

**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 CASA DE LOS PONCE DE LEON

and/or common " " " " "

2. Location

street & number Dr. Santiago Veve Num. 13 _____ not for publication

city, town San Germán _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district N/A

state Puerto Rico code 127 county Mayaguez code 00920

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Aurelio Tió

street & number Dr. Santiago Veve Num. 13

city, town San Germán _____ vicinity of _____ state Puerto Rico

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Main Plaza

city, town San Germán _____ state Puerto Rico

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventario de Monumentos Históricos has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Institute of Puerto Rican Culture

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

The house of the descendants of Ponce de León in San Germán is a two story residential building of rubble masonry walls with a cantilevered balcony at the second level running the full width of the facade. The street level has five doorways with direct access from the sidewalk, two on each side of the central, arched entranceway, which is of greater proportions and flanked by two pilasters similar to the ones that define the vertical limits of the street floor. The other 4 doorways are rectangular, capped by molded hoods. The street facade is extended to the right to incorporate an entry for the carriage. The balcony, originally of wood, was substituted by one of concrete and iron. The forked columns sustain a roof which extends below the cornice and parapet. The four louvered doorways are also capped by molded hoods.

The main entrance opens into a hallway that runs the full length of the house, giving access to the staircase on the right of its axis, other rooms on either side, and the rear patio. The stairs rise to a vestibule with archways opening to the living room towards the front and the dining room towards the rear. The space flows gracefully from the front balcony through the central axis, which in turn gives access to the bedrooms.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates XVII - XX th centuries **Builder/Architect** Original Unknown - Baron Capriles, 1905
Alfredo Nazario - Alsina, 1954

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

According to local historian Aurelio Tió, before founding the original settlement of what is now San Juan, Don Juan Ponce de León (first colonial governor of Puerto Rico), was among the first inhabitants of San Germán, one of the oldest towns in Puerto Rico. The architecture of the town belongs mostly to that undatable local variation of the colonial style either in its commercial or residential manifestation, and the so-called colonial style proper, highly utilitarian masonry structures, provided with many doors to the street, meant to aid the commercial transactions to which this style was invariably dedicated. This architecture is not exclusive to San Germán, as it is present throughout the south of the island.

La Casa de los Ponce was most probably constructed in the middle of the XVIIth century, and altered in different periods. Information on the original builders is lacking.

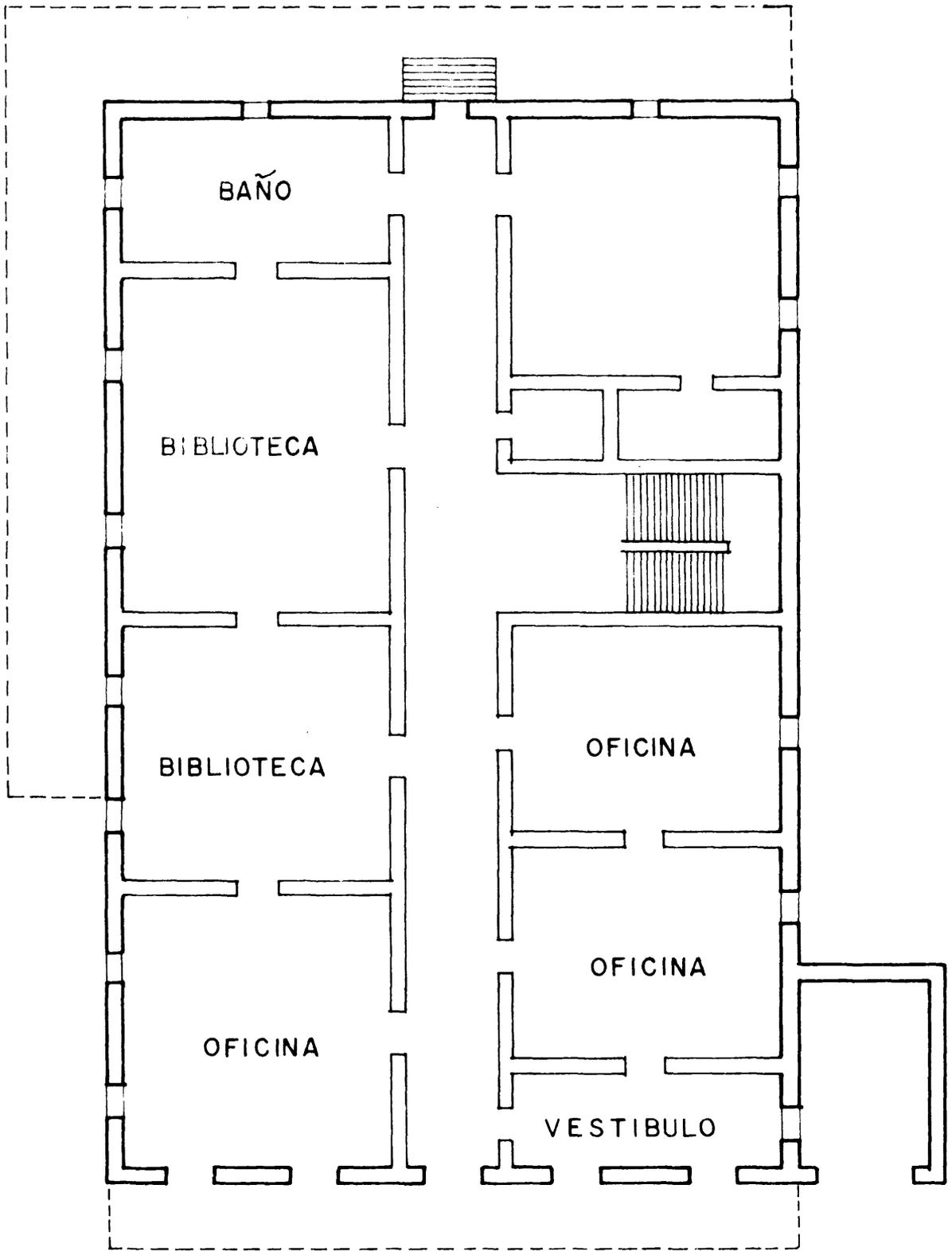
We do know that Baron Capriles was in charge of the 1905 alterations and Alfredo Nazario Alsina in 1954. These alterations consisted of installation of a modern sanitary system, electrical wiring, repair of wood roofs and floor and steel reinforcement for the masonry walls after the 1918 earthquake, among others.

