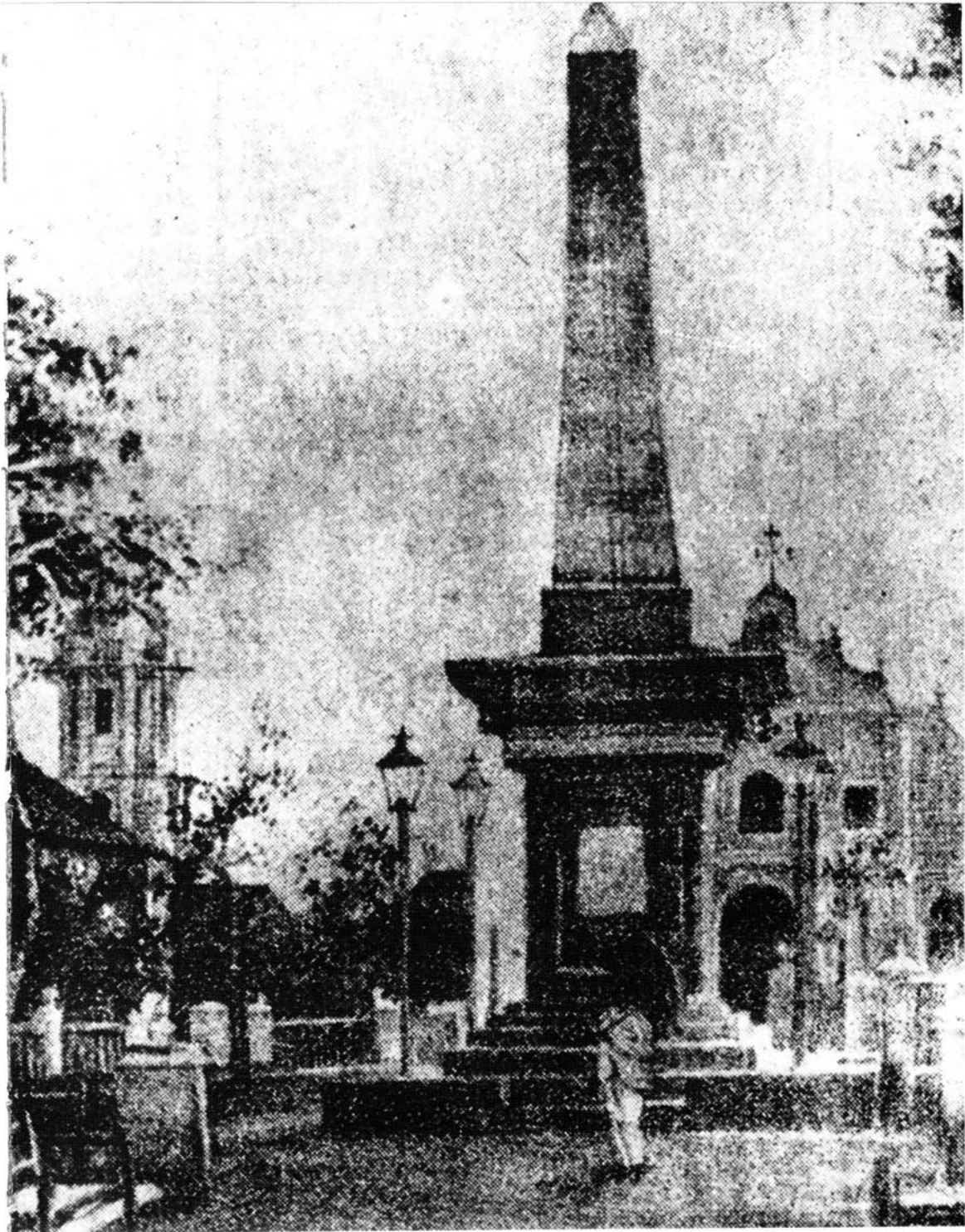


HISTORY OF VILLA FERNANDINA II



A monument installed in 1894 on the main plaza of Villa Fernandina, to honor its founder Capitan Juan de Salcedo. Take note of St. Paul's Cathedral's left bell tower on the left edge of the photograph; it no longer exists, although no records exist explaining the reason for its disappearance (*La Ilustracion Filipina* de Don Jose Zaragoza).

