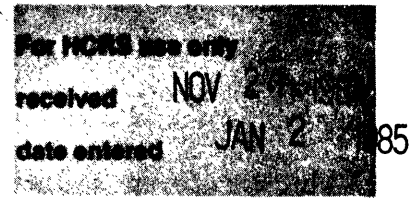


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

**1. Name**

historic OLD URBAN CEMETERY

and/or common CEMENTERIO MUNICIPAL

**2. Location**

street & number At the foot of Cuesta Vieja \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Aguadilla \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district

state Puerto Rico code 00605 county Aguadilla code 005

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b> ___ district ___ building(s) ___ structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site ___ object	<b>Ownership</b> ___ public ___ private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both <b>Public Acquisition</b> ___ in process ___ being considered	<b>Status</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied ___ unoccupied ___ work in progress <b>Accessible</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted ___ yes: unrestricted ___ no	<b>Present Use</b> ___ agriculture ___ commercial ___ educational ___ entertainment ___ government ___ industrial ___ military	___ museum ___ park ___ private residence ___ religious ___ scientific ___ transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Cemetery</u>
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**4. Owner of Property**

name Municipal Government

street & number City Hall Building

city, town Aguadilla \_\_\_ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00605

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registro of Deeds

street & number Progreso Street, Courthouse

city, town Aguadilla state P. R. 00605

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

date \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The old urban cemetery spreads between the foot of the mountain and the beach, close to the town's north entrance. It is enclosed by mortar and stone walls. The western wall was partially torn down in 1887 by pounding surf. In 1918 a serious earthquake damaged or destroyed many old tombs which were made of bricks, stone, and mortar. It has a small chapel at the entrance. The masonic Mausoleum stands in an annex which was built in the 1920's.

The Aguadilla cemetery is an old depository dating back to 1814. It is located at the foot of a hill overlooking the bay of Aguadilla (Caribbean Sea) and surrounded by the urban ward where nearly towns people live. Since the original cemetery was not intended to cope with growth of the small 19th. century ville which was Aguadilla at the time, over-growth soon saw fit that a more modern and ample facility be built. For almost one and a half centuries people of all social status were buried at this location leaving memories of their past lives on their epitaphs and monuments to show their opulence or lack of it, and architectural and historial landmarks of the old ville's social register.

Diversity of styles in tombstones, mausoleums, obelisks, statues, monuments and niches, constitute an archive of one and a half century of colonial history. The entrance to the cemetery shows an open portal overlooking the North side of the hill, which contains the more modern section (after 1920) (Exhibits 2A,B,D); and the portal of the mausoleum's frontispiece which leads to the old section, where antique tombs of different sorts are forever present. (Exhibits 2C,F,G,H).

In the old section, the entrance to the temple mausoleum sports a triangular frontispiece, an altar and a closed crypt where the remains of an old political figure rest. (Exhibits 2A,C). Giving way into the old section a second arched opening (Exhibit 2A) leads to a typical 19th. century neo-classical spanish monument with a historical epitaph and twelve low relief miniature doric columns. Besides it, a small fat obelisk of a smiliar date is aparent (Exhibit 2F). Further down, antique niches, and an octagonal cupola monument are also aparent (Exhibits 2G,H).

The more recent section depicts larger obelisks, triangle frontispiece temples and statues, obituaries of long lost politicians, poets and statesmen. (Exhibits 2D,E).

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> social
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Cemetery

**Specific dates** 1813-14      **Builder/Architect** Engs. Insular Government

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

After burials were forbidden in church grounds, the first Public cemetery was built in 1814 on what was formerly a small sugar cane hacienda. There are valuable old tombs made of Italian marble, with statues, fine carvings, and artistic decorative details. Beneath the chapel is located the burial vault which belongs to the family of the great poet-laureate José de Diego. Other noteworthy tombs are those of poet-laureate José de Jesús Esteves, and painter Rafael Arroyo Gely, whose statue was carved by sculptor Alberto Vadi. The Del Valles' (1814) belongs to one of Aguadilla's oldest families. The Méndez del Villar gravestone, dated 1848, bears in marble the coat of arms of the military commander of the district of Aguadilla and of the Concepción Fort, there being only two such tombstones on the Island. Beneath the Esteves family obelisk is buried Major General Luis Raúl Esteves, the first Puerto Rican to graduate from the West Point Military Academy and to attain the rank of Adjutant General; he was Commanding General of the Puerto Rico State Guard. Upon construction of the Municipal graveyard in the Calero Ward twenty five years ago, the old cemetery has been in disuse, with the exception of occasional usage, of pantheons belonging to ancient families of the locality.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview with Professor Herman Reichard  
Ramón Añeses Morell, Apuntes para la Historia de Aguadilla

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 4,404 sq. meters

Quadrangle name Aguadilla

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UMT References 18°-26'-28" Lat. North, 67°-09'-04" Long. West.

A 

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** The property is bounded to the North by Cuesta Vieja St; to the South by Carmen Gómez Tejera School, to the East by Cuesta Vieja Street, and to the West by Bay of Aguadilla.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eng. José Rafael Bourdony, J. B. Associates

organization Centro Cultural José de Diego date

street & number Ave. San Carlos, Box 966 telephone 891-1458

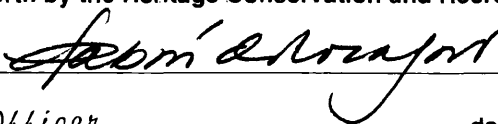
city or town Aguadilla state P. R. 00605

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date November 8, 1984

For HCRS use only

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



date 1/2/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration