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SCHOOL HOUSE DATES BACK TO REVOLUTIONARY DAYS

By HAMPTON DUNN

ST. AUGUSTINE --- Antiquity is the stock in trade for this, "The Ancient City," and one of the interesting attractions here is "the oldest wooden school house." It stands at 14 St. George St. just inside the old stone city gates and as a result is usually one of the first stops on a tourist's visit.

Maps of the first Spanish occupation of St. Augustine, as well as the time-worn beams, and planks of the structure itself are cited as evidence of the antiquity of the school house. The story goes that it originally was built as a private residence about the time of the American Revolution. First occupant was believed to have been the guard for the City Gate, which was the main land entrance to the town which protected the small village from enemy invasion by land.

At a later time, a private school was operated in this small building. The schoolmaster lived upstairs and taught his pupils in the room below. The house was built of hand hewn cedar clapboards and is the only remaining wooden building of its era left in St. Augustine.

The old Spanish kitchen in the garden is of unusual interest. At the rear of the garden is the "Grove of the Educators" containing statues of Latin American educators.