

FORT HILL, TRUSTEE HOUSE  
(McElhenny-Calhoun-Clemson House, Trustee House)  
Clemson University Campus  
Clemson  
Pickens County  
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-344-D

HABS  
SC  
39-CLEM,  
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
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## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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### FORT HILL, TRUSTEE HOUSE (McElhenny-Calhoun-Clemson House, Trustee House)

**Location:** The Trustee House is situated in the Clemson University Campus, Clemson, Pickens County, South Carolina. East of the dwelling called Fort Hill, the Trustee House is near the intersection of Fort Hill Street and Calhoun Drive.

**Significance:** Built in 1889, the Trustee House was ready for occupancy by 1893. As such, it is one of the oldest buildings on the Clemson University campus. Tradition holds that the architectural firm Bruce and Morgan of Atlanta, Georgia, designed the building because that firm is responsible for Tillman Hall.

The Trustee House is described as a Victorian vernacular building. It is made from locally made bricks and probably constructed by convict labor. This is plausible because the State of South Carolina assigned forty to fifty-five convicts as laborers to Clemson University. The convicts were detailed to Clemson in 1889.

**Description:** The Trustee House is a two-story rectangular building of stacked brick construction. There is a 18'0" x 4'0" covered porch on the front. The porch is wood. There were three single chimneys, two in the main living area and one in the kitchen, serving the house. The chimney stacks have since been removed from the roofline. The main entrance is on the north facade; it has glass panes and a transom above. The roof is a hip/gable combination with a shingled surface. Most of the windows are two-over-two double hung sash, however, some are one-over-one and retain hinges for shutters. The sills are stone and the lintels are wood. There are dormers on the north and south sides.

The original floor plan had a central hall with two rooms on each side. The central hall plan was repeated on the second floor. The house also included a kitchen, placed on the rear of the southeast facade. The central stair is made of sturdy oak. The floors today are covered with carpets. The wall and ceiling finish is plaster. One carved mantel is uncovered.

The hardware, in most instances, has been updated. Historically, the house was heated by fireplaces. Today, steam radiators provide heat for the house. Air conditioning via window units cool the interior. Electrical lighting was installed in the 1920s; later the lighting was re-done with fluorescence tubes. Plumbing exists on the first and second floors.

The historic landscape design included several large deadora cedars and ginkos.

The original structure was 46'0" x 60'0". The house was altered structurally in 1958 and 1966. One addition (17'0" x 46'0") provided extra office space. In the original portion of the house, the ceilings are 11'0" high and in the additions they are 9 1/2'0" high. Together, the initial house and its additions measure 46'0" x 77'0".

**History:** The house was one of ten faculty cottages constructed with local bricks. It was initially the residence of Col. Hardin, then Head of the Chemistry department. Later it was used by the Trustees for meetings, a function reflected by its name today. Also the Trustee House served as an infirmary during a flu epidemic in 1918, as an administration building, as home to the Alumni Association, and finally as

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the site of the public affairs department of the university.

Sources: Materials used include the Nomination form for structure and district, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., architectural drawings, and early views.

Historian: William D. Hiott, Summer 1997.