built along these fashionable lines ( unfortunately burned during our study of Dorado's cultural resources ). Both houses, then, belonged to a family that was keen on elegant and fashionable houses, Victorian showcases, ever-constant reflections of their nobility and culture.

The very few changes ( mainly the replacement of some of the original balausters and the addition of two closet-like structures in the interior ) have not affected the integrity of the property. The Municipality of Dorado is currently developing plans for the total rehabilitation of the building as a museum dedicated to the dary industry.

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0 25 50 ft

CASA HERNANDEZ  
DORADO, PUERTO RICO