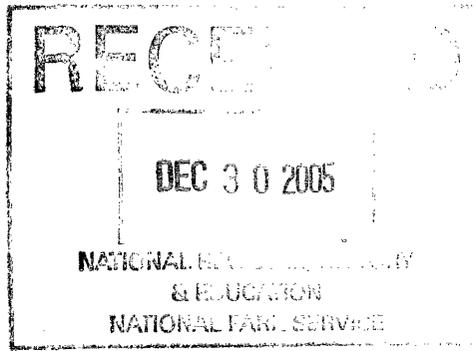


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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register Of Historic Places
Registration Form**



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Quinta Vendrell

other names/site number Granja San Andrés

2. Location

street & number Portugués Ward, Junction of State Roads 143 and 123 not for publication

city or town Adjuntas vicinity

state Puerto Rico code PR county Adjuntas code 001 zip code 00601

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Aida Belén Rivera Ruiz

22 December 2005

Signature of certifying official/Title

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 for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

4. 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper: *Edson K. Beall* Date of Action: *2/9/06*

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

1

0

0

0

1

Noncontributing

<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Name of Property

County and State

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/ Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/ Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other
Victorian elements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls wood
roof wood, metal
other native tiles

Narrative Description

X See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
XC Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Name of Property
County and State

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Social History

Period of Significance

1918 – 1955

Significant Dates

1918

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Alfredo Braulio Wiechers Pieretti

Narrative Statement of Significance

X See continuation sheets

Name of Property

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

X See continuation sheets

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

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____ less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	19	744249	2007965				
1	_____	66°41' 30"	18° 08' 50"	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

Legally recorded lot: Recorded at Register of Property in the Municipality of Utuado, Puerto Rico

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the rural lot: Volume 69, Folio 153, Farm 3114 as recorded in the Registry of Property. Since 1918, the lot has been historically associated with the property.

Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Olga de la Rosa Andujar, Architect / Juan Llanes Santos, Historianorganization State Historic Preservation Office date November 2005street & number PO Box 9066581 telephone (787) 721-3737city or town San Juan state Puerto Rico zip code 00906- 6581

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name José A. Torres Pérezstreet & number Portugués Ward, Junction State Roads 143 and 123 telephone (787) 829-4657city or town Adjuntas state PR zip code 00601

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section 7 Page 1

Quinta Vendrell
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Summary

Fig 1. (Top) View of Quinta Vendrell from Rd PR10
Fig 2. (Below) Quinta Vendrel from the west



Fig. 3 Northeast façade and gravel field



Quinta Vendrell is located at the top of a mountain locally known as *Alto de la Bandera* at Barrio Portugués in the Municipality of Adjuntas, Puerto Rico. The name of the property reflects its history. The term *Quinta* refer to those country houses used for recreation, where its occupants paid as rent the fifth part of the harvest. The gardens surrounding the houses were one of the main characteristics of these properties followed by the raised floors. The design of **Quinta Vendrell** is attributed to architect Alfred B. Weichers, however neither plans or documents have confirmed this information. Nonetheless, two important facts lead to this attribution: first, the testimony of Alfred Wiechers' daughter that mention in a 1984 interview **Quinta Vendrell** as one of her father's design, and second, the fact that Wiechers designed other urban and rural houses for the Vendrell family. The house combines the Creole with Victorian style elements such as expansive porches, bay windows, low pitch roofs and transoms. Built in wood between 1914 and 1918, **Quinta Vendrell** it's a balloon frame two-story country house with an attic, constructed over concrete foundations. Its balloon frame wood structure and the joints of its round porch make it a valuable example of wood construction techniques in the 1910's. This is especially relevant considering the integrity of the property while it remains in active use and the contrasting fact that wood houses are rapidly disappearing from our local urban and rural landscapes, substituted by contemporary concrete buildings.

Property Description

Fig. 4. Garden areas



Fig 5. Gardening terraces



On its southwest side, **Quinta Vendrell** has several gardening areas delimited, following the traditions of the French gardens (Fig 4). On the northwest the property has some gardening terraces made out of stone to cultivate flowers (Fig 5). These important features help define and make legible the history and character of the property.

