**1 NAME**

HISTORIC: Old East; East Building

AND/OR COMMON: Old East

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER: Cameron Avenue, campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

CITY, TOWN: Chapel Hill

VICINITY OF: Second

STATE: North Carolina

COUNTY: Orange

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>PRESENT USE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
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<td>X_OCCUPIED</td>
<td>AGRICULTURE</td>
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<td>X BUILDING(S)</td>
<td>_PRIVATE</td>
<td>_UNOCCUPIED</td>
<td>_COMMERCIAL</td>
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<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>_BOTH</td>
<td>_WORK IN PROGRESS</td>
<td>_EDUCATIONAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
<td>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</td>
<td>ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td>_PRIVATE RESIDENCE</td>
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<td>_OBJECT</td>
<td>_IN PROCESS</td>
<td>_YES: RESTRICTED</td>
<td>_ENTERTAINMENT</td>
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<td>_BEING CONSIDERED</td>
<td>_YES: UNRESTRICTED</td>
<td>_RELIGIOUS</td>
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<td>_NO</td>
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**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

STREET & NUMBER: Office of the President, South Building

CITY, TOWN: Chapel Hill

VICINITY OF: 27514

STATE: North Carolina

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Available descriptions apply to portion of the University campus and do not provide specific information relating to Old East

STREET & NUMBER: 

CITY, TOWN: 

STATE: 

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE: North Carolina Inventory of Historic Properties

DATE: in progress

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Division of Archives and History, Survey and Planning Section

CITY, TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina
DESCRIPTION

Old East stands on the north side of Cameron Avenue just west of Alumni Place at the heart of the original campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Just west of the building is the Old Well, the original source of water for the university, covered in 1897 with a temple-style structure of eight Doric columns supporting a low dome. With the neighboring South Building (begun 1800) and Old West (1822-24), Old East defines the lower end of the university’s present northern quadrangle, a tree-dotted open space known as McCorkle Place.

Designed by James Patterson and built by Samuel Hopkins, Old East was begun in October, 1793, and completed in January, 1795. Constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond, the building was two stories high and ten bays long (approximately 96 by 40 feet) with a gabled tin roof. Entrances were located in the third and eighth bays on the long front and rear (east and west) facades. In 1822-24, William Nichols, North Carolina’s state architect, raised the building one story to match the three-story West Building (now Old West) which he was then constructing.

New York architect Alexander Jackson Davis made further changes in Old East in 1844-45. He extended the building five bays at its northern end, created a new northern facade with three-story pilasters flanking a center entrance, and added a bracketed cornice typical of his work in the Italianate style. The brick of both the addition and the 1822 story is laid in common bond. Davis also added one-story porches on the eastern facade of the building covering the original entrances and a window in the center of the five bay addition; the center porch is three bays wide, those flanking it one bay.

Old East was condemned as unsafe in 1922 when it was discovered that some of the building's walls had bowed as much as three inches. By 1925 the firm of Atwood and Nash had installed a fireproof concrete frame in the building and it was put back in active use. The eastern porches were restored at the same time but no significant alterations in the exterior lines of the building were made.
PERIOD
PREHISTORIC
1400-1499
1500-1599
1600-1699
1700-1799
1800-1899
1900-

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW
COMMUNITY PLANNING
ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC
AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE
ART
COMMERCE
COMMUNICATIONS
COMMUNICATIONS

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
CONSERVATION
ECONOMICS
EDUCATION
ENGINEERING
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
INDUSTRY
INVENTION

RELIGION
LAW
LITERATURE
MILITARY
MUSIC
PHILOSOPHY
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES 1795; 1822-24; 1844-45
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
Old East is the first state university building constructed in the United States. Dedicated in 1795, it was the original home and for many years the entire physical plant of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the first state university in the nation to open its doors to students.

