

A Visual Documentation of Fil-Hispanic Churches – Part XIX: The Church of San Pablo Apostol in Cabagan Viejo (Now San Pablo), Isabela

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A tower above the trees

Traveling from Tuguegarao to Tumauni, one may espy a solitary tower rising above the trees along a fairly lightly populated road. If one has the time and curiosity to approach the structure, one is pleasantly shocked by a magnificent church ruin dominating a grand plaza. There is another “shock” as one realizes that there are no grand buildings that ordinarily would have framed such a sprawling plaza. This is San Pablo, but this was not its original name, nor was it a “sleepy town” a century and a half ago. It is, in fact, the oldest Christian town in Isabela. To unravel its travails in history would be a complicated project, but we have attempted to provide a sketch of the church’s vicissitudes. (In this article, present-day San Pablo with its church complex will be referred to with its historic name, Cabagan. In the division of historic Cabagan in 1888, the original Cabagan was re-named Cabagan Viejo, which is today’s San Pablo; the younger Cabagan was named Cabagan Nuevo, today’s Cabagan.)

First Christian missions in Isabela

The beginnings of Christianity in Isabela province may be traced to Dominican missionary activity in the northern part of this territory in the late sixteenth century. The Dominicans established their regional base in Nueva Segovia (now Lalloc), along

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the banks of the Cagayan River in 1595. From here they diligently made evangelizing expeditions up the river, settling communities or “reductions” of converted natives along the river banks. The first three Dominican missions or “houses” in Isabela were accepted by the intermediate provincial chapter of the Dominicans on May 24, 1598. These were San Pablo de Pilitan, San Ildefonso de Nalavangan, and Santa Catalina de Siena de Maquilá—the ancestral settlement of today’s San Pablo. Pilitan seems to have been located on the confluence of the Siffun and the Cagayan River, near the Hacienda de Santa Isabel;¹ Nalavangan, a day and a half’s journey northwest of Pilitan, was possibly along the Mali or Siffu River or similar waterway.²

It seems that Maquilá was a settlement along the mouth of the Pinacanauan de Maquilá, a small river that joined the Cagayan River on its right side. Letters by a Dominican in 1879 place Maquilá a league north of the center of town of Cabagan (as San Pablo was known then), where there were a number of small lakes, ponds, and creeks.³ There was a small barrio “Santa Catalina de Maquilá” noted in Cabagan in 1877,⁴ while there was another “Maquilá” in Santa Maria, a town on the left side of the Cagayan River which separated from Cabagan in 1879.⁵ (It will be recalled that present-day Pilitan, now a barrio of Tumauni, is also on the left bank of the Cagayan River.) Maquilá may have been a zone that traversed both banks of the Cagayan, which could explain the presence of its name in the two towns. It is also possible that the Pinacanauan de Maquilá originally joined the Cagayan further north than its present mouth.

The Dominican historian Julian Malumbres attributes the name Maquila to the clear (*quilat*) waters of the river which generally were crystalline in comparison with the more turbulent Cagayan. Similarly, the Pinacanauan translated to “the clearest” derived from *nauag*, another word for clear. This name was given to clear

¹ Julian Malumbres, O.P., *Historia de la Isabela* (Manila: Tip. Linotype del Col. de Sto. Tomás, 1918), p. 580. Today, there is a barrio Pilitan along a curve on the left of the Cagayan River, just south across from Tumauni and a short distance north of Santa Isabel. In the Dominican chapter *Acta* of 1598, Pilitan was the only mission in the area which had a privileged altar for the Holy Souls. The other nearest areas were much further north: Nueva Segovia (Lallo) and Pata.

² Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 579.

³ Jose Gurumeta, O.P., “Copia del informe [...], Cabagan 8 de mayo de 1879,” (henceforth Gurumeta 1879a), APSR, Sec. Cagayan Tomo 25, doc. 18., f. 17v; Jose Gurumeta, O.P., “A los causales que alega el Señor Gobernador...,” circa 1879,” (henceforth Gurumeta 1879b), APSR, Sec. Cagayan Tomo 25, doc. 18., f. 34. A tobacco warehouse formerly in Maquilá was relocated to Ugad, seat of what was to be Cabagan Nuevo (present-day Cabagan).

⁴ Pedro Ricart, O.P., “Cabagan,” in “Respuesta de los Pp. de la Isabela a los cuestionarios de 1877 y 1888,” 1877, APSR, Sección Cagayan, Tomo 1, f. 231v.

⁵ Jose Brugués, O.P., “Descripción del valle de Cagayan,” 1900, APSR, Sección Cagayan, Tomo 2, f. 155. Ricart (above) bases much of his writing on a “manuscrito antiguo” which seems to have been available to Brugués as well. Though Ricart’s account is earlier than Brugués, there are details in the latter not present in the former.

tributaries along the Cagayan River, distinguished by their toponymic such as Pinacanauan de Tuguegarao, Pinacanauan de Cabagan, Pinacanauan de Tumauni, and Pinacanauan de Ilagan.⁶

Dominicans moving south of Maquilá established four new missions during the next decade: Santa Maria de Talama (accepted in the chapter of 1604), in the environs of Lapogan between present-day Ilagan and Tumauni; San Gabriel de Bataug (1612), near today's Lulutan, Gamu; Asunción de Nuestra Señora de Abuatan or Abbuatan (1617), situated in Bangag, on the right bank of the Pinacanauan de Ilagan; and San Miguel de Bolo (1619), on a place near Naguilan and Baculud, the early site of Ilagan.⁷ These missions were found in the area roughly comprising the northern half of present-day Isabela province and the southernmost part of present-day Cagayan which was known by the Spaniards as La Irraya; the name stems from *daya*, the pan-Philippine word for upriver, in this case with reference to the Cagayan River. Speakers of Irraya lived in Maquilá and Tuguegarao;⁸ this language was eventually to be displaced by Ibanag, which had been declared as early as 1606 to be the language used, studied, and propagated by the Dominican missionaries in their evangelizing work throughout the present areas of Cagayan and Isabela.⁹ Those who lived in Abuatan, Bataug, Bolo, Nalavangan, and Pilitan were classified by the Spanish chroniclers as Gaddangs, whose language on the other hand was preserved in dictionaries, catechisms, and other works prepared by the Dominicans for their apostolate.¹⁰ Gaddangs and Irrayas lived in Talama and, as shall be seen below, in Cabagan. Towards the west, Dadayag was spoken; the Negritos in the east spoke Atta.¹¹

It took some time for the faith in the La Irraya missions to take root. The status of Maquila seems to have been reduced to a *visita* or mission station, for in the

⁶ Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 579-580.

⁷ Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 580-582.

⁸ Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 580; Felix Keesing, *The Ethnohistory of Northern Luzon* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 248. Father Jacinto Pardo, acknowledged to be the first to write a grammar of Ibanag, also learned the Irraya language when he was assigned to Tuguegarao. He died in Pilitan in 1605. Juan Ferrando, O.P., *Historia de los PP. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas, ...* (Madrid: Imprenta y estereotipia de M. Rivadeneyra, 1871), Vol. I, p. 521; Eladio Neira, OP, ed., *Misioneros Dominicos en el Extremo Oriente*, (Manila, [Provincia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, 2000]) Vol. I, p. 90.

⁹ Ricart 1877, f. 232v; Brugues 1900, f. 152; Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 582. For a slightly different analysis, where Irraya is seen more as the name of a region than a language, see Keesing, pp. 238-239, 246; one small group east of Ilagan is still called Irraya: *ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁰ In the chapter of April 16, 1606, missionaries of Pilitan, in Irraya, were instructed to have the natives learn Ibanag, the language of the northern coasts and Siguiran (the northern section of Cagayan, centered in Lallo), so that all the towns up to Gamu could be administered by one language, instead of four (that is, Ibanag, Itaves, Irraya, and Gaddang). Ferrando, I, pp. 523-524.

¹¹ Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 489.

chapter of May 9, 1604, it was listed in conjunction with the acceptance of the house of San Pedro Apostol de Tuguegarao, thus: “*domum S Petri Apostoli de Tuguegarao et de Maquila*” (likewise, Nalavangan was conjoined with Pilitan). On May 13, 1615, just three years after its foundation, Batauag was abandoned by its people who returned to the mountains.¹² On the 6th of November 1621, the people of Abbuatan—then the largest and richest settlement in the Cagayan Valley—together with those of Pilitan and Bolo rose in arms against the Spaniards who owned *encomiendas* in these areas.¹³ In the struggle, these settlements were destroyed and the inhabitants returned to the mountains.

Re-settlement in Maquilá

Father Pedro de Santo Tomas trudged the banks of the tributaries on both sides of the Cagayan River to re-unite those who had remained loyal to the faith to form a new settlement. Three hundred or so families from the Gaddangs from the Siffu—a large river which empties into the left bank of the Cagayan, between Pilitan and Santa Isabel—and Irrayas from the Balasig—a river which empties into the right bank of the Cagayan and serves as a boundary between Tumauni and Cabagan—accepted the intrepid Dominican’s offer. On November 21, 1622, they were regrouped in Santa Catalina de Maquilá, bringing with them the images of Our Lady and of San Pablo, patron of Pilitan.¹⁴

The families were settled in four points on both sides of the Pinacanauan de Maquila (later known as Pinacanauan de Cabagan): Maquila (the principal settlement), Cabagan, Batu, and Luquilu.¹⁵ The new mission was accepted as a

¹² On this incident, see Ferrando, I, pp. 629-631.

¹³ This was the third such revolt among the Irrayas; Ferrando, Vol. II, p. 47. There were to be more uprisings, the three most serious in 1678, 1718, and 1763. Malumbres says the people of Cabagan shared with their neighbors in Tuguegarao “and in general with the rest of the Irraya” a bellicose nature; Julian Malumbres, O.P., *Historia de Cagayan* (Manila: Tip. Linotype de Sto. Tomás, 1918), p. 379. Dominican historians attribute these rebellions to the protectionist attitude of the Christian Cabaganes toward their lucrative trade with the pagans. Realizing that their monopoly over the trade would be diminished as pagans were converted and reduced into communities, certain unscrupulous Christians fomented unrest that discouraged the pagans from conversion, and led those recently converted to return to the mountains. On the 1678 unrest led by Baladdon, see Ferrando, Vol. III, pp. 321-322; Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 22-23, 583; and Keesing, p. 254. On that in 1718, which began in northern Cagayan and caused many in Tuguegarao and Cabagan to flee to the mountains, see Ferrando, Vol. IV, pp. 199-209; Malumbres, *Cagayan*, p. 57. On the 1763 rebellion, begun in Ilagan by Dabo and Juan Morayac and then spread to Cabagan and Tuguegarao, see Ferrando, IV, pp. 685-686; Keesing, p. 259.

¹⁴ Ferrando II, p. 56; Ferrando III, p. 319; Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 583; Neira I, p. 89. Many chronicles in Spanish on Cabagan have been translated by Pedro Salgado, 2002, making these sources accessible to many other people: see Pedro V. Salgado, O.P., *Cagayan Valley and Eastern Cordillera 1581-1898*, (n.p.: The Author 2002), Vol. I, pp. 388-420.

¹⁵ As we shall see much later in the 19th century, Luquilu was proposed to be the site of the new Cabagan.