Chapter II

The History of Villa Fernandina

Long before the arrival of the Spaniards, the coastal plains in the northeastern extreme of Luzon, from Bangui in the north, to Namacpacan (Luna) in the Gulf of Lingayen in the south, were known to be rich in gold. This region, hemmed in by the South China Sea on the west and the northern Cordillera Mountains on the east, was fairly isolated from the rest of Luzon. Because no trails connected the villages along the coast, anyone wishing to travel from one village to the next either took a boat up or down the coast, or traveled along the seashore. Generally, settlements developed by a small bay or cove, called *looc* or *loco*, for environmental protection. Their inhabitants were called the Ilocanos or Iloco, meaning “from the lowland,” a name by which they came to be called as well by the Spaniards.

Chinese and Japanese traders came periodically to trade with these coastal villages but rarely stayed in them. Instead, utilizing light materials such as bamboo or nipa palm, they built temporary structures for the display of their wares. Tribespersons from the eastern upland and the mountains came down the river as well to barter beeswax, gold, venison, rattan, textiles and jewelry in exchange for the merchandise brought over in by the Chinese, Japanese, Thais, Vietnamese, Indonesians and other Asian traders which included beautiful porcelain ware, jars, jewelry, crystal beads, agricultural produce, horses, carabaos, textiles and many other useful articles.

On May 20, 1571, Captain Juan de Salcedo, a young Spanish *conquistador*, left Manila with 45 men, to explore the coastal areas of Northern Luzon all the way up to the Ilocos Region. He landed on the coast of Los Ylocos and set up camp on the Isla de Biga, on the shore of the Mestizo River, a prosperous pre-colonial trading post where seafaring Asian merchants and locals traded or bartered goods.

On June 13, 1572, he renamed the settlement Villa Fernandina, to honor Crown Prince Ferdinand, son of King Philip II of Spain. The entire Ilocos Region, including Villa Fernandina, were later that year assigned to him as his *encomienda* or fiefdom, in return for his dutiful and distinguished services to the Crown.

Villa Fernandina went on to become the capital and seat of government of the Ilocos Region, which encompassed Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Abra, La Union, the sub-provinces of Lepanto and Bontoc, the Mountain Province, Pangasinan and part of Cagayan. It became the center as well of the region's religious, political and educational activities. In 1818, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur became separate provinces. In 1846, Abra de Vigan became a province as well. In 1850, La Union followed suit.

On April 30, 1575, the Augustinian Friars established a church and convent in Vigan, which they dedicated to Saint Paul, and administered until 1622. The church and convent subsequently passed on to the Bishop of Nueva Segovia, who brought the Dominicans over to administer them. In 1758, the seat of the Diocese of Nueva Segovia was moved from Lal-Lo, Cagayan to Villa Fernandina, which in the meantime had become the Ciudad Fernandina. Ciudad Fernandina was later renamed Vigan, Hispanic for Biga (*alocasia indica*), a plant, introduced from India, that had characteristically large, ornate leaves which, not unlike the native gabi plant, proliferated upon the Isla de Biga's riverbanks.

The Cathedral of Saint Paul, which the Augustinian Friars had built to replace Salcedo's wood and nipa chapel, was an edifice of stone and brick and had a tile roof. This structure influenced the way other structures in Vigan, in keeping with the town planning work started by its founder, Juan de Salcedo. To facilitate their work of evangelizing the local peoples, the Augustinian friars enticed the natives to settle in sizable communities *bajo las*

campanas, that is, within hearing distance of the church bells. Many of these communities developed over time into parishes and even towns.

Because, in Spain, Church and State formed one entity, the Spanish Monarch was significantly responsible for the Christianization of the colony. Under the arrangement known as the *Patronato Real*, the Crown provided subsidies for much of the apostolic labor in the country, which included missionary expeditions and the establishment of churches throughout the area. The Crown, in addition, partially furnished these churches with liturgical vessels, bells, mass wine, and the oil used for the sanctuary lamps. In return, it exercised the right to install its own candidates in high ecclesiastical posts and to decide important religious matters.

