

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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 QUEENS BUILDING, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Rutgers University

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New Brunswick

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
fifteenth

STATE

New Jersey 08903

CODE

COUNTY
Middlesex

CODE

023

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- ___ DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- ___ STRUCTURE
- ___ SITE
- ___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- ___ PRIVATE
- ___ BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- ___ IN PROCESS
- ___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- ___ UNOCCUPIED
- ___ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- ___ YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- ___ NO

PRESENT USE

- ___ AGRICULTURE
- ___ COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ___ ENTERTAINMENT
- ___ GOVERNMENT
- ___ INDUSTRIAL
- ___ MILITARY
- ___ MUSEUM
- ___ PARK
- ___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ___ RELIGIOUS
- ___ SCIENTIFIC
- ___ TRANSPORTATION
- ___ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Rutgers, the State University, Edward J. Bloustein, President

STREET & NUMBER

New Brunswick

CITY, TOWN

New Jersey

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Bayard Street

CITY, TOWN

New Brunswick

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1935

FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input 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 DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A large fieldstone structure of dressed brownstone on the south side and rusticated brownstone on the north. It measures 116 feet wide and 54 feet, 2 inches in length. James Chapman was the mason and Jehiel and John Vorhees were the carpenters.

A description of the early building is extracted from the college archives:

"The building committee under Abraham Blauvelt was extremely busy selecting a site, having plans drawn, and supervising construction. After considering various locations, the Trustees, in November 1807, accepted an offer from the heirs of James Parker, a distinguished citizen of Perth Amboy, of a five-acre site, soon augmented by the purchase of slightly more than an acre. Bounded by Somerset and George Streets, this tract became the present Queen's Campus. Once the site had been chosen, preliminary building plans, prepared by the noted New York architect, John McComb, were studied. After undergoing several alterations dictated by the need for economy, the final plans were approved in June 1808, and the cornerstone of the building was laid with appropriate ceremonies on April 27, 1909.

The building was designed to accommodate the academic work of the Grammar School, the College, and the Theological Seminary. In addition, provision was made in the two wings for apartments for two faculty members. Oddly enough, in view of the general practice at the time, there were no living quarters for students, although it was foreseen that an extension might sometime be constructed for that purpose. The first and second floors were divided into large classrooms while the third floor remained for some years unfinished. Handsomely proportioned and built of brown stone, the building was almost entirely lacking in ornamentation except for four pilasters on the front, extending from the top of the first-story windows to the roof. McComb, its designer, was the architect of several New York City churches and had also collaborated on the design of the City Hall there. Respected today for its fine architectural qualities and revered as "Old Queens," the building, with its varied uses through the decades, epitomizes much of the history of Rutgers.

Construction was carried forward rapidly by the several contractors engaged by the building committee. By the fall of 1811, the fabric of the structure had been completed and the interiors of the two wings and the first floor of the central portion were ready for occupancy. At that point it was necessary to suspend further work because of a shortage of funds. By that date, nearly \$20,000 had been expended, an amount far in excess of the \$12,000 originally contemplated."

The facade rises 35 feet, six inches to the roof line and on the south side four giant order pilasters in the Doric order frame the central pavilion.

(continued)

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 type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1808-09

BUILDER/ARCHITECT John McComb, Jr. (1763-1853)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This handsome Federal style building was the original college of Rutgers University designed by one of the best known architects of that time.

Queens College was founded in 1766 by the Dutch Reformed Church of America under a royal charter. The first charter was lost, and in 1770 George III, through William Franklin as colonial governor of the Province of New Jersey, issued a new charter which is still preserved.

The war of the Revolution paralyzed the activities of the college, leaving it practically without funds or buildings. In 1807 there was renewed activity as far as college was concerned. Through the efforts of James Parker of the Perth Amboy family, a gift of five acres was given to the college from the Parker estate.

A building committee was appointed and John McComb of New York was selected as the architect. McComb, well known in New York, was the son of an English architect and had himself designed New York City Hall with J. F. Mangin, Saint Marks-in-the-Bowery in New York, a series of lighthouses at Montauk, Eaton's Neck and Cape Henry. He was also the architect of Castle Garden in Battery Park as well as Alexander Hamilton's Manhattan country home, "The Grange."

Construction began in the fall of 1808 or early in 1809; the date stone above the doorway is inscribed 1809; the cornerstone was laid on April 27, 1809. The building was not actually finished until 1825 and it cost approximately \$30,000. It was occupied, however, before it was completed. The east and west wings were used as living quarters for two of the professors. The central portion was used for classroom purposes; no provision was made for boarding students. The original idea was to use the building for the grammar school, for collegiate work, and also for the theological college.

Early in the nineteenth century the collegiate activities were discontinued for a time. In 1816, except for a wing occupied by one of the professors and a room for the grammar school, the building was offered to the Dutch Reformed Church of America for a theological college. Collegiate activities were to be discontinued until the Board of Trustees saw fit to resume them. For a while the property was in the possession of the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church.

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There are pedimental gables with bulls-eye windows on all four sides of the building. The roof is a gable surmounted by a wooden cupola containing the old school bell. There are four interior brick chimneys with interior fireplaces intact with carving in the Adam style. There have been some modifications on the interior to make Old Queens adaptable as a modern administrative center.

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The building has always been at the core of college activities and houses the administrative offices today.

Henry J. Hardenbergh (1847-1918), the architect, was a native of New Brunswick and was responsible for several campus buildings (Geology Hall, Kirkpatrick Chapel).