“house” by the provincial chapter of May 20, 1623, under the patronage of Saints Peter and Paul (*domo Ss. Apostolorum Petri et Pauli de Maquila*). Father Lucas Garcia was the first minister of Maquila, with assistants Fathers Jeronimo de Zamora and Alonso Garcia, and Brother Antonio de San Vicente. In 1633, the community of the house of Saint Paul of Maquila was increased with the establishment of a new mission, the *visita* of San Juan Bautista de Analu, or Amaleg, but its name does not recur in the succeeding records. In this same year the question of saintly patronage between Tuguegarao and Maquila was settled: Saint Peter was confirmed as patron of the former and, with Pilitan extinguished (a move to re-establish Pilitan in 1627 met with failure in 1629), Saint Paul adjudged the patron of the latter.¹⁶

Final settling down in Cabagan

Considering that Maquila was a little too near Tuguegarao, authorization was given to transfer the settlement further south to Cabagan, an elevated plain about three expanded leagues south of the latter.¹⁷ Cabagan was established as a civil town on November 30, 1646, and accepted as a separate *vicaría* or vicarage (the equivalent of today’s parish¹⁸) known as San Pablo de Cabagan in the Dominican chapter celebrated on May 15, 1647. Malumbres records the place to be between the barrios of Batu and Luquilu (now a barangay on the western end of Cabagan Nuevo, on the right bank of the Cagayan). It is possible that the geographic name of the Pinacanauan changed from “de Maquila” to “de Cabagan” some time after this transfer. To the east were the mountains known as Buguiao.¹⁹ The first Dominican vicar was Father Luis del Rosario Oñate, who was assisted by Fathers Teodoro de la Madre de Dios and Bernardo Lopez.²⁰ During the term of Father Antonio Gomez de Espejo (1648-1652), a church, school and tribunal of light materials were constructed.²¹

Father Malumbres, who spent many missionary years up and down the Cagayan Valley, gives two sources for the name Cabagan. The first is from *bag*, derived from *bahag*, a loincloth, which seems to have been one of the principal items obtained here after having been sourced through the plains of Diffun (the ancient name for the

¹⁶ Brugués 1900, 152. According to Father Jose Gurumeta, parish priest in Cabagan from 1878-1880 and 1886-1888, remains of the walls of the church built in Maquilá (1622-1646) could still be seen in his time: “Relación de los Padres y vicarios, que han residido en Cabagan” [hereafter Gurumeta 1888], APSR Sección Cagayan, Tomo 25, f. 25.

¹⁷ Gurumeta 1888, f. 25v; Malumbres, *Cagayan*, p. 306.

¹⁸ The *vicaría* or vicarage is the precursor of the parish as we know it today, which in the Philippines was developed in the latter part of the 18th century. It is different from the *vicariato* or vicariate, an administrative division within a diocese.

¹⁹ Ricart, “Cabagan,” f. 231.

²⁰ Ricart 1877, f. 231v; Brugués 1900, f. 152; Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 476, 582-583; detailed dates and places in Malumbres, *Cagayan*, p. 376.

²¹ Gurumeta 1888, f. 25v.

area encompassing Gamu up to the border with Nueva Vizcaya), especially in the town of Camarag (today's Echague), where it was exchanged for salt, iron, and other items. The second is from *cabbagang*, a traveler, which to Malumbres seemed more apt since it could refer to the traders who roamed the plains and rowed the rivers down to Diffun to trade with the pagans of Camarag. The Dominican historian adds that Cabagan was early on a residence for both Gaddangs and Irrayas.²²

Father Pedro Ricart, writing in 1877, listed his parishioners' primary industry as the growing of tobacco. Less importance was given to the growing of rice and corn. In earlier times, the natives had looms from which they turned out ordinary items of clothing such as shirts, trousers, sashes, shawls, and blankets. In Ricart's time, weaving was only practiced by the pagans in the nearby mountains, where some form of pottery was also engaged in.²³

From its establishment in 1646, Cabagan remained the southernmost vanguard of Hispanic-Christian civilization in the Cagayan Valley, until the foundation of Ilagan, Gamu, and Itugud some 32 years later (1678).²⁴ For this reason there was a detachment of soldiers in Cabagan. The barracks eventually grew into a triangular stone fort with two bastions, but it was destroyed in an earthquake and by 1738 had been rebuilt in Cabcungan, on the northwestern shore of Cagayan.²⁵

Building the church of Cabagan

Cabagan was consistently the second or third most populous town in the Cagayan Valley until way into the 19th century. Accordingly, its significance was reflected in its church, second only to Tuguegarao in size and height.

The first church of stone is said to have been built by Father Juan Pavon, minister in Cabagan for three terms (1656-1661). In this endeavor, Father Pavon—and his town's builders—must be considered as pioneers working out a technology of masonry introduced quite early in the Cagayan region. For example, the church in Nueva Segovia (Lallo) was built of stone but was destroyed by the earthquake of November 1619.²⁶ Much of the church in Malaueg (now Rizal) begun before 1641

²² Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 582.

²³ The recent yearly collections averaged from 100 to 110,000 *fardos* (bundles) of tobacco, at ten to twelve *reales* per *fardo*. Ricart 1877, f. 232.

²⁴ Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 8, 15. These last three towns were founded by Father Pedro Jimenez, O.P., indefatigable missionary and builder of churches in Fotel and Capinatan (Apayao): *ibid.*, pp. 659-660.

²⁵ Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 583; Fray Juan Francisco de San Antonio, O.F.M., *The Philippine Chronicles of Fray San Antonio* [...] (Manila: Historical Conservation Society (Vol. XXIX), The Franciscan Fathers, and Casalinda, 1977 [first published 1738, Manila]), p. 362.

²⁶ Ferrando, I, pp. 730-731.

and reconstructed in 1651 is extant, including the façade.²⁷ The church and convento in Fuga, Babuyan, Cagayan, were constructed at the latest by 1660.²⁸ An imposing vault of masonry built around 1675-1676 over the presbiterium of the church in Fotal (now Pudtol, Apayao) still stands.²⁹ The church of Ilagan was built of brick between 1686 and 1688.³⁰ Other 17th century structures are those at Tocolana (now a barangay of Lallo), and Nassiping,³¹ and possibly those at Pata (in Sanchez Mira) and Tuao, all in Cagayan province.

The church built by Father Pavon had three naves and a vault of stone and a large convento. It was a well-appointed church, as manifested in an inventory of silver items made just a year after he finished his assignment (1662). Among others, there were a large processional cross with an accompanying pair of candle poles, four chalices (two of which were gilded), four large and six candle stands, a sanctuary lamp, and crowns and rosaries of various sizes for the images of Our Lady and the Holy Child, all of silver.³²

Much of Pavon's church collapsed in the earthquake of 1688.³³ Further damage was caused by a fire in 1709.³⁴ (Ironically, the privileged altar for souls reserved for Pilitan had just been transferred to Cabagan two years earlier.³⁵) The church seems to have remained unscathed in the 1718 rebellion mentioned above.

The cavernous vault over the presbiterium including the daring *arco toral* (the so-called triumphant arch, separating the presbiterium from the nave) was rebuilt in brick by Father Gabriel Serrano. This builder-priest (1662-1722) erected the bell-tower of Tuao when he was there from 1690 to 1692, as well as the façade of Buguey (1704-1708), and must have directed the work in Cabagan while he was stationed in

²⁷ Regalado Trota Jose, "Parish Church of San Raymundo de Peñafort, Rizal (formerly Malaueg), Cagayan," *Philippiniana Sacra*, XLVI:138 (September-December, 2011), p. 694.

²⁸ Regalado Trota Jose, "The Church of Saint Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins in Fuga Island, Babuyan, Cagayan," *Philippiniana Sacra*, LIII:158 (January-April, 2018), p. 121.

²⁹ Regalado Trota Jose, "A Visual Documentation of Fil-Hispanic Churches. Part XVII: Churches in Fotal and Capinatan, Apayao," *Philippiniana Sacra*, LIII:159 (May-August, 2018), p. 327.

³⁰ Neira, I, pp. 246-247.

³¹ Benito Legarda y Fernandez, "Angels in clay: the typical Cagayan church style," *The Filipinas Journal of Science and Culture*, 2, (1981), p. 71.

³² "Libro e imventario de la plata [...]" in APSR, Sección Cagayan, Tomo 11, doc. 8, fols. 37v-38. Copy made in 1776 of an original prepared in 1662.

³³ Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 583. No earthquake was recorded for this year in the standard catalogue of earthquakes in the Philippines. There were several violent ones the year before, but no notable damages were reported. Miguel Saderra Masó, S. J., *Catalogue of Violent and Destructive Earthquakes in the Philippines [...] 1599-1909*. (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1910).

³⁴ Valentin Marin y Morales, O.P., *Ensayo de una síntesis de los trabajos realizados por las corporaciones religiosas-españolas de Filipinas*, Vol. 2 (Manila: Imprenta de Santo Tomas, 1901), p. 673.

³⁵ Ricart, "Cabagan," f. 232.

the next town of Tuguegarao (1720-1722).³⁶ Under the direction of Father Diego de la Torre who was assigned to Cabagan for many years (1720-1722; 1723-1727; and 1729-1731), the church was re-built with a single nave, together with the convento. Father de la Torre is reported to have been assisted by Salvador de la Cruz and Ambrosio Calingayan, who was “a church singer skilled in architecture and painting,” about whom we know next to nothing.³⁷

It appears that the apse of the mid-17th century church with its two large collaterals was retained and enclosed in the early 18th century renovation, and strengthened with massive buttresses. The two collaterals indicate the original three-naved plan; somewhere along the middle of the church’s axis the nave was narrowed, giving the impression that the collaterals form a somewhat narrow “transept.” The narrowing of the nave may indicate a decrease in population, as when several residents transferred to the new town of Tumauni in 1752,³⁸ or when a cholera epidemic in March 1758 took away 512 souls.³⁹ The parish books dated not earlier than 1755 according to a report in the 19th century,⁴⁰ which implies a population event, if not an un-recorded disaster like a fire.

Apart from rehabilitating the church, Father de la Torre also erected chapels in some of the outlying areas. This was in compliance with the recommendation of the Dominican provincial who, after making his canonical visitation around Cagayan, recommended in 1724 that chapels be constructed in the principal barrios of the larger towns. This was perhaps in view of preventing the kind of unrest that broke out only a few years ago in 1718.⁴¹ In Casibaran (today’s Casibarag), Father de la Torre built a chapel dedicated to Santo Domingo de Guzman, who is believed to have saved many people from crocodiles. (There is still a chapel dedicated to Santo Domingo in

³⁶ Marin, p. 673; Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 583; Neira, I, pp. 245, 279. This shows that parish priests could rely on their confreres or other persons to direct their constructions, even though they were not based in their communities.

³⁷ Legarda, p. 81; Legarda adds that the façade of the church was crafted by a Filipino stonemason “solely from the description given to him of a church in South America,” *ibid.*, p.71. Sources for this and for de la Cruz and Calingayan are not given.

³⁸ Tumauni had been a *visita* of Cabagan since the time of Father Diego de la Torre in the 1720s. Its growth was nurtured by the ministers of Cabagan until it gained its spiritual and civil independence on April 11, 1752. Those who moved to the new town were exempted for three years from *polo*, or community work. Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 594.

³⁹ Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 71, 583. A reduced population resulted in the decreasing of length or width of churches as seen in Malaueg (now Rizal), Cagayan, (Jose, 2011, p. 694); and in Basco, Batanes [Regalado Trota Jose, “A Visual Documentation of Fil-Hispanic Churches. Part 1. Batanes,” *Philippiniana Sacra*, XLV:135 (September-December, 2010), p. 687]. Also around 1758, the vicar then, Father Jose Marin, was able to set up a distillery for wine and a mill for sugar: Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 71, 583.

⁴⁰ Ricart, “Cabagan,” f. 232v.