The representative of the Spanish Crown in the Philippines, the Governor General (also known as the Vice Patron), assisted by the *Audencia* or Council, administered the colony through a bureaucracy which enforced highly detailed regulations and ordinances. In the early days of the colony, vast tracts of land, called *encomiendas*, were assigned to Spaniards, in consideration of military and other services rendered. In consequence of this, vast haciendas, the ownership of which devolved upon singular families or religious corporations, emerged in the 18th century. As stewards of these lands, the *encomenderos* were in charge of the material as well as the spiritual welfare of all who happened to be living upon them.

The colony was subdivided into provinces, with their towns or barrios. Each town was governed by the *alcalde municipal* or *gobernadorcillo*, who often was drawn from the *principalia* or local nobility. The barrios, for their part, were administered by *cabezas de barangay*. Mention must also be made of the *rancherías*, the inhabitants of which had yet to be Christianized, and of the *corregimientos*, places which had yet to be colonized and brought into the political fold. Heterogeneous groups of Malay-Chinese ancestry,

differentiated from one another by the languages that they spoke, inhabited all of these places. On being Christianized they came to be known as *indios* (*indio Ilocano*, *indio Pampango*, *indio Tagalog*). These *indios* were situated upon the lowest rung of the social ladder. Highest up were Spaniards born in Spain. Slightly below them were Spaniards born in the Philippines, known as the *criollos*, or Filipinos. Individuals of mixed (*indio-Spanish*) union were called *mestizos*. The Chinese were called *sangleyes*. By the end of the 19th century, however, the term Filipino referred to the collectivity of *indios*, *mestizos*, and *mestizas sangleyes*.

A number of native uprisings against the Spanish colonizers took place in the area around Villa Fernandina. Among the earliest was that of the Tagudin Tribe, in 1581. In 1762, Diego Silang of La Union, having formed an alliance with the British invaders of Manila, attacked and seized Villa Fernandina, and made it the capital of Free Ilocos. He was assassinated not long after that by Vicos, a *mestizo*, with assistance from the Bishop of Villa Fernandina. Gabriela Silang, his wife, a native of Santa, Ilocos Sur, took up her husband's cause and assumed the leadership of the rebels. She successfully recruited primitive tribesmen from Abra to aid her in her cause. She was eventually captured by the Spanish authorities and hanged by them as a traitor.

In 1807, the Basi Revolt took place, the rejoinder given by the Ilocanos to the Spanish authorities upon the establishment by the latter of a wine monopoly that effectively prohibited them from producing *basi* or their much-loved sugar cane wine. The revolt began when a number of Ilocano conscripts escaped to the mountains of Piddig and were later joined by other malcontents. The rebels took Laoag, Sarrat, Batac and Villa Fernandina, but were defeated in a fierce battle on the south bank of the Bantoay River at San Idelfonso. Their leaders were hanged in Villa Fernandina. In 1821, the great Ilocano artist, Esteban Villanueva, of Villa Fernandina, produced a series of paintings depicting the revolt and its aftermath, which today hang at the Father Burgos Museum in Vigan.

Father Jose Burgos was by far the most illustrious revolutionary with ties to Villa Fernandina. A Spanish *mestizo*, Father Burgos' unpopularity with the Spanish government stemmed from his strongly held and very public views relating to the establishment of a truly Filipino ecclesiastical apparatus. He was one of three Filipino priests who were executed in 1872 for complicity in the Cavite Mutiny.