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The property location makes possible the visual domain over the landscape. This seemed to be an important consideration on the design of this country house where windows and/or balconies were integrated to appreciate the vista on all of its sides. The rural environment where the property is settled is characterized by exuberant vegetation, considerable precipitation and very high humidity, comparable to those climatic conditions in the rainforest. The roofs of the house respond to these conditions, the main volume and the projecting wards have two-gable roofs made out of a wood structure, wood planks and undulated metal. The raised floors also respond to these conditions maintaining ventilation through the space between the wood floor and the soil.



Fig 6. Main Entrance



Fig 7. Porch entrance



Fig 8. Round porch structure

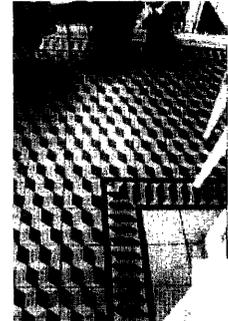
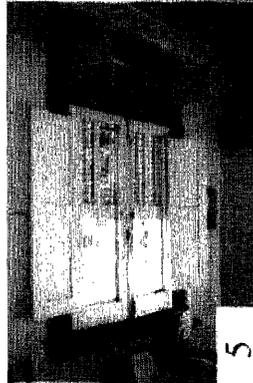
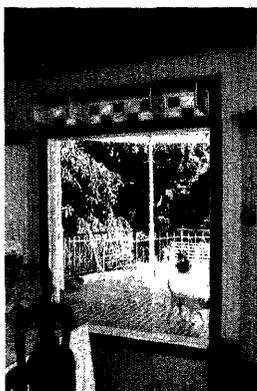


Fig 9. Hydraulic tiles pattern

The access to the house is through a gravel field at a lower level where you get an impressive view of the house height (Fig 3). It is through a wide staircase at the left side of this field that you can access the round porch by one of its sides. The roof structure of this porch resembles an open fan, it is also covered with wood planks and corrugated metal. The railing is made of iron, but the handrail and columns are made of wood. The porch floor is made out of concrete covered with hydraulic tiles having a white, gray and black rhombus pattern that plays with the visitor sight (Fig 6 – 9).

Fig 10. Double doors with transom

Fig 11. Jalousie, fixed glass.



The interior floors of the house are of wood planks over a wood beam framer resting over concrete columns from two to four feet high, depending on the site variations. Lattice panels cover the space between the columns on the perimeter of the building. On the round balcony you found a double door that permits the entrance to the dining room and the appreciation of the spectacular view from the interior of the room when widely open. A transom crowns the double door and the jalousies and postern wood windows. This detail can be found over all the doors and windows of the house. The transoms are made of stained glass squares in red, green, white and blue colors, that hue the entrance of light to the rooms. They also have small doors in the inner side to completely block light entrance through them (Fig. 10 –11). Over the interior doors the transom is made out of clear glass and has no small door on the inner side. A lateral smaller width double door in the dinning

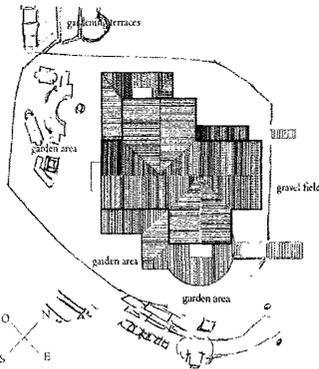
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room leads you back to the porch, that becomes of an orthogonal shape while bordering the southern façade. On this porch you found the main entrance to the house that takes you to a corridor that connects the office, the living room, the dining room and the stairs that takes you to the upper floor.

Fig. 12 Roof Plan



The house shape is described by a central rectangular volume oriented from the northeast to the southwest, with two projecting from it, on opposite but parallel direction (Fig. 12). The ceilings on this volume are ten feet high. The central volume contains the office, the stairs, the bathroom, a pantry and other servitudes spaces. The wing projected on the northwest contains the living room with a bay window and a kitchen. The bay window at the living room is of a polygonal shape with pivoting fixed glass wood windows with posterns. The kitchen, also on this wing, can be access either by the interior or the exterior of the house. Entering to this space by the interior of the house, there is a spatial compression on the corridor height that marks a difference in scale and

hierarchy. The exterior access to this area is through a small and narrow roof balcony and equally narrow stairs that takes you from the right side of the gravel plane to the servitude areas (Fig 13).