⁴¹ Malumbres, *Cagayan*, p. 58. From this year, 1724, is dated the Ermita de San Jacinto in Tuguegarao.

this district, just north of Luquilu). Another was dedicated to San Diego de Alcalá in Garita, a barrio just north of the Balasig River separating Cabagan from Tumauni, which then was a visita or mission station being developed by Father de la Torre.⁴² Perhaps, it was during this period that the chapel dedicated to San Vicente Ferrer (now a ruin surrounded by the local cemetery) was also erected. This chapel had its own sacristy and stone fence, and it was only later that the cemetery was built around it.⁴³ (This area could have been Batu, one of the four points in the original Maquila of 1622, considering that the other points—Maquila, Cabagan, and Luquilu—have already been accounted for.)

Father Manuel de Mora, who accompanied the Dominican provincial on his ecclesiastical visits to the Cagayan churches in 1805, wrote a glowing report of the Cabagan church. It was single-naved and of brick, and had five altars. The central one was all of molave, carved the year before [1804] by an old native of the town. Though the church was dedicated to the conversion of Saint Paul, the patron was depicted as a solo figure. The convento was of brick and although it was spacious with its three rooms, it was old and low. (This seems to be the *antiguo convento* attached to the *sacristia antigua* to the rear of the church, referred to in an 1898 inventory.⁴⁴) The tower to the right had four bells. The largest was cast in 1787 and dedicated to Santo Domingo de Guzmán; although it sank in a ship, they were able to retrieve it. There were three other bells, one of them consecrated in Tuguegarao during the visit of Bishop García.⁴⁵ (None of these bells are extant, though at least one of them was recast in 1855 during the term of Father Tomás Alonso.)

A few years later, the church and convento were thoroughly renovated by Father Manuel García (*casi a fundamentis*, almost from the ground up, according to his biographer). This Dominican was assigned in 1810, and would have continued serving upon his re-appointment on April 30, 1814, had he not died just a few days later, on May 5, in the church of his labors.⁴⁶ If the inscriptions on the baked clay insets on the atrium walls can be read as “1813” (they also read like 1818 or 1819), then this attractive section of the church complex could be attributed to Father García. The name of the master who worked on the insets can also be made out as Domingo Babaran or Pabaran.⁴⁷

⁴² Malumbres, , *Cagayan*, p. 58; Neira, I, p. 729.

⁴³ The original cemetery was located to the right of the church: “Propiedades,” 1898, p. 24.

⁴⁴ “Propiedades,” 1898, p. 24.

⁴⁵ Malumbres, *Cagayan*, p. 335.

⁴⁶ Neira I, p. 404.

⁴⁷ Legarda, p. 78; Ma. Teresa P. Quevedo, “The churchyard wall of San Pablo,” [1993] (Paper in the Regalado Trota Jose Archives, Manila Archdiocesan Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, Arzobispado de Manila), p. 40.

With the church standing magnificent, the succeeding parish priests for the next half a century worked on improving other infrastructural aspects of Cabagan. Father Antonio Garcia, minister from 1841 to 1844, directed the building of the tribunal in stone diagonally to the south-east from the church.⁴⁸ An inscription formerly over the entrance indicated it was finished in 1846 (sadly, it was burned around 1857). He commissioned two stone bridges on the road to Tumauni, and a similar one towards Tuguegarao.⁴⁹ Father Tomas Alonso, parish priest from 1846 to 1858, commissioned three stone bridges on the road towards Tuguegarao, and improved the road to Tumauni. He re-decorated the church of Cabagan, as what he had done during his terms in Malaueg (1835-1841) and Piat (1841-1846).⁵⁰ A bell in the tower is a rare witness to his activity: the 1787 Santo Domingo bell mentioned by Father de Mora in 1805 bears Alonso's name, when it was recast in 1855.

Challenging times

Disaster struck in 1866 when a huge fire consumed both church and convento, during the term of Father Jose Alonso, more painfully because it occurred during his first year of office. Undaunted, he worked to have both structures rehabilitated, and the church re-decorated upon his last year in 1872. One of his successors in the parish implies he accomplished this despite difficulties from both the authorities and the town's elite, without giving any other details.⁵¹

Perhaps it was these same "difficulties" that prompted Father Pedro Ricart, parish priest from 1874 to 1878, to work for the removal of the town from its 230-year old seat. As early as 1875, he had already planned the move because of the unhealthy conditions of the old site, the steady flow of people away from the town to smaller and distant farmlands, and the mysterious "tyranny of a significant family." Initially it was to be moved to Luquilu (one of the four settlements by the Pinacanauan de Maquila in 1622) but a decree dated January 25, 1877, moved the resettlement a bit further east to Ugad (as noted earlier, the tobacco warehouse had been transferred from Maquilá to Ugad). Ricart also claimed that by this time Ugad was the more populated part of town. Father Ricart's motion for the construction of a new church on Ugad, replacing that in the old town, was approved by the Governor General on February 23 later that year.⁵²

⁴⁸ Marin, II, p. 673.

⁴⁹ Gurumeta 1888, f. 26v.

⁵⁰ Gurumeta 1888, f. 26v; Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 583; Marin, II, p. 673; Neira, I, p. 476.

⁵¹ Gurumeta 1888, f. 26v; Marin, II, p. 673; Neira, II, p. 87.

⁵² Ricart, "Cabagan," fols. 231-234v.

In a counter petition addressed to the Governor General on December 25, 1878, the people of Cabagan pointed out that their town was not unhealthy at all. In truth, thin friars who began their ministry here ended up leaving robust—look at Father Ricart! Secondly, they claimed Ugad was hardly populated. In reality, they claimed it was dangerous to cross the Pinacanauan between Cabagan and Ugad during any time of year. During the rainy season, the river was subject to flash floods. During the rest of the year, people had to make their way over a bed of rough pebbles and stones which not only absorbed but reflected the heat of the sun and caused untold suffering and sickness. The petition contained about 1,150 names (mostly signed with crosses) on 22 pages.⁵³

Father Ricart left for his new assignment in Tuguegarao in May, 1878. Seeing the obstinacy of the Cabaganes, he had the roofs of the church and convento taken down, and the altars with their images of the saints, vestments, and other appurtenances moved to the new church which the townspeople described as a poor *camarin* or warehouse. Ricart's successor, Jose Gurumeta, arrived in mid-1878. Appreciating the beauty of the ancient church, he repaired the roofless structure, brought back the altars and original furnishings to Cabagan, and assigned an assistant priest to take care of the spiritual welfare of the people there while he resided in Ugad.⁵⁴ In fact, he disagreed with Ricart's draconian solution and argued that Cabagan still had more advantages than Ugad.⁵⁵

As to Ricart's complaint about the "steady flow of people ... to smaller and distant farmlands," he most probably was referring to the movement of people across the Cagayan River which eventually led to the founding of the town of Santa Maria. It was separated civilly from Cabagan on March 6, 1878, and accepted as a new parish dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady in the Dominican chapter held on May 11 that same year. The founders of the town were members of the Masigan family.⁵⁶

On January 8, 1879, a petition was made to divide Cabagan in two, with the old poblacion to be separated from Ugad and to be renamed Cabagan Viejo, while the new seat would be called Cabagan Nuevo. The petitioners requested to retain their original patron San Pablo Apostol, and they agreed to voluntarily repair the church and other buildings. However, in an undated but presumably later copy of this

⁵³ "Exposicion contra el P. Fr. Pedro Ricart en 1878," Dec. 25, 1878, APSR, Sección Cagayan, Tomo 25, doc. 18., fols.1-16v.

⁵⁴ Gurumeta, 1888, f.27; Brugues, f. 154; Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 583, 663; Neira, II, pp. 105-107.

⁵⁵ Gurumeta 1879a, f. 17.

⁵⁶ Malumbres, *Isabela*, pp. 607, 663.

petition, Father Gurumeta noted that what the people of Cabagan wanted was not a division—which was the idea of the governor—but a return to the old poblacion. He added that the pages of signatures in the 1879 petition had been unbound from that of the Cabaganes and re-attached without anybody knowing except the two persons who brought the petition to the governor.⁵⁷

The next parish priest was Father Ezequiel Pinilla, who ministered from 1881 to 1886. Favoring the retention of the seat at Ugad, he recalled the assistant priest from Cabagan Viejo and transferred its images again to Cabagan Nuevo.⁵⁸ He built two small *hornos* or kilns for the manufacture of lime and brick, which were used to repair the roads and other infrastructure;⁵⁹ their remains can still be seen in barangay Minanga Norte, a short distance northwest of the church.⁶⁰

Finally, in 1887, the ancient town of Cabagan (minus Santa Maria on the left bank of the Cagayan) was split in two. The original seat of town was made independent of its offspring in the new seat in Ugad, and renamed Cabagan Viejo. The “new” town of Cabagan Viejo comprised the barrios and rancherias east of the Pinacanauan de Cabagan; those barrios and rancherias west of the Pinacanauan belonged to what was then renamed Cabagan Nuevo. The ecclesiastic and civil separation of Cabagan Viejo was effected upon the eventual impetus of Father Gurumeta himself.⁶¹ Gurumeta—who was re-assigned to Cagagan in 1886 and continued until 1888—brought back to the old church all that originally belonged to it. Since the patronage of San Pablo Apostol had been transferred to Cabagan Nuevo, the new patron of Cabagan Viejo was Our Lady of the Rosary (however in the Acts of 1894 it was still referred to as “San Pablo Apostol de Cabagan Viejo”). The parish was served by a coadjutor until the arrival of the first parish priest, Father Segundo Rodriguez, in August 1888.⁶² Like his predecessor, Father Rodriguez repaired and rehabilitated the old ruin, as well as improved the town materially and morally.⁶³

⁵⁷ Gurumeta 1879a, fols. 27-34v.

⁵⁸ Neira, II, p. 163.

⁵⁹ Gurumeta 1888, f. 27.

⁶⁰ “Propiedades [...], 1898,” p. 23; Quevedo, p. 10.

⁶¹ Cabagan Viejo was created as a town by royal decree on June 17, 1887 (Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 664). Although the same source gives January 20, 1890 as the date for the foundation of the “new” parish, this is the date of the Dominican chapter, and Cabagan Viejo is listed in its Acts among the regular parishes, not as a new establishment. Gurumeta, who was instrumental in the parish’s creation, gives the year as 1887.

⁶² Gurumeta 1888, f. 27; Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 664; Marin, II, p. 674; Neira, II, p. 207.

⁶³ Malumbres, *Isabela*, p. 583; Marin, II, p. 674; Neira, II, p. 105. Gurumeta, who while in Piat (1872-1878), had rehabilitated that town’s shrine, roofing it with galvanized iron and erecting a portico over the façade, improved the church in Cabagan Nuevo as well.

Father Rodriguez served Cabagan Viejo for ten years,⁶⁴ until his capture by Filipino revolutionaries in September 1898. He and the parish priests of Cabagan Nuevo—Father Deogracias Garcia, and Santa Maria—Father Lucio Urroz, endured fifteen months of captivity marked by torture and mockery. All received rounds of whippings with rattan. Father Garcia suffered the worst: when the commandant Villa learned that he had sent 2,000 pesos to Hongkong, his feet and hands were bound and, between bouts of suspension and dropping on the floor, about two *tinajas* (large jars) of water were poured over his nose and mouth. Father Primo Calzada, assistant parish priest of Cabagan Nuevo, was made to play music for the revolutionaries during their feasts. All three, along with their other confreres from Cagayan, were able to return to Manila on New Year's Day of 1900.⁶⁵

In the 20th century, the patronage of old Cabagan changed from Our Lady of the Rosary to Saint Paul the Hermit, an Egyptian who lived in the 4th century; his feast day is January 15. The ancient patronage of Saint Paul has been passed on through the centuries from Pilitan in 1598 to present-day Cabagan (Cabagan Nuevo), with the feast-day commemorating the Saint's Conversion, January 25.