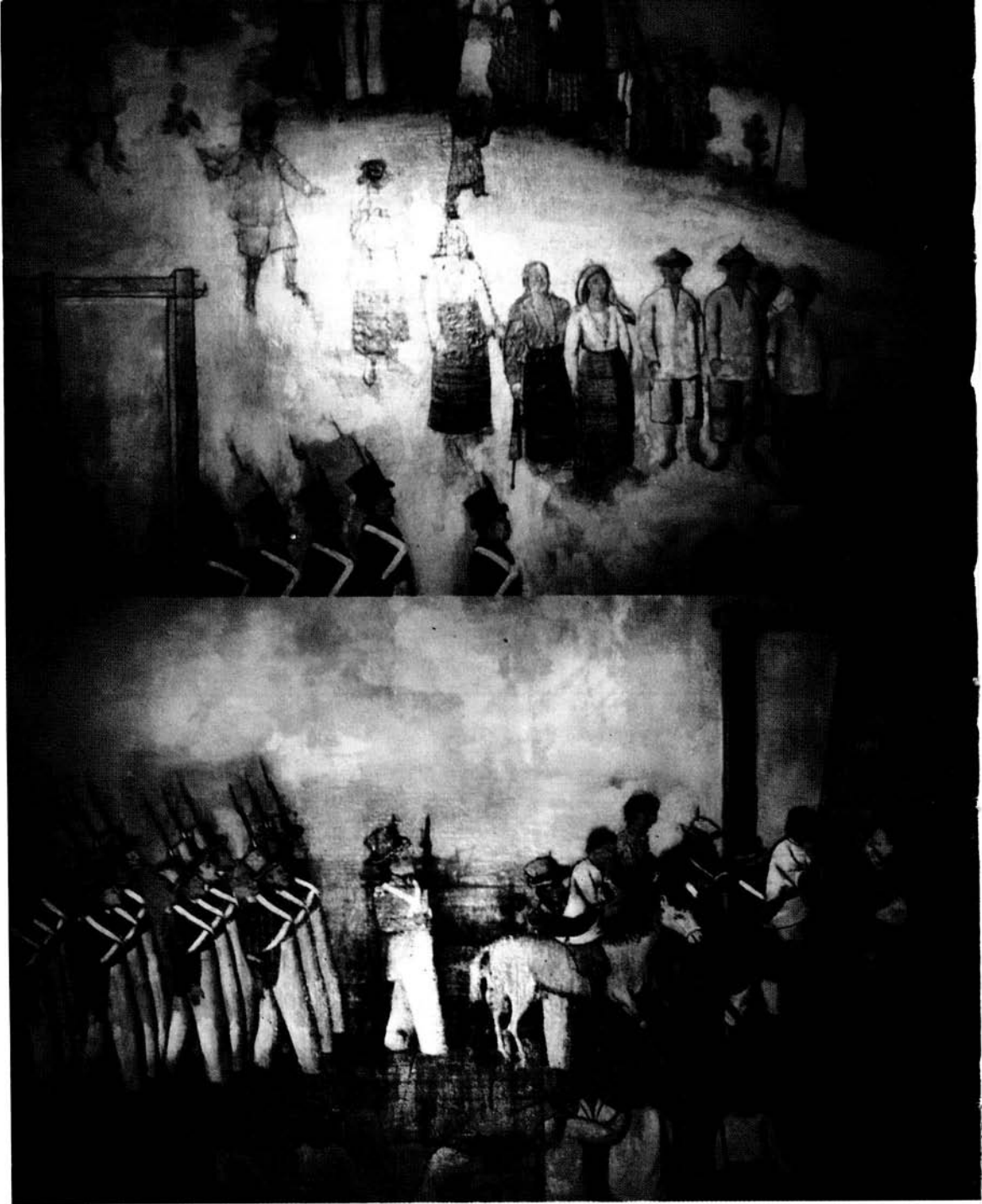
During the Filipino-American Revolt of 1898 in Ilocos, the supporters of General Emilio Aguinaldo captured Villa Fernandina and made the Bishop's Palace their headquarters. In that same year, it was taken and occupied for the American government by Colonel Parker.

The Ilocos Region benefited very greatly from the 48-year (1898-1946) American Insular Government's development programs in the areas of health, infrastructure, transportation, communications, and the use of the English language. Much of the old Spanish government infrastructure, such as bridges and public markets, was torn down and replaced by reinforced concrete and steel structures. Numerous government and school buildings went up during this time.

