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THE CHARTER

By W. H. S. DEMAREST

IN THE Rutgers Library is a copy of the second charter of Queen's College, now Rutgers University, printed in the year of its granting, 1770. The first charter of Queen's College was granted by George III through Governor William Franklin of the Province of New Jersey, November 10, 1766. The original of this is not in the possession of the University and is not known to be in existence. No copy of it in manuscript or printing is known. The second charter was granted by George III and Governor Franklin, March 20, 1770. The original document, like that of the first charter, has not been found. The copy printed in the very year of its granting is by reason of its date, therefore, of especial interest and importance.

Its value is the greater because it is the only copy of this particular printing known to be in existence and because no other very early printing of the charter is known. It was secured by the library thirty-five years ago at the auction of books and documents of the deceased Samuel Smith Purple, M.D. of New York City. The listing of it in the auction announcement gave to Rutgers the first knowledge of its existence and its purchase was accomplished. Dr. Purple (1822-1900) was an eminent physician, a leader in his profession, especially in the advancing of its organized life in the city and of its library resources, a founder of the Academy of Medicine, president of it 1875-78, founder of its library, inaugurating it with the gift of his own 5000 volumes on medical science and practice. He was a lover of books, keenly sensitive to the value



JACOB RUTSEN HARDENBERGH

No likeness of the first president of Queen's College was known to exist until this silhouette was acquired by the Library last Spring.

of old printings and manuscripts, devoted to the study of biography and genealogy, editor for some years of the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*. His private library was one of the largest in the city. For it he had acquired at some time and from some unknown source the copy of the Queen's charter probably through his sense of its rare historic and literary value rather than from any personal interest in the college.

Its value for the quality of its printing and the name of its printer is also in point. The printer was John Holt (1721-1784), at the Exchange, New York. He was one of the great printers of the colonial period. Of Williamsburg, Virginia, he practiced his art there, then at Norfolk, then at New Haven with James Parker, then from 1760 in New York. A member of the English Church, he was yet ardently devoted to the cause of independence, a vigorous writer in this and other controversies. Away from New York in Revolutionary years, he carried on his printing for a time at Kingston (Esopus) and Poughkeepsie. His first publication at New Haven was an edition in Latin of the Statutes of Yale College: "Liber Primus Novo-Portu Impressus." In the printing of the Queen's charter his choice of type with the variety and arrangement of it composed a book of rare dignity and beauty.

The rare interest of this printed copy of the charter lies in still further detail. At the end of the text, between it and the signature "Pettit" (Charles), the secretary of the Council of the Province, is the official advice: "By desire of the Trustees within named none of the copies of the foregoing Charter are to be delivered or held to be genuine but such as are subscribed by Peter Zabriskie, Esq." The copy before us carries the written signature of Peter Zabriskie. The writing of so long ago is faint, easily escaping notice, but the name is perfectly clear. He was a trustee, of the colony of New Jersey, his home at Hackensack.

Again, the binding in which the copy of the charter is enclosed is highly significant. The name of the binders appears in very small print within the cover, Riviere and Son. They were bookbinders, not in the United States, but in London. It appears, therefore, that this printed copy of the charter had been sent or taken to England, possibly for some official notice

C H A R T E R

O F A

C O L L E G E

T O B E E R E C T E D I N

N E W - J E R S E Y,

B Y T H E N A M E O F

Q U E E N ' S - C O L L E G E,

F O R the Education of the Youth of the said Province and the Neighbouring Colonies in true Religion and useful Learning, and particularly for providing an able and learned Protestant Ministry, according to the Constitution of the Reformed Churches in the United Provinces, using the Discipline approved and instituted by the national Synod of Dort, in the Years 1618, and 1619.

Printed by *N E W - Y O R K,*
J O H N H O L T; at the *E X C H A N G E,*

M,DCC,LXX.

and filing. The year of its binding is 1880 or later, since the son does not appear in the Riviere title until that year. Robert Riviere began his bookbinding in London in 1840 or a little earlier. He became greatly distinguished, was of such skill and good taste that he did work for the great collectors and for "the Queen and Royal Family," and was given commission to bind copies of a great presentation volume to be sent to "all the crowned heads of Europe." The firm continued their work until 1940, a full century. The binding of the Queen's College charter is a beautiful example of their art. The passing of this unique copy of the charter to England and its return to the United States, to the library of Dr. Purple, present an alluring subject for future study.