The venerable church in old Cabagan was a ruin before World War II, as can be seen from a photograph dated 1942; perhaps only the rear part was being used. The bombs that fell all over the Cagayan Valley towards the end of the war in 1945 only exacerbated the weakness of the structures.⁶⁶

Re-tracing the building of San Pablo church

The following is an attempt at a tentative narrative of church building in San Pablo (Cabagan Viejo). The earliest masonry structures were built in Maquila, on the northern edge of town, in the 1620s; remains of these could still be seen in the 1880s. The town moved further south to its present location in 1646, and a masonry church

⁶⁴ By the end of the 19th century, Cabagan had a population of 3,644 souls (by comparison, Cabagan Nuevo had 9,012, while Santa Maria had 2,464). These were distributed among the poblacion and several barrios including Lattu, Auitan, Laguna, Ballacayu, Catentengan, Tana-p, Lumbi, Calamagui, Dalena, Antagan, Minanga, and Binguang. Apart from the church, convento, and tribunal, it had schools for boys and girls, four houses roofed with galvanized iron, and three warehouses roofed with the same material; one of these latter, located in Auitan, belonged to the Tabacalera company. The residents raised corn, rice, vegetables, and tobacco: Bruges 1900, fs. 153-155.

⁶⁵ Neira, II, pp. 158 (on Fr. Garcia), 207 (on Fr. Rodriguez), 245-246 (Father Urroz volunteered for the Batanes missions in 1903 and died there in 1940), and 300-301 (Father Calzada returned to his position as master of the *tiples de Santo Domingo*); Marin II, p. 674. Father Gurumeta, who worked so hard for Cabagan Viejo, did not live to see all these travesties, having passed on to a better life in 1893: Neira, II, 105.

⁶⁶ Legarda, p. 81; Hornedo, p. 30. Florentino H. Hornedo, (*On the Trail of Dominican Engineers, Artists & Saints in the Cagayan Valley and Batanes*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2002), p. 30.

with three naves and a stone vault was built by Father Juan Pavon during his three terms, from 1656 to 1661. An earthquake in 1688 is said to have demolished the structure. However, an examination of the layout suggests that at least the apse and the two side altars were retained and incorporated into the rebuilding of the church by subsequent vicars. Some of the rebuilding, such as the addition of the massive buttresses at the back of the church, could have taken place during the five terms of Father Francisco Nuñez Bravo (1704-1714). A fire in 1709 is said to have destroyed the church and the large convento, but it seems that subsequent rehabilitation built over and incorporated the ruins.

Father Diego de la Torre (1720-1722) is credited with reducing the church of three naves to a single one, and with building the present convento. These three naves, as was pointed out above, were retained, but the width of the church was reduced into a single nave. The break between the 1650s apse and collaterals can be clearly seen just before the middle of the present nave. Father Gabriel Serrano, vicar of nearby Tuguegarao at the same time as Father de la Torre, completed this work, constructing the vault over the apse as well as the imposing triumphal arch preceding it, in brick. This suggests that the rest of the nave was also built in brick. The lower walls of the sacristy and convent at the back of the church are also in brick.

Extending from the right side of the nave is another chapel of brick, with a separate passage to the adjoining empty field. This field, as noted earlier, was the old cemetery, and the extension may very well have been the funeral chapel. Similar arrangements of a brick chapel extending from the right side of the church, opening onto an empty field may also be seen in Tuguegarao, Malaueg, and Lallo further north in Cagayan province. Behind the present bell tower is a vine-covered quadrangular mass of brick, which may have been an earlier bell tower. If this is so, then the façade of the church may have stood approximately where the arch supporting the choirloft now stands. The brick chapel of San Vicente Ferrer, the town's secondary patron saint, may also have been built in this time.

This is the church that impressed the Dominican Provincial Father Burrillo and his secretary Father Mora on their visit in 1805. The church was all of brick, with five altars. The central one was of molave, installed there a year ago by a native artist.

We next read that Father Manuel Garcia practically rebuilt (*renovó, casi a fundamentis*) the church and convento during his term from 1810 to his death in 1814. The artistic sway-back wall enclosing the atrium, with its welcoming caliper-like “arms” at the three entrances, may date from this time. The brick insets bear dates that read 1813, although they could also be read as 1818 or 1819.

It may be hazarded that the nave of the church was elongated up to and including the present façade and bell tower. These latter two structures are unusually of stone. The walls of the nave between the choirloft arch and façade are of brick with several stone ashlar inserted, suggesting a shift in building technology. Why shift to stone? The answer is not easy to find, but there may be a clue if a stone quarry can be located.⁶⁷ There may have been a period when it was more economical to quarry stone and float it down the river rather than mould bricks from clay and fire them in kilns, supplied by great quantities of firewood. The only other church in the Cagayan Valley that has stone ornamentation is in Dupax, Nueva Vizcaya, built between 1774 and 1782.⁶⁸ Though the ornamentation in both churches may be stylistically dated to the late 18th century, there are differences in motifs that suggest the carvers were not the same for both churches. Though Cabagan's façade with its graceful S-scrolls, volutes, and bouquets is baroque which in the Philippine early 19th century would have been archaic, it seems this style reached Cagayan later than the rest of the archipelago. Another baroque "anomaly" is the pair of carved stone retablos in the niches on both sides of the "transept" which are also of stone. This section may have been originally in brick but rebuilt in stone at this time.

The stone retablos seem to be composed of pieces from another set of artwork and re-assembled here (there are gaps between the pieces, for instance). The pieces bear rococo elements and are of a style different from the façade; furthermore, they seem weathered and may have originally figured on the exterior of another structure (whether in Cabagan or elsewhere is open to question). The use of stone continued into the 1840s, when the tribunal was built under the aegis of Father Antonio Garcia. The brick lower walls of the 18th century convento were completed with stone similar to that used in the church and the tribunal.

By the 1870s, the church had a roof of tile, which Father Ricart complained was quite dangerous for a church which had "weak walls." During his time, as narrated above, he set into motion the gradual degradation of the venerable church, beginning with unroofing the church (only the tiles over the funeral chapel remained). A brick kiln was set up during the time of Father Pinilla in the 1880s; the bricks produced here may have been used to re-sheath the old walls (also of brick) with new bricks. This may be seen in the inner walls of the exposed nave.

⁶⁷ For a methodology on locating quarries for historic structures, see Rona Catherine R. Repanco, "An investigation on the stone heritage of selected churches in Pangasinan," (Master's thesis, University of Santo Tomas Graduate School, 2018).

⁶⁸ Regalado Trota Jose, "A Visual Documentation of Fil-Hispanic Churches. Part V. Parish Church of San Vicente Ferrer, Dupax del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya," *Philippiniana Sacra* XLVII:139 (January-April, 2012), pp. 164-166. The carved stone decoration is on the walls of the baptistery and the pillars supporting the choirloft.

Today, only a little more than half of the church is roofed; the area from the stone façade to the inner entrance now serves as an attractive garden among the ruins. The grand edifice with its ornate walls and vast interior space conjures up visions of a Baroque past with the flickering of many candles reflected on silver frontals, and the strains of polyphonic motets alternating with Gregorian chant; but as Florentino Hornedo wrote as an epitaph, “All that is past, of course, and now they can only be seen and heard by the inward eye and ear.”⁶⁹

Table 1. Dominican ministers of the vicarage of Cabagan (now San Pablo), Isabela

Legend for biographical citations:

BSC	Santa Cruz, Baltasar de, O.P. 1693. <i>Historia de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas</i> . Zaragoza.
FF	Ferrando, Juan, O.P. 1871. <i>Historia de los PP. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas, y en sus misiones de Japon, China, Tung-king y Formosa</i> . Edited by Joaquin Fonseca Alvarez, O.P. 6 vols. Madrid: Imprenta y estereotipia de M. Rivadeneyra.
MC	Malumbres, Julian, O.P. 1918. <i>Historia de Cagayan</i> . Manila: Tip. Linotype de Sto. Tomás.
N1	Neira, Eladio, O.P., ed. 2000. <i>Misioneros Dominicos en el Extremo Oriente</i> . Volume 1, 1587-1835 [Edited, updated and corrected version of Hilario Ocio OP’s <i>Compendio de la Reseña Biográfica de los Religiosos de la Provincia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Orden de Predicadores</i> (Manila, 1895)]. Manila: [Provincia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario].
N2	_____. 2000b. <i>Misioneros Dominicos en el Extremo Oriente</i> . Volume 2, 1836-1940 [Continuation of Ocio’s <i>Compendio</i> , updated by Gregorio Arnaiz O.P. up to 1940.] Manila: [Provincia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario].

Specific dates of assignment from 1755 to 1877 were taken from Pedro Ricart, O.P., “Cabagan,” in “Respuesta de los Pp. de la Isabela a los cuestionarios de 1877 y 1888,” 1877; APSR, Sección Cagayan, Tomo 1, fols. 231-234v.

Names in bold	Vicars or parish priests.
Indented names	Assistants or <i>socios</i> .
--	Not found in Neira
*	formerly assigned here as an assistant
b.	born
Bd.	Blessed
H.	Hermano, member of the Third Order
x	nth time assigned in the place
x ^N	Date taken from Neira

⁶⁹ Hornedo, p. 31.

Years (taken from the corresponding <i>Acta</i> and Neira 1 and 2). Please take note that information in the <i>Acta</i> may differ from other sources.	Name/ Remarks	Lifespan	Biographical source
1598 May 24. The house of Saint Catherine of Siena of Maquilá was accepted by the intermediate provincial chapter of the Dominicans. Also accepted at this time were the houses of San Pablo de Pilitan and San Ildefonso de Nalavangan; these were the first three Dominican missions in the present province of Isabela.			
1604 May 9. Maquila was listed in conjunction with the acceptance of the house of San Pedro Apostol de Tuguegarao, thus: “domum S Petri Apostoli de Tuguegarao et de Maquila.”			
1623 May 20. “In domo SS Apostolorum Petri et Pauli de Maquila.”			
1623-1625	Lucas Garcia	1575-1651	N1:120
1623-1625	Jeronimo de Zamora	c. 1589-1655	N1:116
1623-1625	Alonso Garcia	?-1625	N1:134
1623-1625	Antonio de San Vicente, hno.	?-1623	N1:114
1625-1629 (2 terms)	Jeronimo de Zamora* ; commissioned in 1627 to found a house in Irraya.	c. 1589-1655	N1:116
	Domingo Martinez		--
	Matias Rubi (appears in some manuscripts in place of Domingo Martinez)	?-c.1620	N1:119
1627-1629	Diego Rodriguez	?-1636	N1:141
1629-1633 (2 terms)	Alonso Fernandez/ Hernandez	?-1636	N1:111
1629-1631	Gaspar de Casablanca	?-1634	N1:101
1631	Juan Rodriguez		
1633 April 17. The Chapter accepted the house of San Juan Bautista de Amaleg as an annex of Maquila. The place was occasionally listed down as Analu.			
1633-1634	Gaspar de Casablanca*	?-1634	N1:101
1633-1635	Pedro de Ansa	c.1603-1656	N1:146
1635-1637	Francisco Mola	c.1582-?	N1:110
1637-1639	Pedro de Ansa*	c.1603-1656	N1:146
1639 ^N -1641	Pedro de Mesa	?-?	N1:164