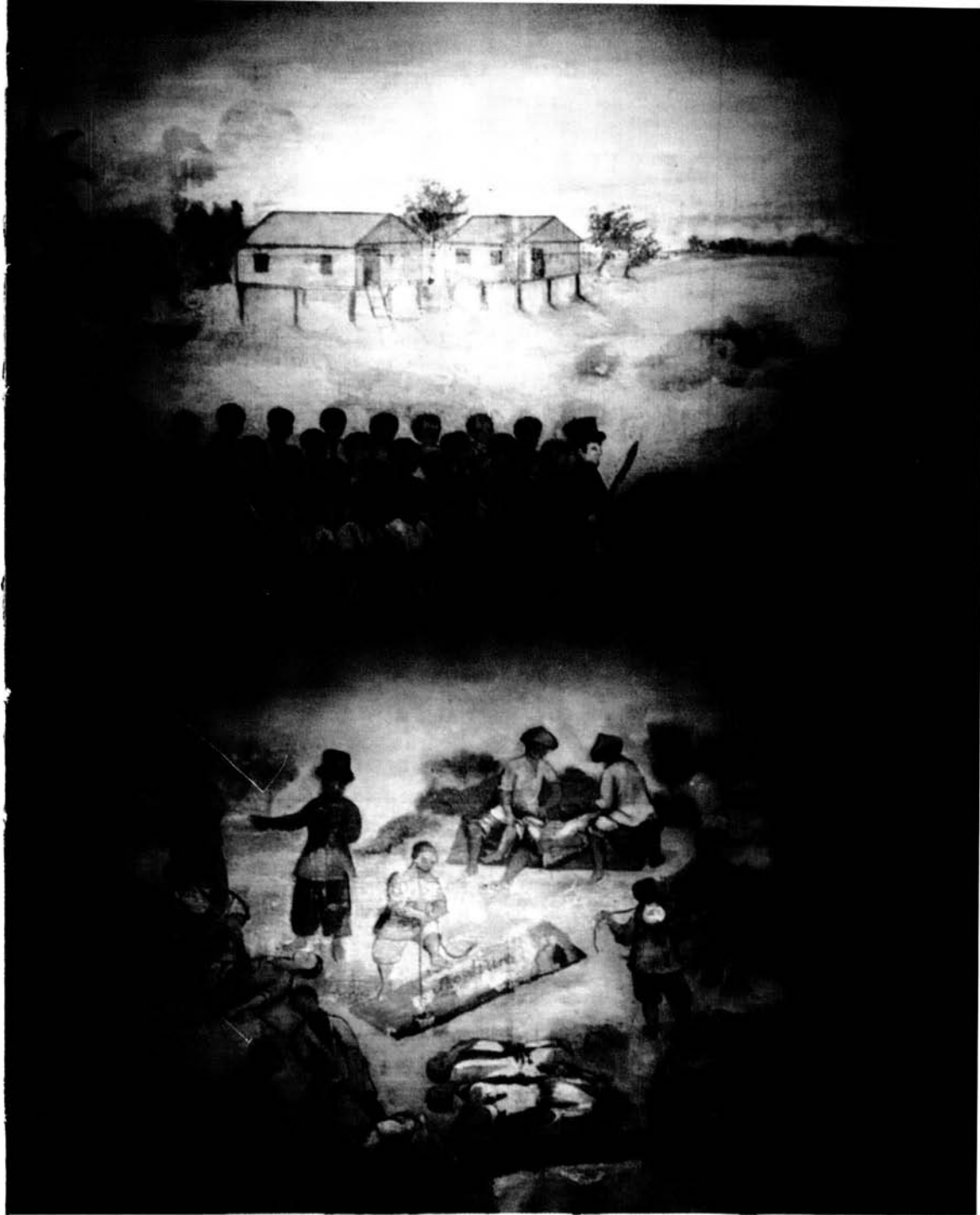
The Japanese Occupation (1942-45) of the Ilocos Region may have been brief, but it was wrenching. Stories abound of the cruelty towards the Ilocanos of the Japanese. Fortunately, as a consequence of the love that a Japanese officer bore towards an Ilocana who had given him a daughter, Villa Fernandina was spared from total destruction in the throes of the Japanese army's withdrawal from the city in 1945, just a little ahead of advancing American troops.