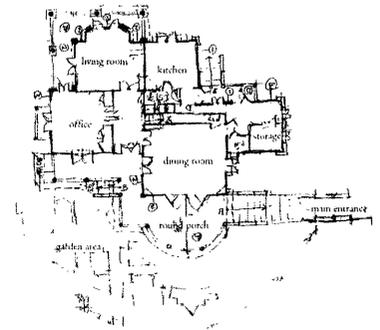


Fig. 13. First plan sketch-not in scale

Fig. 14 Kitchen



Fig. 15 Cooking Box



The cooking box still in place, but adapted to have a range in it, to serve the current owners needs. The old kitchens sink still in use. The house plumbing is of cast iron pipes (Fig 14–15). The kitchen has a wood jalousie, fixed glass and postern window facing the northwest. A roof terrace to which the roof was altered surrounds the living room area. The roof of this terrace was built in concrete sometime between 2002 – 2004, as it was perceived in photographical evidence. Supporting columns in concrete were added. The wing on the southeast contains the dining room. The insides corners of the dining room have been chamfer by built-in shelving.

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A half turn stair with its first flight enclosed by walls, takes you to a small vestibule on the upper floor where all the four bedrooms and the bathrooms connects. The master room and one of the secondary rooms are connected by a small space with a washbowl and a closet. The bathroom still has the original washbowl and bathtub with its faucets. It has a wood casement window with colored stained glass. On the back of the wall facing the vestibules you can still appreciate the walls wood frame that was left exposed. All the other partitions are covered with wood by both sides. For a total of four generous rooms, three of

Fig 16. Attic



them have a window and a projecting balcony sustained by knee braces. Only the room facing the northeast does not have a balcony. This room only has jalousie, fixed glass and postern wood window. This room also has a hidden entrance on one of its walls that give access to a narrow stair that takes you to the attic. The room on the attic does not occupy all the space. It has two windows through which light comes into this room, one in the southeast façade, the other one in the northeast. A three-sided awning of wood protects exterior doors and balconies on the second story.



Fig 17 Wiechers's house in Tibes, 1918.



Fig 18 Quinta Vendrell's southwest façade, 2005.

The second story balcony railings on the southeast façade have the same crosses and diamonds pattern that was used by Alfred Wiechers on his own country house in the outskirts of Ponce.

Due to the threats to the structure caused by Hurricane George winds, the house has been covered with aluminum siding to prevent wind damage. The exterior of the house has been painted in a dark green color, while the interior was painted in beige.

Quinta Vendrell constitutes an excellent sample of the wood construction techniques in the early 1900's. Its architectural type and level of integrity while remaining under active use by its owners are some of the qualities that add significance to this building. This building is not only worth preserving for the history or construction techniques it conveys but also for the fact that it is an historic building that still supplies modern life needs to its occupants.

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Summary

Quinta Vendrell is significant locally under Criterion C in the area of architecture as an outstanding example of wood construction method in the early twentieth century and because it represents the work of a master.

Historical Background

The property nominated, **Quinta Vendrell**, is located in the municipality of Adjuntas. The town is known as “*La Ciudad del Gigante Dormido*” (City of the Sleeping Giant) because of a mountain formation nearby called by that name. The location of the town within the Central Mountain Range creates a very high and mountainous topography (Fig. 1). These topographical characteristics explain the other name applied to the town: “*La Suiza de Puerto Rico*” (the Switzerland of Puerto Rico), because of Adjuntas’ low temperature, with an average yearly weather of 72 degrees Fahrenheit. These geographical qualities would eventually combined to make Adjuntas a great location for the development of coffee production. Its cool climate will make the town also a strong attraction as a resort area, especially for members of the upper class, particularly during the first decades of the twentieth century. These two factors, coffee production and a resort area, are highly associated with the property nominated, **Quinta Vendrell**.