1641-1643	Pedro de Ansa, 2x	c.1603-1656	N1:146
1643-1645	Jeronimo de Zamora, 2x	c. 1589-1655	N1:116
1645-1647	Luis del Rosario Oñate	1607-1678	N1:154
1645-1647	Teodoro de la Madre de Dios	1599-1662	N1:143-142
1645-1647	Bernardo Lopez	1619-1676	N1:168
1647 May 15. "...in domo S. Pauli de Cabagan" (established as an independent vicarage). Cabagan established as a town, 1646 November 30.			
1647	Pedro de Ansa/Mesa, 2x	c.1603-1656	N1:146
1648-1652 (2 terms)	Antonio Gomez de Espejo	1604 (Manila)-1678	N1:499-500
1650	Jose de Santa Maria		--
1652-1656 (2 terms)	Pedro de Ansa/ Mesa, 3x	c.1603-1656	N1:146
1652-1653	Luis Gutierrez	1625-1653	N1:180
1652-1654	Juan Rodriguez de Ladera	1622 (born in Mexico but grew up in Lallo, Cagayan)-1670 (Cabagan)	N1:511
1654	Miguel de Gaona	?-1654	N1:127-128
1654-1656	Francisco Castellanos	1627-1656	N1:180
1656-1661 (3 terms)	Juan Pavon ; builder of the first church of stone, with three naves and a vault of masonry.	c.1619-1666	N1:168; BSC p. 490
1659	Antonio Martir		--
1661	Bernardo Lopez*	1619-1676	N1:168
1661-1663	Esteban de Rivera	1636-1675	N1:193
1663-1665	Juan Pavon, 2x	c.1619-1666	N1:168
1663-1665	Melchor Vigil	1636-1673	N1:194
1665-1668 (2 terms)	Francisco de Santo Domingo	1633-1668 (Cabagan)	N1:194
1667-1669	Pedro Jimenez	1642-1690	N1:207-208
1669-1671	Antonio Gomez de Espejo, 2x	1604 (Manila)-1678	N1:499-500
1669-1670	Juan Andres Ruiz	1626-1670	N1:513

1671-1673	Salvador de Santo Tomas	1626-1696	N1:193
1671-1673	Francisco de Olmedo	1644-1706	N1:208-209
1673-1675	Tomas de Leon Araujo	1632-1681	N1:191
1673-1675	Melchor de Lorenzana	1644-1684	N1:223
1675-1677	Tomas Bultiel	1628 (Belgium)-1685	N1:193, N2:741
1675-1677	Francisco de Olmedo, 2x	1644-1706	N1:208-209
1677-1680 (2 terms)	Pedro Jimenez*	1642-1690	N1:207-208
1677-1680 (2 terms)	Jeronimo de Ulloa [secretary of the Provincial Diego de San Roman, sent by the Provincial himself: FF III, 307]	1644-1701	N1:219-220. FF III, 745-749.
1680-1682	Tomas Bultiel, 2x	1628 (Belgium)-1685	N1:193, N2:741
1680	Rafael Moret	1650-1680	N1:228
1680-1684	Pedro Jimenez*; in 1680, he was assigned to take care of the Diffun/ Sifun mission.	1642-1690	N1:207-208
1680-c.1684 ^N	Francisco Matoces	1647-1690	N1:228
1682	Leonardo Marquez	1631-?	N1:194-195
1684-1686	Jose Galfaroso de la Trinidad	1648-1702	N1:217
1684-1686	Juan Iñiguez, assigned to Cabagan but to attend to the three populations of the Irraya Mission independent of Cabagan. Finished church of Aparri, 1686-1688.	1685-1720.	N1:229-230; DC pp. 376-381
1686-1690 (2 terms)	Jose de San Jacinto	1643-1699	N1:209
1690-1692	Andres Diez	1656-1718	N1:247-248
1692-1696 (2 terms)	Francisco de Olmedo*	1644-1706	N1:208-209
1696-1698	Jose de San Jacinto, 2x	1643-1699	N1:209
1698-1700	Domingo de la Mota/Mutta	1653 (Savoy)-1714	N1:233-234
1700-1702	Francisco Nuñez Bravo	1653-1718	N1:233
1702-1704	Domingo de la Mota/Mutta, 2x	1653 (Savoy)-1714	N1:233-234

1704-1714 (5 terms)	Franciscum Nuñez Bravo , 2x; also was entrusted with the formation of the settlements of Tabucan and Naggasuan, later mentioned in the Acts of 1708 as Tumaui. He gave the sermon in the blessing of the mission church, 2 Feb 1707.	1653-1718	N1:233. FF IV, 84-85. MC, pp. 331-332.
1709. Fire damaged the church and convento.			
1714-1716	Andres Diez , 2x	1656-1718	N1:247-248
1716-1720 (2 terms)	Bernabe de la Magdalena	?-1747	N1:281
1718. An insurrection in northern Cagayan caused many to flee from Tuguegarao and Cabagan and return to the mountains. In the provincial's visit of 1724, it was recommended that chapels be erected in the principal barrios.			
1720-1722	Diego de la Torre ; built the present single nave church and convento; with the aid of Father Gabriel Serrano, the brick vault and triumphal arch were constructed.	1686-1738	N1:279
1722-1723	Juan de Santo Tomas	1689-1743	N1:278-279
1723-1727 (2 terms)	Diego de la Torre 2x, also entrusted with the growth of the Tumaui mission; 1724, built chapels in Casibaran and Garita.	1686-1738	N1:279
1724	Vicente del Riesgo	1668-1724 (Cabagan)	N1:254-255. FF IV, 299-300.
1727-1729	Francisco Jimenez , also entrusted with the growth of the Tumaui mission.	1689-1751	N1:290-291
1729-1731 (2 terms)	Diego de la Torre 3x, also entrusted with the growth of the Tumaui mission.	1686-1738	N1:279
1729-1731	Andres Lopez, entrusted with the Tumaui mission.	1703-1733	N1:305
1730-1731	Pedro Nolasco, entrusted with the Tumaui mission as <i>misionero doctrinero</i> .	1696-1740	N1:305
1731-1733	Francisco Jimenez , 2x	1689-1751	N1:290-291
1733-1735	Francisco de Borja , entrusted with the Tumaui mission.	1690-1748	N1:279-280.

1733-1735	Luis Martinez Orive	1705-1769	N1:316
1735-1739 (2 terms)	Juan Sebastian	1690-1746	N1:289-290
1739-1741 (2 terms)	Francisco de Borja, 2x	1690-1748	N1:279-280
1739-1741	Pedro Lorenzo, entrusted with the Tumaui mission.	1711-1743	N1:324
1741-1743	Jose Prego	1694-1752	N1:295-296
1741-1743	Jose Martin Alpeñez, entrusted with the Tumaui mission.	1709-1773	N1:323
1743-1747 (2 terms)	Teodomiro Navarro	1710-1746	N1:323: only 1743-1745
1747-1751 (2 terms)	Jose Martin Alpeñez, 2x	1709-1773	N1:323: was assigned to Piat
1751-1753	Juan Bautista de Azcarraga	1716-1756	N1:332
1751-1753	Jose Viladecas	1714-1765	N1:331-332
1752 April 11. Tumaui was separated as a town from Cabagan; it was accepted as a vicarage in the chapter of 1753 May 12.			
1753-1757 (2 terms)	Jose Viladecas*	1714-1765	N1:331-332
1755 Aug. 12	Martin de Zabalza (interim)	1731-1756	N1:359
1757 Jan. 9	Antonio Peñalosa (interim)	1729-1801	N1:358
1757 March 6	Raymundo Favon (interim)	1721-?	N1:358
1757 April 3	Domingo Rodriguez Crespo (interim)	1719-1776	N1:336-337
1757 June 5-1759	Jose Tomas Marin	1710-1769	N1:320-321
1757 Oct. 26	Pedro Enriquez (interim)	1725-1773	N1:349
1758 Jan. 8	Jose Martin Alpeñez, 3x (interim)	1709-1773	N1:323
1758 May 21	Pedro de San Pedro (interim)	1726-1779	N1:347
1758. 512 Cabaganes died of cholera.			
1759 Feb. 18	Vicente Gomez del Rosario (interim)	1731-?	N1:360
1759 June 17-1763 (2 terms)	Luis Martinez Orive , entrusted with the Tumaui mission.	1705-1769	N1:316
1759-1763	Antonio Peñalosa	1729-1801	N1:358

1761 Jan. 4	Cristobal Francisco (interim)	1725-1792	N1:346
1761 June 18	Matias Gonzalez (interim)	1732-1769	N1:359
1762 May 28	Jose de Miranda (interim)	1735 (Macao)-1765	N1:523
1763 Feb. 20	Jose Tomas Marin (interim, 2x)	1710-1769	N1:320-321
1763 Mar. 27	Antonio Lobato de Sto. Tomas (interim)	1724-1794	N1:356
1763 May 1	Pascual Poveda (interim)	1734-1770	N1:360
1763 June 5	Carlos Masvidal (interim)	1721-1791	N1:334, was in Buguey
1763 Nov. 27	Tomas Hernandez	1726-1766	N1:346; [probably the vicar here, instead of Viladecas who was not listed in Ricart]
1763-1765 [after 1765, four-year terms became the norm]	Jose Viladecas* , 2x	1714-1765	N1:331: was assigned to Letran, 1763- 1765
1763: rebellion which began in Ilagan, led by Dabo and Juan Morayac, then spread to Cabagan, and Tuguegarao. Put down by Spanish and local troops.			
1765 April 7	Julian Camino (interim)	1741-?	N1:370
1765 June 9-1769	Manuel Velez	1720-1773	N1:339-340
1765	Jose Miranda, 2x	1735 (Macao)-1765	N1:523
1765 July 14	Jose de San Pablo Vandeyque (interim)	1730-1780	N1:375
1766 Feb. 23	Tomas Añibarro [interim]	1740-1800	N1:375
1766 June 29	Juan Crespo [interim]	1738-1793	N1:374
1767 June 12	Francisco Casas [interim]	1714-1768	N1:331
1769 April 3	Miguel Cañas [interim]	1742-1806	N1:375
1769-1776 (2 terms)	Domingo Rodriguez Crespo	1719-1776	N1:336-337
1770 May 27	Ygnacio Milano [interim]	1747-1806	N1:388
1772 July 23	Ygnacio Abria [interim]	1719-1784	N1:333
1774 July 3-1777	Domingo Forto. Built church in Tumauini, his next assignment (1777-1789)	1740-1783	N1:389

1775 Nov. 12	Francisco Hidalgo [interim]	1744-?	N1:390
1776 June 30	Francisco Arroyo [interim]	1741-1803	N1:389
1776 ^N -1777 ^N	Pedro de San Pedro [interim]	1726-1779	N1:347
1776 March 9	Joaquin Sancho [interim]	1743-1828	N1:384
1777 July 6-1778	Manuel Torrijos	1736-1778 March 12	N1:383
1778 June 21	Vicente Gomez del Rosario	1731-?	N1:360
1779 March 28	Diego Martin de Lucia	1744-1800	N1:381
1780 Oct. 8	Francisco Borja de los Santos	1754 (mestizo chino, b. in Santa Cruz, Manila)-1807	N1:527
1781-1806 (6 terms; the titles parish priest and president became more common as per the chapter of 1777; N1:347)	Ignacio Milano*	1747-1806 (Cabagan)	N1:388
1806 April 27	Tomas Sanchez [interim]	1772-1811	N1:410
1806 May 4	Francisco de Paula Mogallon [interim]	1771-1822	N1:410
1806 June 1	Juan Guidotti y Monsagratti [interim]	1774-1838	N1:431
1806 July 9	Joaquin Ybañez [interim]	1777-1828	N1:432
1806 Sept. 5-1814	Manuel Garcia ; thoroughly renovated the church and convento; Was re-appointed on April 30, 1814, but died on May 5 that year.	1765-1814 (Cabagan)	N1:404
1807 June 22	Antonio Pujol [interim]	1778-1812	N1:434
1807 July 5	Tomas Avizanda [interim]	1776-1827	N1:436-437
1810-1814	Tomas Avizanda, 2x	1776-1827	N1:436-437
1810 Aug. 12	Francisco Garrido [interim]	1786-1820	N1:569
1810 Oct. 27	Jose Maria Sanchez [interim]	1778-1822	N1:433
1813 Aug. 15	Rafael Adriances Fabie [interim]	1789-1819	N1:530
1814 May 22	Lucas Uy de la Concepcion [interim]	c.1780 (China)-1821	N1:560