Today, of the three oldest Spanish cities existing in the Philippines (Cebu and Manila being the other two), Villa Fernandina, or Vigan, alone escaped total destruction, and, indeed, through the efforts of the Zaragoza Restoration Program of 1998, has even

developed into the best preserved Spanish colonial city in Asia. On December 2, 1999, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) inscribed the City of Vigan in the prestigious World Heritage List of Sites and Monuments, turning Salcedo's legacy into a global landmark. As a World Heritage Site, Vigan belongs to all peoples of the world.

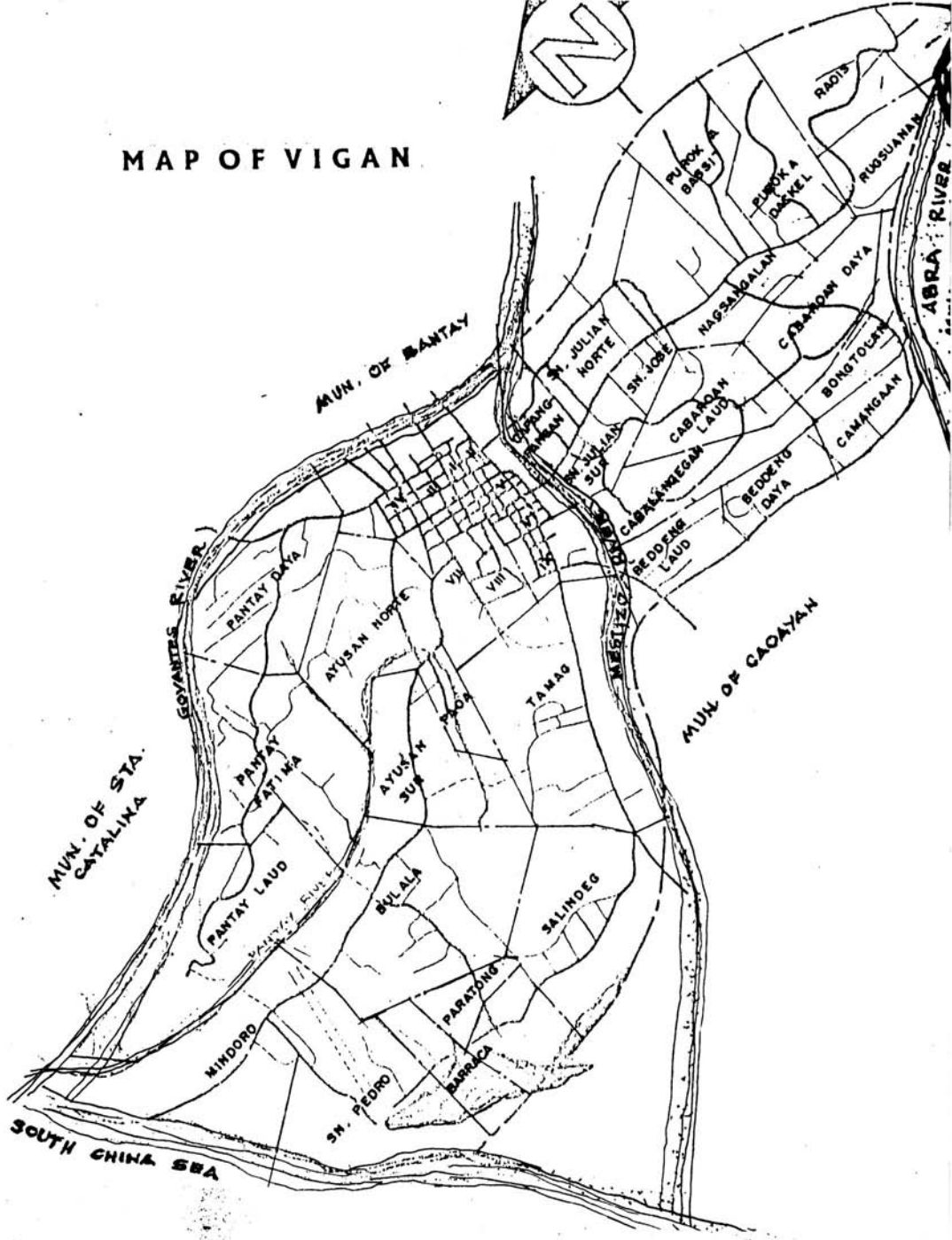