(Fig.1 The town of Adjuntas)



The town of Adjuntas was founded in August 11, 1815. The area derives its name from the term “tierras adjuntas” (adjoining lands), because the territory was part of the adjoining lands of the old Villa de San Blás de Illesca (Coamo), founded in 1579.¹ During the early 19th century Adjuntas became an important intermediate point between the interior town of Utuado and the coastal city of Ponce. The increase of population and the development of an infrastructure system in Adjuntas was a direct result of the significance of the territory as a transit route of the valuable commerce between the coffee producer highlands of Utuado and the internationally connected port of Ponce.²

Eventually, the relation between Ponce and Adjuntas became very important for both parties. Adjuntas became more than a transit route; it became a coffee producer. Coffee was by mid 19th century the main exporting produce in the agricultural production of Adjuntas. By 1845, the town had 185. 25 acres dedicated to growing coffee.³ Some of this production was for local consumption, but most of it found it’s way to the international market through the commercial houses and the port in Ponce. These numbers dramatically increased by the end of the century.

¹ Wilhem Hernández. *Adjuntas: Notas para su historia*. Oficina Estatal de Preservación Histórica, 1985. p. 28.

² Fernando Picó. *Libertad y servidumbre en el Puerto Rico del siglo XIX*. Rio Piedras: Ediciones Huracan, 1979. p. 28.

³ Archivo General de Puerto Rico. Fondo de Gobernadores Españoles. Caja 385.

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In 1876, the United States, the largest consumer of coffee in the world, totally opened its market to the largest coffee producer in the world, Brazil, creating a vacuum in the coffee supply around the world. The Puerto Rican producers took advantage of the situation. By that time, the local coffee was already considered one of the best in the world. The coffee production and the value of the exportation of the product augmented rapidly. By 1879, coffee became the primary exportation product in the Puerto Rican economy. By 1890, Puerto Rico was the fourth exporter of coffee in Latin America. Our mayor buyers, by the end of the 19th century, were Spain, Cuba, France, Germany and Italy.⁴

(Fig. 2)



This boom in the coffee production had a significant impact in Adjuntas. The town became an important member of the complex of territories responsible for a high portion of the coffee production within the Central Mountain Range: Utuado, Jayuya, Ciales and Adjuntas (Fig. 2). The four municipalities shared frontier lines among themselves. This period was the “golden age” of the coffee production in all these areas.

(Fig.3. Adjuntas, 1910.)

In Adjuntas particularly, the coffee boom created a dynamic society. The population went from 6,000 in 1860 to 18,710 by 1897. New roads and bridges were built to facilitate the movement of the local production. Better and improved means of communication were installed (Fig. 3). By 1881 there was a postal and telegraph system operating between Adjuntas and Ponce. By 1894 there were 31 coffee plantations producing the valuable merchandise.⁵



The coffee production of this region was channeled through the port of Ponce to the Caribbean and European markets. This situation promoted a deep economical and social relation within the rural highland area and the urban core of the highly cosmopolitan and commercial area of Ponce, “the Pearl of the South”, as the city was known. By 1897, there were eleven (11) commercial houses in Ponce dedicated to the elaboration and exportation of coffee.⁶ In 1897, more than fifty percent of all the coffee exportation in the island was reaching the international markets through Ponce’s port.⁷ The merchants in Ponce established their control of the adjacent coffee areas through their commercial houses, the loaning of money at high interest

⁴ Luis Pumarada Oneill. *La industria cafetalera de Puerto Rico, 1736 – 1969*. Centro de Investigaciones, Recinto de Mayagüez, Universidad de Puerto Rico. Oficina Estatal de Preservación Histórica, 1990. pp. 38.

⁵ AGPR. Fondo de Gobernadores Españoles. Censo y Riqueza. Cajas 12, 385.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Luis Pumarada O’Neill. *La industria cafetalera...*pp.44.