1814 May 24	Jose Tomas Figuerola [interim]	1752-1824	N1:396
1815 Feb. 14	Francisco Mañas [interim]	1774-1838	N1:420
1816 Jan. 8	Luis Garcia [interim]	1778-1833	N1:433
1816 Feb. 25	Mariano Nogues	?-1819	N1:569
1817 Sept. 21	Domingo Roman	--	Ricart
1818 Nov. 1	Valero Valls	1788-1821	N1:443
1818-1825	Joaquin Ibañez*	1777-1828	N1:432
1822 Feb. 23	Tomas Rosello [interim]	1765-1852	N1:425
1822 March 3	Vicente Ferrer Robledo [interim]	c.1798 (<i>mestizo español</i> , b. Manila)-1828	N1:531
1822 April 1	Vicente Anastacio de Larramendi [interim]	1781-1824	N1:443
1825-1837 [as per Acta; but per Ricart, his first entry was on 1822 June 13]	Jose Fausto de Cuevas	1787-1837 Dec. 27	N1:439
1829 Dec. 6	Jose Morales [interim]	1801-1834	N1:454
1834 March 30	Antonio Garcia [interim]	1807-?	N1:471
1837 Dec. 14	Jose Ramon Rodriguez [interim]	1809-1887	N1:459
1838 March 8	Domingo Perez	1802-1838 May 23	N1:450: died shortly after assuming his post.
1838 ^N	Manuel Concha	1812-1877	N2:24
1838-1841	no listing, not even in Ricart		
1841-1844	Antonio Garcia , 2x; built the tribunal of masonry.	1807-?	N1:471
1844 Feb. 3	Pedro Carballeyro [interim]	1811-?	N1:478
1845 March 5-1846	Matias de la Cruz	1804-1846	N1:465-466
1845-1846	Jeronimo Rubio	1814-1846	N2:44
1845 ^N -1846 ^N	Pedro Trasobares Medarde	1818-1895	N2:56
1846 Jan. 3-1858	Tomas Alonso de Guerra ; improved the church; built three bridges to Tuguegarao, and improved the road to Tumauini.	1808-1858	N1:476

1848-1850	Segismundo Riera Comas	c.1821-1864	N2:60-61
1855	Franciscum Ruiz	1813-1858	N2:28: was in Tuao 1845 till his death 1858.
By Royal Order of 2 and 27 November, 1855: the province of Isabela was created, combining Tumauni and Cabagan from Cagayan with the northern part of Nueva Vizcaya (itself separated from Cagayan in 1839). Decreed in Manila 1856 March 31.			
1858 Aug. 4-1863	Joaquin Pascual	1813-1863 (Cabagan)	N2:44: was re-assigned on April 25, 1863 but died on Sept. 26 that year
1863 ^N Dec. 12-1865 ^N	Francisco Font	1813-1865 (Cabagan)	N2:34
1863 ^N -1864 ^N	Romualdo Aguado Lebrado	1839-1903	N2:108
1864-1865	Pedro Trasobares Medarde, 2x	1818-1895	N2:56
1864 ^N -1867 ^N	Santiago Capdevila Morer	1841-1904	N2:116
1866 Jan. 20-1872	Jose Alonso Varela	1833-1878	N2:87
1866. The church and convento were burned for the second time in recorded history.			
1872 ^N Jan. 16	Juan Bautista Flores Ruiz de Medina , interim	1830-1882	N2:80
1873 Jan. 16-1874 ^N	Manuel Gonzalez Nuñez	1825-1876	N2:49
1874 May 14-1878	Pedro Ricart Jinjaume	1836-1915	N2:107
1877 Jan. 25. Father Ricart transferred the center of the parish to Ugad. From 1877 to 1886, the parish was based in Ugad.			
1874-1877	Venancio Huerta Fernandez	1849-1885	N2:148
1875-1876	Deogracias Garcia	1846-1924	N2:158
1875 ^N -1876 ^N	Jaime Jutla Viñas; worked for the creation of the new town of Santa Maria.	1844-1889	N2:149
1877 ^N	Hilario Ma. Ocio Viana	1841-903	N2:131-132
1878	Jose Alonso Varela	1833-1878	N2:87: assigned on May 5, 1878, but d. on May 13.
1878 ^N	Roman Cordero	1849-1896	N2:179
1878-1880	Jose Gurumeta Perez	1836-1893	N2:105
1881-1886	Ezequiel Pinilla Herce ; built kilns.	1850-1887	N2:163: 1878-1879 was in Santa Maria

1881-1882	Venancio Garcia Baquero Ramos	1853-1937	N2:183
1882 ^N -1886 ^N	Jose Braga Sanchez	1858-1891	N2:200
1883 ^N -1886 ^N	Valentin Rodriguez Diaz	1859-1894	N2:202
1886-1888	Jose Gurumeta Perez, 2x	1836-1893	N2:105

CABAGAN VIEJO, 1887-1898

1890 Jan. 20. Acceptance of the parish of Our Lady of the Rosary of Cabagan Viejo (although a priest had been assigned here since 1888). Civil erection, Royal Order of 1887 June 17.			
1888-1898	Segundo Rodriguez Cortina [1 st of this new parish]	1858-1930	N2:207; transferred from Santa Maria
1888 ^N -1890 ^N	Victoriano Martinez Draga	1863-1929	N2:247
1890 ^N -1894 ^N	Angel Martinez Rico	1865-1934	N2:260

CABAGAN NUEVO (1887-1898)

1886-1888	Venancio Peña Delgado	1863-1918	N2:226; 1888-1891 to Santa Maria
1888-1890	Jose Gurumeta	1836-1893	N2:105
1890-1898	Deogracias Garcia	1846-1924	N2:158
1892; 1897-1898	Jose Fitó Badia	1864-?	N2:260-261
1895 ^N -1897 ^N	Juan Cruz Zaballa Meaza	1865-1941	N2:276
1897-1898	Primo Calzada Albarran	1871-1952	N2:300-301

SANTA MARIA DE LUZON (1878-1898)

1875 ^N -1876 ^N	Jaime Jutla Viñas	1844-1889	N2:149: worked for the establishment of Sta Maria de Luzon.
1878 May 11. Acceptamus in domum nostrae Provinciae, S Mariam, Tit. Conceptionis, de Luzon, in Provincia <i>de la Isabela</i> . Royal Order creating the town, 1878 March 6.			
1878-1879	Ezequiel Pinilla Herce	1850-1887	N2:163
1881	[not filled: Ezequiel Pinilla Herce in Cabagan Nuevo, 1881-1886]		

1886-1887	Juan Gomez Zabal	1860-1914	N2:201
1887-1888	Segundo Rodriguez Cortina	1858-1930	N2:207; transferred to Cabagan Viejo, 1888
1888-1891	Venancio Peña Delgado	1863-1918	N2:226; 1886- 1888, in Cabagan Nuevo
1891-1898	Lucio Urroz Martin	1862-1940	N2:245-246

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National Commission for Culture and the Arts

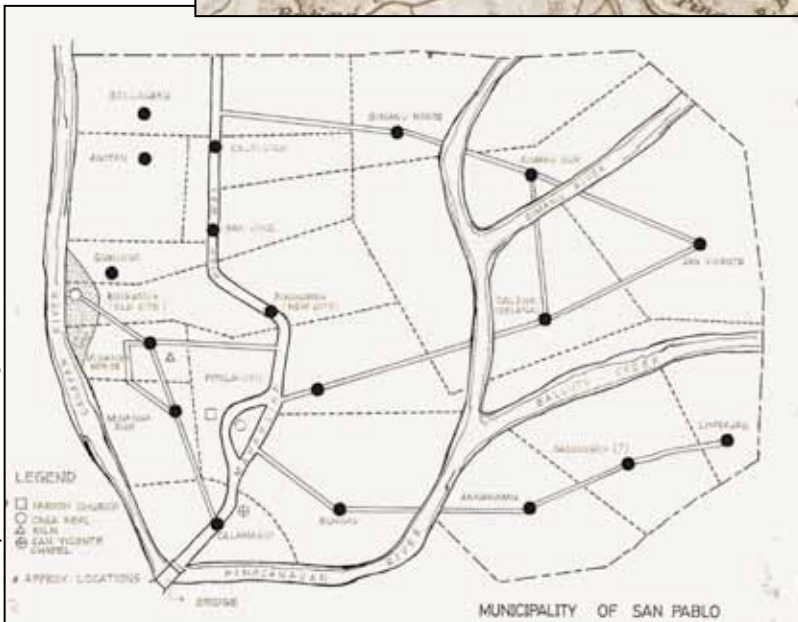


Map of the Philippines showing San Pablo, Isabela.

Algué, *Atlas de Filipinas*, 1899

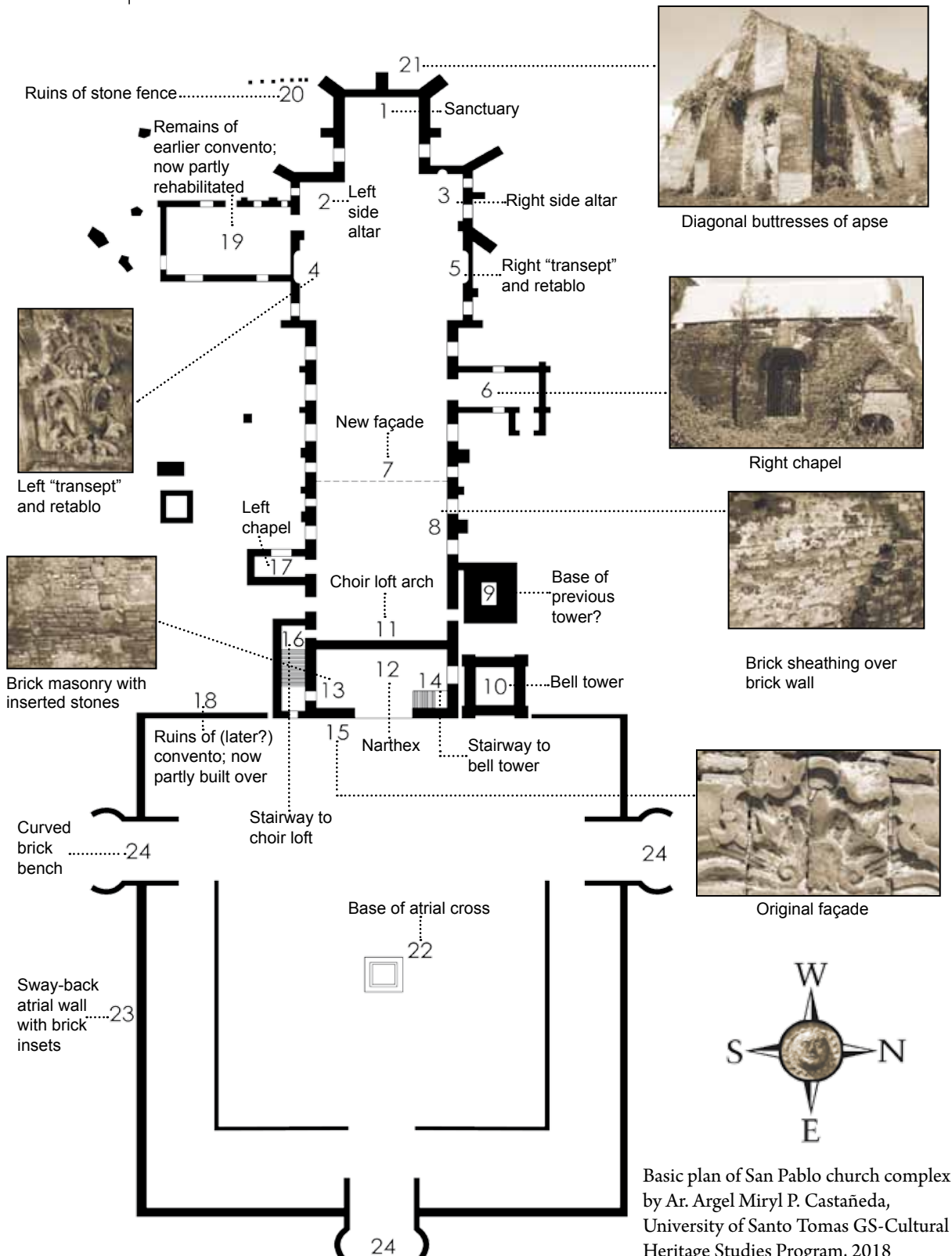


Map of upper Isabela, showing San Pablo (Cabagan Viejo) and nearby towns.