La Casa de los Ponce derives its significance from the fact that it was built by Ponce de Leon's direct descendants. It is possibly the oldest residence in continuous use in San Germán.

It's most famous resident was poetess and educator Lola Rodríguez Ponce de León one of the most prolific of the XIXth century Latin American women poets. The bronze plaque on the facade reads:

"In this house lived, until her marriage to publisher Bonocio Tió, Lola Rodríguez Ponce de León, born September 14, 1843 in San Germán died November 10, 1924 in Havana, Cuba.
Poetess, Patriot, Educator. "Circulo de Recreo de San Germán, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña".

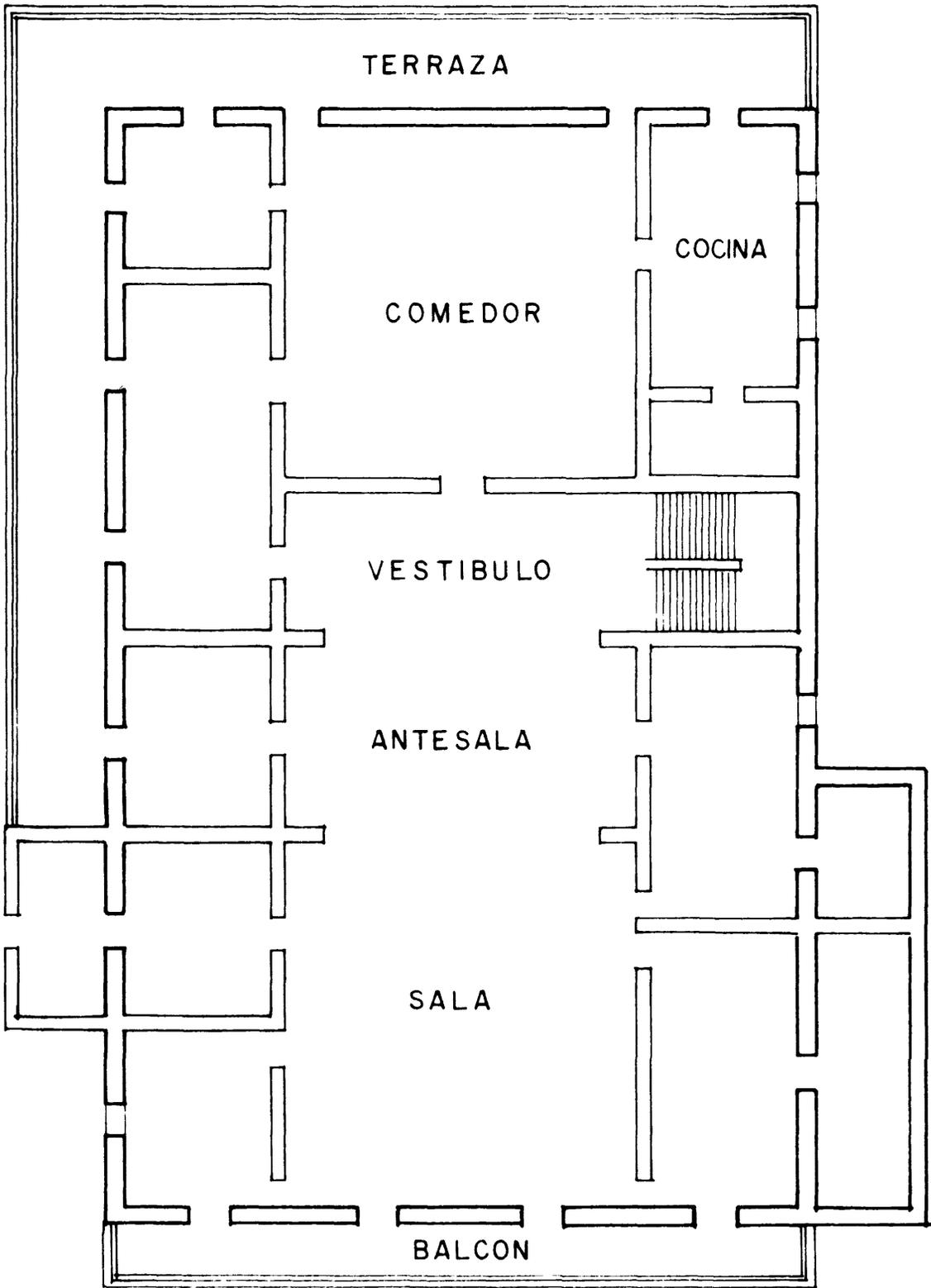
In the library of this ancestral home are kept her letters and other writings, part of her furniture, paintings and other memorabilia. From this room the distinguished writer corresponded with the most notable personalities of the Hispanic American and European intellectual world. The writer's archives and library, of great cultural and historic value, and the house, of architectonic and sentimental relevance, are of considerable significance in Puerto Rico. Their conservation and habilitation as a museum, library and local archives, will undoubtedly enrich the cultural heritage of Puerto Rico.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

not to scale

CASA DE LOS PONCE San German



SECOND FLOOR PLAN not to scale

CASA DE LOS PONCE San German