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rates and by directly participating in the coffee production through the acquisition of coffee farms in the Central Mountain Range area. In numerous occasions, these merchants from Ponce established residences in the coffee farms to manage the property, becoming either permanent or partial residents of the adjacent municipalities. In a sense, these highlands became an economic appendix of Ponce, and at the same time, an extension of the class power and control exercised by Ponce's bourgeoisie.⁸

By the end of the 19th century, the coffee industry, while it was at its peak, received two strong hits. One of them was the 1899 San Ciriaco hurricane that devastated the island in August 8, 1899. The powerful storm brought rain for 28 hours straight and winds over 100 mph. San Ciriaco paralyzed the entire coffee industry. Over sixty percent of the coffee trees were destroyed and the entire crop for that year was lost.⁹ The other devastating crush to the industry was a political one: the transfer of the island to the United States after the Spanish American War of 1898. The American investing capital that rapidly came to Puerto Rico was interested in the sugar production. Because of our insertion within the United States tariff system, the coffee industry lost its European markets. At the same time, the local coffee couldn't compete with the third class rated, but cheap Brazilian coffee, that monopolized the United States market and taste, since the 1870s. The coffee industry, and the regions depending on it, never recovered from the combination of these blows.

Adjuntas, after the fall of the coffee industry, oriented its agriculture economy toward the production of minor products. It also became, as mentioned before, an attractive resort area, especially for the members of the upper class. **Quinta Vendrell** is an excellent physical example of all this complex process.

Quinta Vendrell
(Fig. 4)



Quinta Vendrell is located in the intersection of Road 143 and the old road to Ponce from Adjuntas, Road 10 (Fig. 4). It's a two level wooden and concrete house. The construction of the house dates from 1914 – 1918. But the history of the farm goes back to the days of Adjuntas' golden age as one of the great coffee producers.

The farm where **Quinta Vendrell** is today located used to be a 115 hectares 19th century coffee farm. By 1892, it was described as having land for coffee, plantains, minor fruits, woodland and pasture. It also contained a wooden house used as residence; another wooden structure used as a coffee factory

⁸ Angel Quintero Rivera. *Patricios y plebeyos: burgueses, hacendados, artesanos y obreros. Las relaciones de clase en el Puerto Rico de cambio de siglo*. Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1988.

⁹ Francisco A. Scarano Fiol. *Puerto Rico. Cinco siglos de historia*. Mexico: McGraw-Hill, 2000. p. 649.

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and warehouse. The farm also had a row of small houses to be used by the farm workers.¹⁰

The owner of the property during the early 1890s was Guillermo Schuck y Olivera, a well-known member of the powerful merchant class from Ponce. Mr. Schuck y Olivera was the owner during the most productive time of the farm. With the eventual collapse of the coffee production, the farm became more attractive as a resort (summer house) due to the cool climate of the area. Once again, the farm history became associated to Ponce. In 1914, with the old glory days gone, Fernando A. Vendrell y Gandía, another important merchant from Ponce, acquired a section of the old farm.¹¹ This time the farm was used as a vacation retreat not as a productive property. After acquiring the land, Vendrell y Gandía contracted the services of Ponce's architect Alfredo Wiechers to design the new house that was eventually known as **Quinta Vendrell** (Vendrell's Country House).¹²

(Figs. 5 – 9)



Wiechers designed a wood and concrete house following the Creole style, but combining it with some other interesting elements. The use of concrete is limited to the balcony railing, columns and base walls that support the balloon frame two-story house. The round porch projecting from the main façade's corner shows the influence of Victorian architecture. Wood siding was used for the walls, floors, interiors stairs and ceilings (concrete tiles are also used). The interior and exterior windows and doors combine wood louvers and colored glass panes providing both ventilation and light. Interior doors and windows use the traditional transoms (Figs. 5 – 9). The house became a physical representation of the sophisticated and cosmopolitan taste of Ponce's bourgeoisie.

¹⁰ Registro de Propiedad. Tomo: 90. Folio: 227. Finca: 3675. Utuado, Puerto Rico.