Map of San Pablo town

Drawn by Ma. Teresa P. Quevedo, 1993



Two aerial views of San Pablo church complex

Jared M. Koller, Ifugao Archaeological Project, 2016



Jared M. Koller, Ifugao Archaeological Project, 2016



Then as now, the setting of San Pablo church is one of the most impressive in the country.

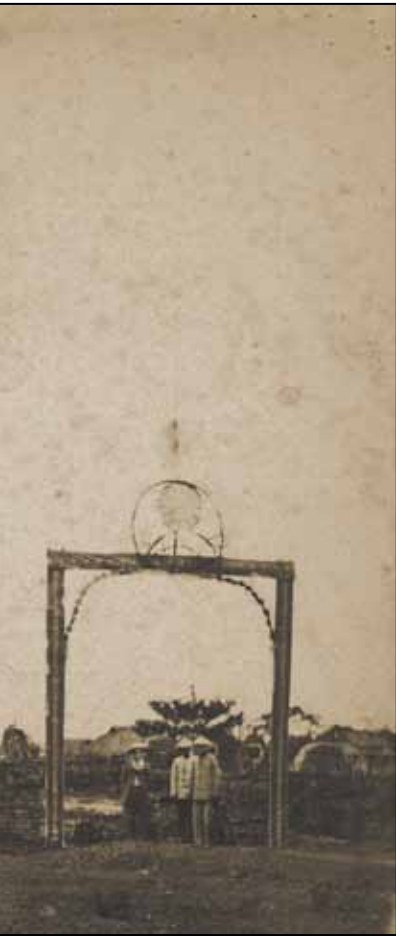
Javier Rodríguez Barrera, 1886. Courtesy of Museo Nacional de Antropología (Madrid, Spain)



Vertice, 1942. Courtesy of Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati



Romantic view of San Pablo during the war years, almost taken over by dense undergrowth.



Remarkable photograph of the approach to the church of San Pablo. It was taken in 1886 probably by a delegation sent to document the progress of the province of Isabela for the *Exposición General de Filipinas* to be held in Madrid in 1887. A festive arch welcomes the visitors. The next year (1887), the old church was revived as the seat of the new parish of Cabagan Viejo.

Towards the end of the 20th century, the atrium had been cleared, but thick vegetation still covered many areas.



RTJ 1996

Javier Rodríguez Barrera, 1886. Courtesy of Museo Nacional de Antropología (Madrid, Spain)



For most of the second half of the 20th century, much of the central portion of the façade remained a gaping hole.

RTJ 1996

Closer view of the 1886 photograph highlighting the church façade and its carved decorations. Note that it was covered with *paletada* (lime plaster).



RFJ 2018

The façade and much of the church were repaired by about 2000. The church faces the east. Almost all of the *paletada* has disappeared.

RTJ 2002



Right section of the façade.

RTJ 2018



Short twisted column is topped by a whorl of leaves in place of a capital.

A sensuous S-curve, formed by two opposing C-scrolls, frames each end of the façade.

RTJ 2018



The space between the façade and the tower is a wall of brick and assorted cut stone utilizing different masonry techniques, suggesting two periods of construction. Interestingly, the base of the façade is composed of five courses of brick, while the rest of the façade is of cut stone. The lateral ends of the façade are likewise finished in brick.

RTJ 2018



RTJ 2018



The pedestals of the rather flattened columns are faced with flower-like designs in a fan-shaped enclosure whose irregular outline and tapering points recall *rocalla* elements popular in the late 18th century Philippines.

The ground level of the bell tower is ornamented with vases of flowers inspired by prints in 18th century books. Some of the original *paletada* have been retained in the crevices between the carvings and stones.

RTJ 2002



RTJ 2002



RTJ 2018



RTJ 2018



The right flank of the church, clearly seen from an open field which was the burial ground in earlier times. Only in recent

years has the roofed area been extended to reach a little more than half the length of the nave.

RTJ 2018



A little beyond the middle of the length of the nave is a tile-roofed extension which may have served as a funeral chapel. It has its own

sloping passage, leading directly to the open field which was the ancient cemetery. Similar chapel extensions, also on the left side of the nave (regardless of their orientation), may be seen in the Cagayan churches of Lallo, Malaueg, and Tuguegarao.

RTJ 1996



View of the rear of the apse, the ruins of the convento, and a part of the right flank of the church.

An unusual aspect of the church of San Pablo is its buttresses which sprout diagonally from the corners of the apse and its collateral chapels. These chapels formerly formed the 'shoulders' of a triple-naved church and now constitute a rather narrow "transept."



RTJ 2018

The tile roof of the apse can be seen in this 1996 photograph.



RTJ 1996

The monumental brick-faced buttresses of the apse.



RTJ 2018

RTJ 2018



Right side of the apse and a section of the old convento attached to it.

RTJ 2018



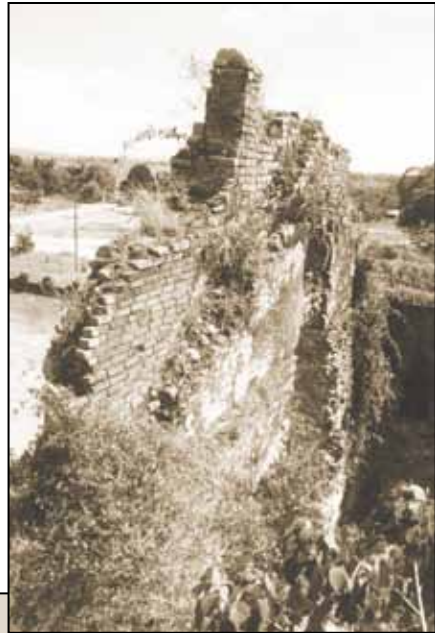
Exterior of a section of the left flank of the nave, corresponding to the left “transept.” The other side of the old convento may also be seen. The buttress left of center has an angled silhouette. The one to its right is unique in the church for the inclusion of cut stone in a basically brick support.

RTJ 1996



Exterior of the left flank of the nave. A previous lower roofline can be observed, as well as buttresses of different sizes and heights.

The rear of the pediment of the façade is curiously of brick, while the front is of cut stone.



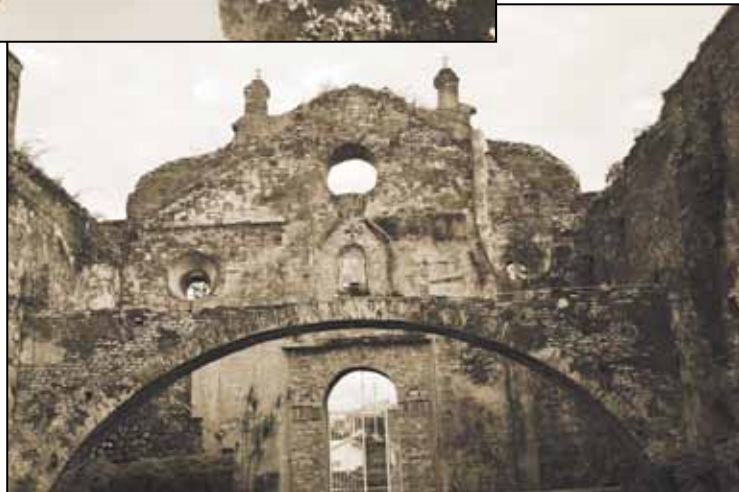
RTJ 1996

Rear of the damaged façade, photographed before it was repaired, showing the rubblework filling of the walls.



RTJ 1996

Rear of the façade after it was repaired, with the commanding presence of the arch that used to support the choir loft.



RTJ 2013

View of the
narthex and choir
loft arch from the
bell tower.



RTJ 1996



View of the nave,
apse, and right
chapel from the
bell tower.

RTJ 1996

View
west
from
the bell
tower
towards
the
Cagayan
River,
with the



RTJ 1996

plains of Santa Maria town across it and the foothills of Kalinga in the vague distance. One can see the effects of the transfer of the population from this site to the Cabagan Nuevo in 1886.

RTJ 2018



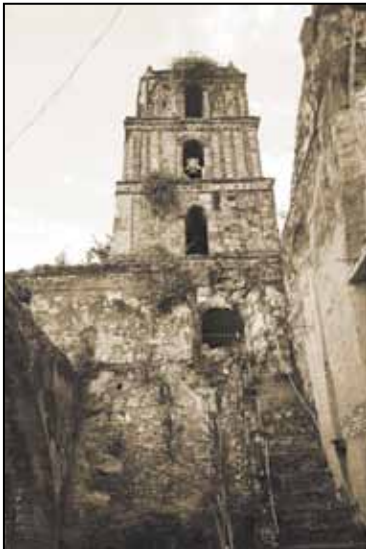
Left wall of the narthex, a vestibule between the façade and the main part of the nave. The narthex was separated from the longer part of the nave by the choir loft arch. The arched opening linked the choir loft to the stairway that led to the ground level.

RTJ 2002



Lower part of the solid brick arch that supported the choir loft.

RTJ 2018



Right wall of the narthex, with the masonry stairway that leads to the bell tower.

RTJ 2013



One can discern a door or window that has been walled up, as one inspects the right wall.

RTJ 1996



The left wall of the section of the nave that is roofless. The door to the left leads to the inner court of the convento and also to a passage to the choir loft.

RTJ 1996



The narrow passage that leads to the choir loft.

RTJ 1996



Outer side of the left wall, showing a door that leads to the church and an upper door that led to a possible earlier choir loft (it is on a level lower than the present choir loft).

RTJ 1996



Closer look at the masonry of the outer side of the wall, showing a number of large stones inserted in the brick work. A niche for an image or a lamp can also be seen.

RTJ 1996



Right wall of the roofless section of the nave. There is evidence that some windows were walled up. The square door to the right leads to an extension that may have been the base of an earlier bell tower, or a baptistery.

Unusual sheathing of a brick wall with another brick cover is only one of many clues to the renovations on the church over the centuries.



RTJ 2002

RTJ 1996



The improvised inner entrance to the church as it was in 1996. This has been replaced with a more formal arrangement.

