NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 20/47

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NAME:

Historic: Faro de Punta Higuero Common: Punta Higuero Light

LOCATION: On Point Higuero on the most westerly point of Puerto Rico between Mayaguez and Aguadilla Bays. On position 18° 21' 49 " N - 67° 16' 15" W.

CLASSIFICATION: Unoccupied. Restricted access.

DESCRIPTION: Good condition. Unaltered. Original site.

In 1892 the original light was built as a fixed white 6th order station with a 6 mile range light beam. It was a singular piece of design and construction similar to Guánica Light. Its most striking feature was the peculiar use of materials in the facades and tower. The light, as a result of the 1918 quake, was rebuilt in 1921 but demolished by the U.S.C.G. in 1922.

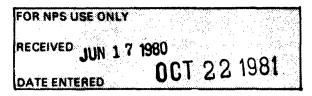
As originally built, it was a brick and stone rectangular dwelling --for one 2nd class keeper-- constructed around an exposed brick octagonal tower. Its Mediterrenean appearance came from an elaborate combination of exposed and indented brick work in the facades --around doors and windows-- and corners. The "castle" look was further emphasized by reddish stucco imitating stone-work on all facades and the very elaborate exposed brick cornice topped by a parapet built in lace-like brick-work. The tower followed the same style.

The original illuminating apparatus was a 4th order Bernard & Barbier 1892, lenticular lens with 50 cm. in diameter. The lens had 6 panels; 6 flashing panels in the central drum formed by 5 elements each panel. It also had 6 prisms on each panel above the central drum and 3 below. The flashes were produced by the entire revolving lens activated by a clock work device. The cast-iron, copper, and glass lantern was approximately 2 mts. in diameter.

The evidence suggests that the lens was destroyed by the 1918 quake; nevertheless, the lantern and clock system were apparently moved to the new light in 1922: a reinforced-concrete cylindrical structure. This one is almost identical to Punta Borinquen but varies in dimensions. It has a 21 ft square 4 ft deep foundation reduced by four superimposed concentric belts to a 12 ft tower with an internal 10 ft diameter. It has 3 floors, watchroom, and lantern. A concrete stairway leads to each floor and a railing iron ladder to the lantern. It has a central hollow concrete shaft lined with galvanized iron for the old clock work cord. In 1933 the light was made automatic and left unattended.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 21/47

The structures and dwelling which were also built in the 1920's were razed by a fire some years ago and severely damaged.

SIGNIFICANCE: Originally built to connect the intermediate space left by Punta Boringuen and Cabo Rojo Lights. It incorporates some of the old light devices: lantern and sections of the rotating apparatus. The tower is the smallest of the two built by the U.S.C.G. in Puerto Rico.

<u>GEOGRAPHICAL DATA</u>: Area nominated: 2.46 acres. Boundary description: beginning at a point at corner of fence S 44° 8' E 178 ft from SE corner of old dwelling; thence northerly along right-of-way of old American Railroad Co. of Porto Rico 265 ft to a point; thence NW parallel to railroad track 118 ft to a post; thence in a curve along top of slope in northerly direction 178 ft to a point; thence NW 25 ft a point; thence NE 60 ft to high-water-mark; thence along high-watermark W and S to a point 155 ft S of SW corner of old dwelling; thence N 76° 15' E 150 ft to point of beginning.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS: v. attached pocket #4 "Punta Higuero Light". Enclosures are: Quadrangle; plan area nominated; c. 1898 photo; 1978 photos; alteration's drawings.