¹¹ Registro de Propiedad. Tomo 69. Folio 153. Finca 3114. Utuado, Puerto Rico. Fernando Agustín Vendrell y Gandía was a well-known member of Ponce's bourgeoisie, regarded as one of the most important merchants in the city. At the time of his death in 1931, Vendrell's will showed a diversify portfolio: stocks in the two main banks in Ponce (Banco de Crédito y Ahorro Ponceño and Banco de Ponce); stocks in the Porto Rico Iron Works, in the Ponce Electric Company and in the Jayuya Development Company. He was also the owner of 13 urban properties in Ponce, one farm in Santa Isabel and five rural properties in Adjuntas.

¹² Jorge Rigau. *Puerto Rico 1900. Turn-off-the-century architecture in the Hispanic Caribbean 1890-1930*. New York, 1992. p. 122.

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The specific construction date of **Quinta Vendrell** has not been determined. But its safe to say that it was between 1914 and 1918. Vendrell y Gandía bought the farm in 1914; Wiechers left Puerto Rico in 1918, never to return; so the period of construction is definitely limited to the years 1914-1918. There is also another important and conclusive proof of the significant dates for **Quinta Vendrell**. The house was immortalized by one of the most important Puerto Ricans painters of the Twentieth Century, Miguel Pou. The Vendrell commissioned Pou' services to paint their new resort home in the highlands of Adjuntas. Pou painted the piece, titled "*Quinta en el Alto De la Bandera*" in 1918, firmly establishing the existence of the residence by this last date.¹³

The Architect
(Fig. 10)



Alfredo Braulio Wiechers Pieretti (Fig. 10) was born in Ponce on March 26, 1881. He was the youngest of five brothers procreated by Jorge Federico Wiechers Klem and Isabel Pieretti Marsaud. His mother was originally from Ponce; his father (Jorge Federico) was a merchant from Hamburg (Germany) residing in Ponce since the 1860s. In 1865, 1872 and 1874, Wiechers Klem served also as the Prussian Consul in the City (a positioned usually obtained by well connected foreign merchants.) The association of Wiechers Klem to the German government will eventually had serious repercussion in his son's life.

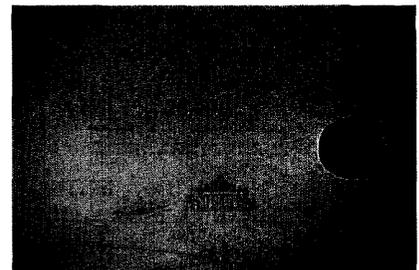
After his father's death (when Alfredo Wiechers was still a young boy), Wiechers moved with his sister to Barcelona, Spain. By the age of twenty, he was admitted to the famous *L'Ecole Speciale d'Architecture* in Paris (Fig. 11). Wiechers completed all the required courses in three years and graduated from the prestigious school in 1905 receiving high mentions for his performance and a gold medal for his achievements as a student (Fig. 12).

(Fig. 11. Wiechers in Paris (third from left, top row)

(Fig. 12. Wiechers' 1905 Diploma¹⁴)



Recently graduated and recently married, Wiechers returned to Barcelona. He spent the next few years at the workshop of the renowned French architect Enric Sagnier. From the *L'Ecole Speciale*, from Sagnier and from Barcelona, Wiechers acquired the taste for the neoclassic and the gothic; for the highly elaborated



¹³ Miguel Pou was born in Ponce in 1880. He studied painting and drawing intensively and also taught art. He founded his private art school in 1910 in Ponce, which he ran for forty years. He was very much admired for his artistic works in Puerto Rico. Pou was highly interested in capturing what he called "the spirituality of the people and the land" through the painting of the urban and rural landscape. Miguel Pou died in 1968. In Pou's biography (written by his widow) appeared a list of his main works and where the pieces are located. In page 36, its mentioned the painting in oil "*Quinta en el Alto de la Bandera*", done by Pou in 1918, and belonging to the Vendrell family. Ana Valdejulli de Pou, *Miguel Pou : Su vida y su Obra*. Arte Puertorriqueño. San Juan, Puerto Rico. 1968. p. 36.