Entering the roofed section of the church, one can discern the difference between the single nave (foreground) and the original three-naved intention (sanctuary).



RTJ 2013

RTJ 1996



Left wall of the roofed section of the nave, showing the break between the single nave and the original wider church. The reduction of the width of the church has turned the wider section into a kind of narrow “transept.”

RTJ 2018



The left “transept” with its stone retablo. The entrance leads to the ruins of the convento.

RTJ 2018



The right wall with the corresponding “transept.”

The upper areas of the sanctuary were plastered until about 2000. A lower apex can barely be discerned.



RTJ 1996

The plaster of the uppermost reaches of the sanctuary was stripped by 2002. Both higher and lower apices of the pitch of the roof can be seen.



RTJ 2002

View of the deep sanctuary. Could this be the earlier *boveda de piedra*, renovated later in brick?



RTJ 2018

RTJ 2018



Left wall of the roofless nave, showing the entrance to a side chapel or extension.



RTJ 1996

Exterior view of the same wall.



RTJ 1996

The left side chapel was roofless in 1996. It is decorated with the same clay insets as those on the atrium walls, the upper stories of the tower, and the San Vicente cemetery chapel.

The left side chapel has been roofed and rehabilitated in recent years.



RTJ 2018

RTJ 2018



Brackets for hanging lamps flank the sanctuary. On closer examination, the features resemble those of an open-mouthed beast.



RTJ 2018

RTJ 2018



Passage to a chapel on the right of the nave. A small door leads to the field outside. This hall may have served as a funeral chapel, with access to the graveyard.

The entrance to the chapel is flanked by tombstones, reinforcing the probability that it was used for funeral wakes. This particular tombstone is dedicated to Nicolas Castañeda y Formoso, who died on September 16, 1902, at the age of 32 years, 4 months, and 16 days.



RTJ 2018

The “transepts” of cut stone constitute a break in the overall plan of the brick church. In each transept, a large arched space has been opened to accommodate retablos of cut stone carved with *rocalla* motifs. Curiously, these carved stones may have been destined for another location or structure: their assembly in this space has left large gaps between the stone, implying they were “spread out” to maximize the space. The carvings also show some weathering, indicating they were exposed to the elements for a time. In a recent renovation, many details have been smoothed over with plaster.

RTJ 1996



Left “transept” altar with a stone retablo.

RTJ 1996



A floral bouquet punctuates both ends of the arch over the altar space.

RTJ 1996



The headpiece of the stone retablo bears such *rocalla* elements as C-scrolls and irregular silhouettes. The four points of the Dominican cross ending in fleur-de-lis may be discerned as the central motif.

RTJ 1996



Vertical member of the stone retablo in the left “transept,” richly carved with *rocalla* motifs.

RTJ 1996



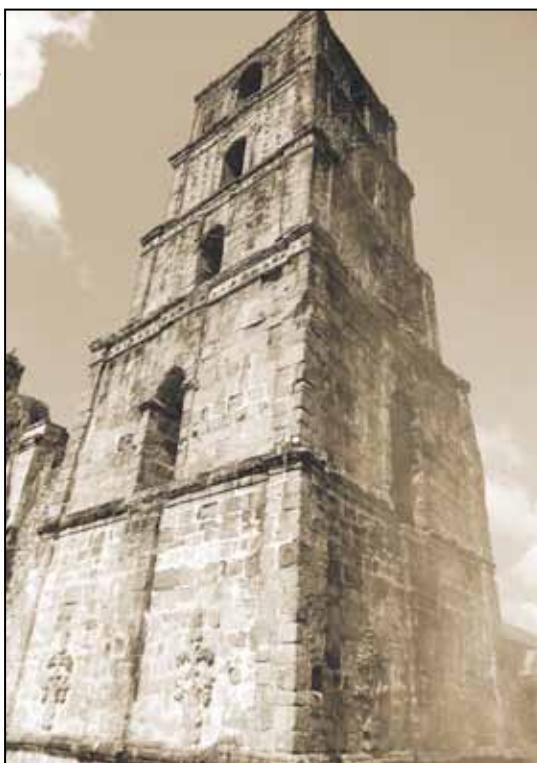
Right “transept” with what seem to be portions of a stone retablo re-assembled in this space.

RTJ 1996



Rocalla headpiece of the niche within the stone retablo.

RTJ 2018



The bell tower of San Pablo is one of the two tallest in the Cagayan Valley, the other being that in Tuguegarao. Both are quadrangular and are composed of five levels capped by a masonry dome. That of San Pablo is of stone, however, while that of Tuguegarao is of brick.

RTJ 1996



The upper four levels of the tower are ornamented with brick insets which bear the same designs as those on the atrium wall, the chapel to the left of the nave, and the San Vicente cemetery chapel. The rib-like motif over the arched windows is also found in various aspects of the latter chapel.

RTJ 1996



Passage from the second level of the tower to the church. Note the different types of stone and brick construction of the walls, indicating different times of construction.

RTJ 1996



Passage from the third to the fourth floor, adhering to the walls.

Brick insets on the inner cornice of the fourth level. The design recalls a clam or half of a flower or spread out like a fan, very similar to one used in Tumauini, the next old church south of San Pablo.



RTJ 1996

RTJ 1996



Impressions of split bamboo on the intrados of the arches indicate the type of material used to keep the mortar in place while it was drying.

RTJ 1996



The pavement of the fifth level, showing the holes through which passed the ropes used to ring the four bells.

According to inscriptions on this bell on the fifth floor, it weighs 29 *arobas* and 17 *libras* (742 pounds) and was commissioned by Fr. Tomas Alonso in 1855. It is dedicated to Santo Domingo de Guzman, and was recast from an earlier bell cast in 1781.



RTJ 1996

RTJ 2002



Lower part of a bell cast in 1890.

According to inscriptions on this bell on the fourth floor, it weighs 20 *arobas* and 18 *libras* (518 pounds) and is dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, the patroness of Cabagan Viejo (now San Pablo). The bell was cast in 1894 in the foundry of Hilario Sunico in Binondo, Manila. On the right is the passage from this floor to the third level.



RTJ 1996

The atrium wall with its brick insets is one of the two most artistic of its kind in the entire Cagayan Valley, the other being Tumauni just south of San Pablo. (In fact, the builder of Tumauni's brick church was Domingo Fortó, who immediately before this assignment was assistant vicar of San Pablo.) Unfortunately, many of these brick insets have been pried off and stolen or carelessly slapped with mortar.

One of three entrances to the atrium that are provided with pairs of brick benches that follow a sinuous curved plan, similar to those in Nassiping, Gattaran (Cagayan). This is a unique graceful touch.



RTJ 2018

The atrium walls are decorated with brick insets that take the form of rope, stars, and what resemble as curled fronds. The stars are of two kinds: some of six rays, the others eight.



RTJ 2018



QUEVEDO 1993

Each "hump" of the sway-back wall of the atrium is ornamented with a brick disk. Some of these bear a crown design, as shown, or a sun with a human face, dates that seem to read 1813, 1818 or 1819, and names which are barely legible. This one seems to read *Siendo Mro.* [maestro] *D. Domingo Babaran* (the master being Don Domingo Pabaran).



RTJ Photo Collection

Brick disk with a human face on a sun. The date seems to read 1813.

There seem to have been two conventos built at different times. The later one may have been built next to the façade, but it is now in ruins. Another one was constructed at the back of the church, perhaps to replace an even earlier one there, and more remains of this are still standing.

RTJ 1996



View of the back of the church with the convento, facing west.

RTJ 2018



View of the same side of the convento, this time with the stones cleaned. Note that the lower portions are of brick; it seems that when the brick walls crumbled they were rebuilt with cut stone.

RTJ 1996



View of the convento at the back of the church, from the south.

RTJ 2018



View of the convento, from the east; the door at the right leads to the left “transept” of the church.

Ruins of a large brick convento nearer the façade of the church. A brick buttress can be observed, as well as a masonry enclosure.



RTJ 1996

RTJ 1996



Evidence of illegal pot-hunting among the ruins.

Passage linking the convento with the left “transept” of the church.



RTJ 2018

The chapel dedicated to San Vicente Ferrer is a short distance away from the church. It may have been constructed in 1724 as one of the chapels that doubled as security posts after the revolt of 1718. From this chapel one has a view of the valley below, and it commands the entrance to the town from the south. Eventually, the cemetery was assembled around it.

Legarda 1981, p. 77. Courtesy of Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati



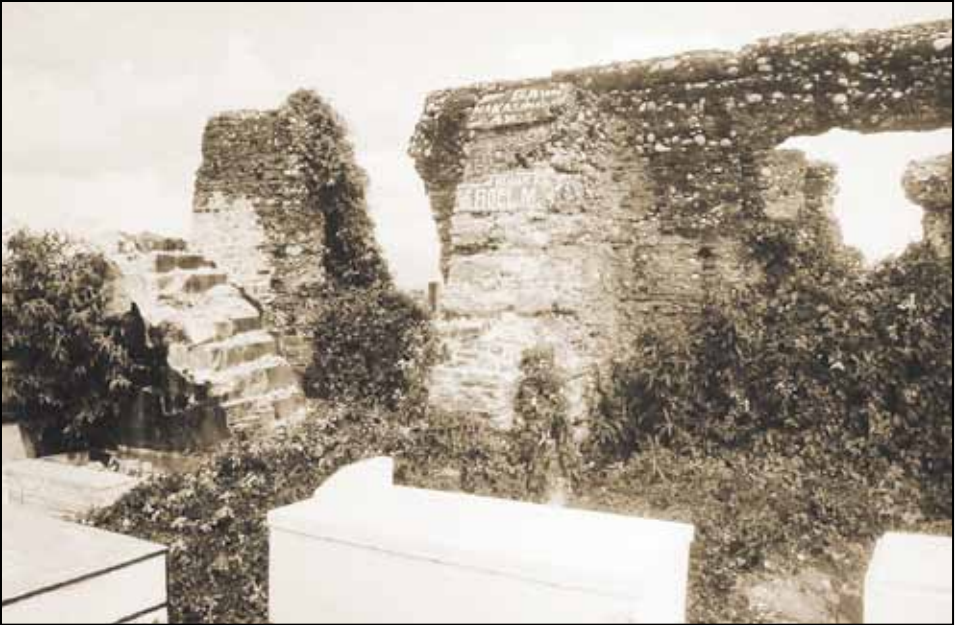
The façade with its finials and brick insets shares a common trait with many late 18th century churches in the Cagayan Valley. The unique rib-like motif over the entrance arch, around the rose window, above the pediment, and over the arch in the nave is also found over the arched windows of the fourth and fifth level of the bell tower.

Luis Faustino, 1980. Courtesy of Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati



The *arco toral* or “triumphal” arch separating the nave from the sanctuary also bears the rib-like motif found on the façade and on the upper levels of the bell tower. The remains of the masonry retablo with four niches can be seen in the background.

RTJ 1996



Ruins of step buttresses which are found on both sides towards the back of the chapel.



RTJ 1996

The chapel is now a ruin, with façade, apse, and retablo totally obliterated. The walls are completely smothered by dense vines. Its atrium wall, which also had brick insets like the church in town, has also disappeared.

RTJ 1996



Ruins of the *casa tribunal*, or town hall. It is said to have been built by Fr. Antonio Garcia, parish priest from 1841 to 1844. According

to an inscription on the façade, now lost, this was finished in 1846 during the term of Governor Juan de Guzman.

RTJ 2018



Detail of the cut stone technology of the *casa tribunal*.

QUEVEDO 1993



Ruins of kilns for baking bricks found in Minanga Norte, a district adjacent to the west of the church.