When completed Old East was a simple brick building, two stories high and ten bays long with a gabled roof. During the 19th century the building was raised one story, lengthened five bays, and given Italianate detailing designed by noted architect Alexander Jackson Davis. Necessary repairs were made to the frame of the building in 1922-24 but its exterior lines were not altered. Now in good condition, Old East is still in active use as a freshman dormitory; the building is not open to the public.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The Revolutionary era witnessed both a growing interest in higher education and a broader acceptance of education as a public responsibility. The result was the development of a new concept in American education--the state university. The first state university to be chartered in the United States was the University of Georgia (1785), but the first to open its doors to students was the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In accordance with Article 41 of the State constitution of 1776, the University of North Carolina was chartered by an act of the State legislature on December 11, 1789. Ten days later a companion act was passed providing for the construction of academic buildings and for support of the university through escheats and arrearages due the state. After an initial State donation, however, the university was maintained with difficulty through private donations until 1881 when the legislature began making annual appropriations for it.

(Continued)
The site chosen for the new university was New Hope Chapel Hill, named for the nearby Anglican New Hope Chapel. The cornerstone of the first building, now known as Old East, was laid in October, 1793, by William R. Davie, who had played a major role in the enactment of the legislation providing for establishment of the university. Designed by James Patterson and built by Samuel Hopkins, the building was dedicated in January, 1795. The first student, Hinton James, arrived four weeks later. James constituted the entire student body for another two weeks, but by the end of the first term enrollment had reached forty-one, with a faculty of two professors.

The university was administered by a "presiding professor" until 1804 when Joseph Caldwell was appointed its president. Under his direction (1804-1812; 1817-1835), the university developed from a small classical school to a creditable liberal arts college. By 1835 it was widely known as a center of sound scholarship, a reputation which has grown with succeeding years.

Old East grew with the university during the first half of the 19th century. In 1822-24 William Nichols, North Carolina's state architect, added a story to the original building. Further changes were made in 1844-45 by Alexander Jackson Davis, whose New York firm had recently completed the North Carolina State Capitol. Davis extended the building five bays at its northern end, constructed the one-story porches along its eastern (front) facade, and added a bracketed cornice at the eaves. Davis's work on Old East led to contracts for other university projects, among them the design of the Playmakers Theatre (1851, originally called Smith Hall).

The University of North Carolina remained in operation during the Civil War though it graduated only four students in 1864. Three years later, however, the rigors of reconstruction led to its closing. The university was re-opened in 1875 and has continued in operation since that date. Its physical plant now consists of some 70 major buildings on a 600-acre campus. Old East remains in active use as a freshman dormitory. Though necessary repairs were made to the interior framework of the building in 1922-24, no significant change has been made in its exterior lines since the period of Davis's work.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Battle, Kemp R. History of the University of North Carolina, 2 volumes, 1789-1829 and 1830-1912 (Raleigh, 1897-12, 1-17).
Henderson, Archibald. The Campus of the First State University (Chapel Hill, 1841).

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre
UTM REFERENCES
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
The boundary of the National Historic Landmark designation for Old East are the foundation lines of the building including the parches.
(Note: Old East also lies within the boundaries of the Chapel Hill Historic District nominated to the National Register of Historic Places by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History.)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE: Billy R. Gottig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by Frank R. Carles Jr., Historian, 4/10/80
ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service
STREET & NUMBER: 1100 I Street NW
TELEPHONE: 202-522-8444
CITY OR TOWN: Washington
STATE: District of Columbia

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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE: N/A National Historic Landmark
TITLE: 
DATE: 

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE: 

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARcheology AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST: 
DATE: 

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
| Battle, Kemp P. History of the University of North Carolina, 2 volumes, 1789-1863 and 1868-1912 (Raleigh, 1907-12, 1912). |
| Henderson, Archibald. The Campus of the First State University (Chapel Hill, 1949). |
| Tewksbury, D. G. The Founding of American Colleges and Universities before the Civil War (New York, 1932). |
Commencing at a point on the east curb of Columbia Street and the north curb of Cameron Avenue, proceed along Cameron Avenue N64° – 36'E, 1135' to the west edge of a brick sidewalk, the point of Beginning; thence with the edge of brick sidewalks the following three calls (1) N25° – 24'W, 164'; (2) thence N64° – 36' E, 76'; (3) thence S25° – 24'W, 164' to the north curb of Cameron Avenue; thence with Cameron Avenue S64° – 36'W, 76' to the point of Beginning.

UTM 17.675900.3975850
Playmakers Theatre
Cameron Avenue
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina (Office of the University Engineer)
Scale: 1"/100 feet
June, 1968

Latitude: 35° 54' 43"
Longitude: 79° 03' 09"