¹⁴ Archivo Histórico de Ponce. Colección Alfredo B. Wiechers.

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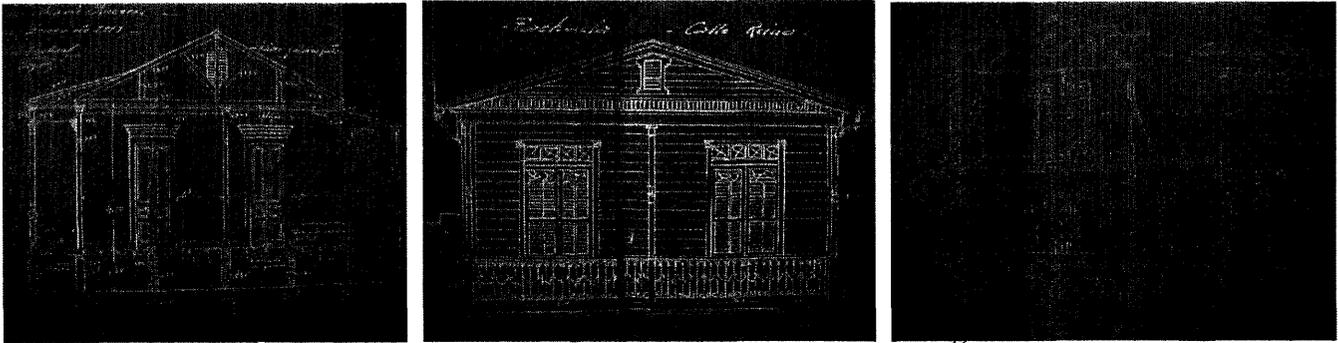
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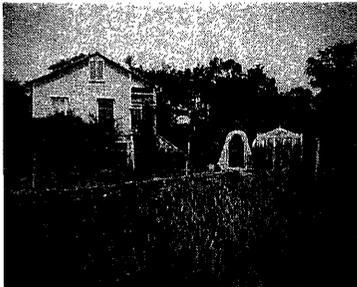
style with the traditional Creole orientation. This orientation included the used of wood as the principal construction material. Wiechers designed a few of these wooden houses for the well to do in their rural properties, mainly to be used as resort homes (Figs. 19 –21).

(Figs. 19 – 21)



Some of Wiechers’s designs for wooden houses in Ponce.¹⁶

(Fig. 22 Wiechers’s Quinta in Tibes, Ponce.)



The architect used the Creole style as the preferred model for his own country house in the outskirts of Ponce (Fig. 22). He also combined the Creole with the neoclassical and Victorian architecture in *Villa Julita*, another resort home design by Wiechers for the Vendrell family in the cool highlands of Aibonito¹⁷ (Fig. 23) This combination created a residence, which even with Creole mix looks atypical to its surroundings.

(Fig. 23. Villa Julita)



In **Quinta Vendrell**, Wiechers created this very same effect. **Quinta Vendrell** its also one of only two wooden structures still standing, designed by Wiechers.

As an architecture historian reflects, “*Ponce succumbed to Alfredo Wiechers’ enthusiasm for innovation*”.¹⁸ This enthusiasm changed after 1917. With the entrance of the United States in the First World War, just like in the continental US, locally the situation for all those having German ascendancy or connected to the German government will encounter a very hostile

¹⁶ Archivo Histórico de Ponce. Colección Alfredo B. Wiechers.

¹⁷ *Villa Julita* was included in the NRHP in December 19, 1986.

¹⁸ Jorge Rigau. *Puerto Rico 1900...*p. 122.

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atmosphere. Wiechers (who had German ascendancy and whose father was a German political representative) resented what he described as an unjustified persecution and a continual discrimination against his work by Ponce's officials.

(Fig. 24. Wiechers in the 1940s.¹⁹)



Alfredo B. Wiechers left Puerto Rico and went back to Barcelona in 1918. He never returned to the Island and never did any other work in architecture. A.B. Wiechers died in Barcelona, Spain, on July 15, 1964. He left a body of work in Ponce of an impressive quality; enough to considered Wiechers a true master. His works had become synonymous with the aristocratic past of the city of Ponce.

