

Santa Maria Mission (Ruins)  
Near St. Mary's, Camden County, Georgia.

HABS No. 14-18

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District No. 14  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
P. Thornton Marye, District Officer  
62 Bartow St., N.W., Atlanta, Georgia

SANTA MARIA MISSION  
Near St. Mary's, Camden  
County  
Georgia.

Owner: Not given.

Date of Erection: 1650-75.<sup>1</sup>

Architect: No record.

Builder: No record.

Present Condition: Ruins.

Number of Storeys: Two or more, originally.

Materials of Construction: Tabby.

Other Existing Records: See illustrations in Bolton, H.E., The  
Debatable Land, frontispiece and  
opposite page 24.

Additional Data: See following pages.

<sup>1</sup>See Gardens of Colony and State, vol.2, page 272.

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HISTORICAL NOTES:

"In 1566 the Spanish, under Mendenez, came with 'sword and cross' to convert the Indians. Five miles from the present Saint Mary's they erected a mission of tabby (from the Spanish word 'tapia')".<sup>1</sup>

According to the title of a photograph in Gardens of Colony and State, this building was a Mission School for Indian boys and called, "Santa Maria de Godelopes", built 1650-75.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See the Historical Sketches of the Golden Isles of Guale, by the Cloister Hotel, page 66. There is reason to doubt the accuracy of this approximate date of erection, 1566. Although Bolton in his Debatable Land shows St. Mary's Mission on his map of Georgia in Spanish days, he does not include this mission in his list of missions existing in 1655. The mission is also not mentioned in Lowery's Spanish Settlements Within the Present Limits of the United States, 1513-74.

<sup>2</sup> See volume 2, page 272.

(~~Original sheet in field notebook~~).

by Henry Chandler Forman  
March 1936

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ARCHITECTURAL NOTES:

The floors, the interior and exterior stucco finish, and the roof have been destroyed, leaving only tabby walls thirteen feet high. The mission is really a monolithic concrete structure. The horizontal marks of the layers of tabby are visible on the present walls, which are sixteen inches thick. The sockets and rebates for door and window frames also show in the tabby construction.

The plan is a rough "T", one hundred twenty-two feet nine inches long by seventy-two feet nine inches wide. There are two porches with square piers on east and west sides. The entrance front was probably on the north side. The south room has rows of small one by three foot windows set high in the wall.

by *Henry Charles Brown*  
Henry Charles Brown  
March 1936