The occasion for the superseding of the first charter by a second, the difference between them, is not entirely clear. That a charter had been granted as early as 1766 did not receive due attention until about fifty years ago. In fact the centennial of the founding of the college was celebrated in 1870, not in 1866. The grant of 1766 and its active force appear in a call for a meeting of the trustees of Queen's College, April 4, 1767. The summons is signed by the secretary; it recites the granting of the charter November 10, 1766; it lists the trustees named in it; it calls them to convene at New Barbadoes (Hackensack) on the second Tuesday of May 1767. Several further meetings of the trustees were held prior to 1770. Since the exact wording of the first charter is not known, it cannot be precisely compared with the wording of its successor. It may be fairly inferred, however, that they agree in almost every particular. Almost at once after the first grant, however, there was a request for alteration of it. Such petition was read before the Council of the Province, June 27, 1767; Hendrick Fisher and other trustees were present to support it; it failed of favorable action. At a meeting October 4, 1769, the trustees again presented a petition, praying to be relieved from some embarrassment attending the charter, especially its "allowing the distinction between residents and non-residents of their colony." They said that support of the college must come from outside the colony as well as from inside it, that such support was prejudiced by words of the charter. The Council at Burlington, November 24, 1769, recommended to

the Governor that he grant the desired change. His action to this effect took the form, not of amendment to the charter of 1766, but of a new charter, March 20, 1770.

What few words were changed does not appear. It is readily supposed that the reference to residents and non-residents relates to residents of the colony of New Jersey and residents of New York, with Pennsylvania also probably in mind. The list of trustees named in the new charter shows no substantial change from the names given in the call issued under the first. Of the forty-one men, twenty-one are of New York, and twenty of New Jersey including four state officers—two of the twenty more accurately perhaps of Pennsylvania. The names correspond almost without exception: John Covenhoven is substituted for John Van Metern (Van Mater?); and in three instances the first name is changed, because, possibly of a verbal error in one list or the other. It would appear, therefore, that the question was, not of numbers resident in each colony, but of some special status or privilege given the trustees resident in New Jersey.

The royal and colonial charter of Queen's College, March 20, 1770, confirmed with minor amendments by the Legislative Council and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, June 5, 1781, remains, with later amendments, the document upon which Rutgers University maintains its life and work of education.

The copy printed by John Holt in 1770 in the best printing art of the time reposes in the Rutgers archives, a treasure of especial distinction.



Courtesy of the New York Public Library

From a Sketch by A. J. Davis

VIEW OF NEW BRUNSWICK IN 1820, SHOWING QUEENS COLLEGE AT RIGHT

Nous Benjamm. F. R. A. N. K. L. I. N.
Coryer, Ministre Plenipotentiaire des
Etats Unis de l. Amerique, pres Sa
Majeste Tres Chretienne,

P. R. O. N. S tous ceux qui sont à prier,
de vouloir bien laisser surement & librement
passer M. Spier, ^{Citoyen de l'Etat}
^{de la Rep. Hollandoise,} et ayant avec lui
^{une femme qui}
sans donner ni permettre qu'il lui soit donné
aucun emp'chement, mais au contraire de lui
accorder toutes sortes d'aide & d'assistance,
comme nous serions en pareil cas, pour tous
ceux qui nous feroient recommandes.

En foi de quoy nous
avons delivré le present passeport, valant
pour un mois, signé de notre main,
contresigné par l'un de nos Secretaires, &
au bas duquel est l'empreinte de nos Armes.

D O N N E à Passy, en notre
Hotel, le 8^{me} mil sept cent quatre
vingt trois

Benjamin Franklin



Par ordre du Ministre Plenipotentiaire.

W. S. Franklin sc

THE RUTGERS PASSY PASSPORT