¹⁹ Op. Cit.

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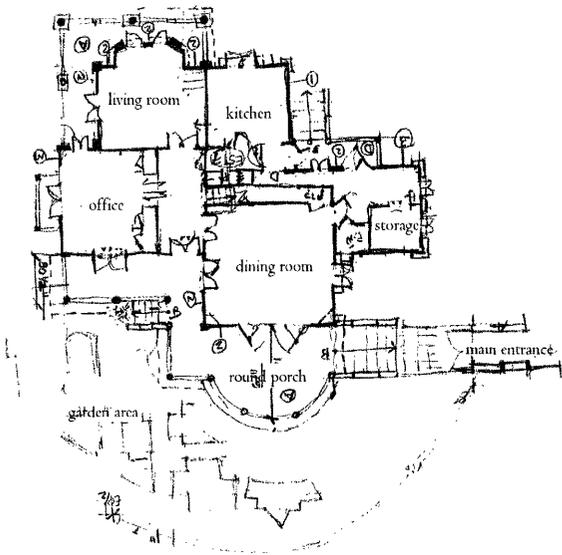
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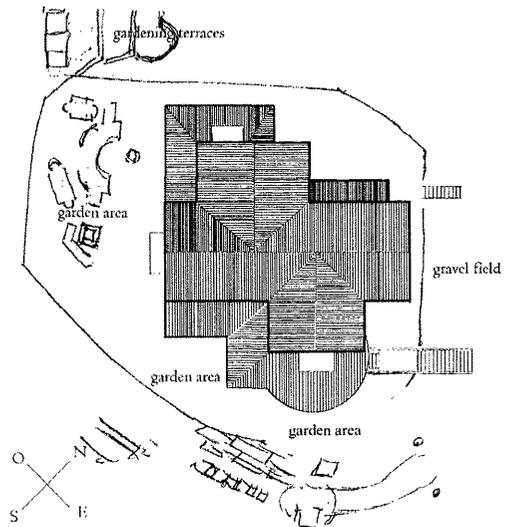
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First Floor Plan

Roof Plan



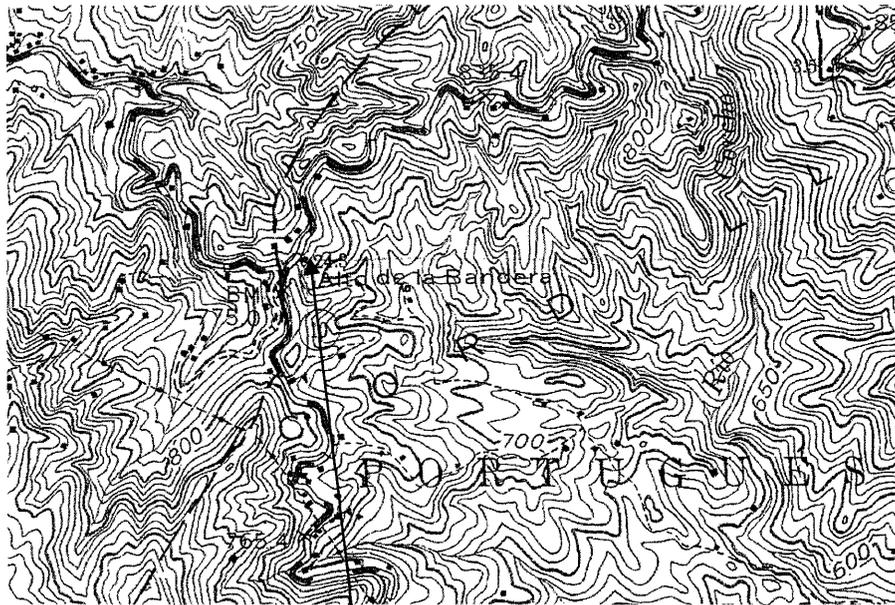
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Site Map



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Partial views of Quinta Vendrell