▲ A series of paintings depicting the Basi Revolt of 1807, were produced in 1821 by Vigan artist Esteban Villanueva (Father Burgos Museum, Vigan).



▲ The leaders of the Basi Revolt of 1807 were hanged in Villa Fernandina following their defeat on the south bank of the Bantoay River, San Ildefonso Ilocos Sur (Father Burgos Museum, Vigan).

MAP OF VIGAN



▲ The map of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, showing the location of its 39 barangays and barrios and the South China Sea (ZA).

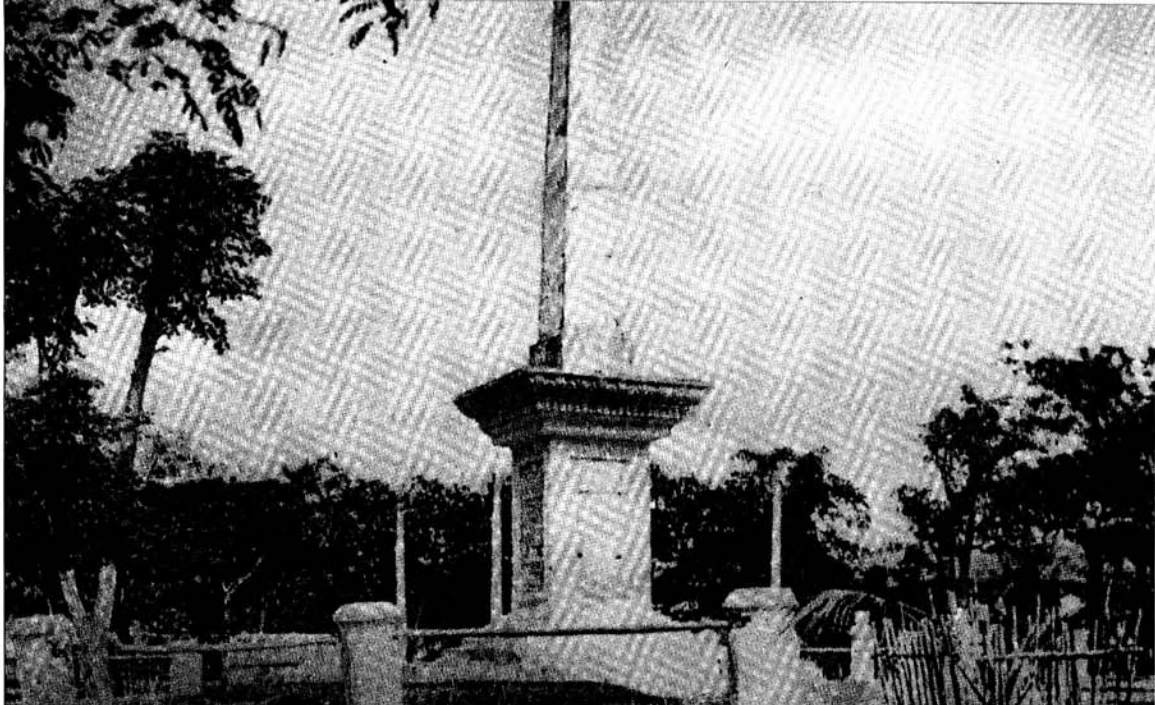


▲ On the Mestizo River once stood a busy port, filled with cargo boats (Ilocos Sur, 1895) (ZA).

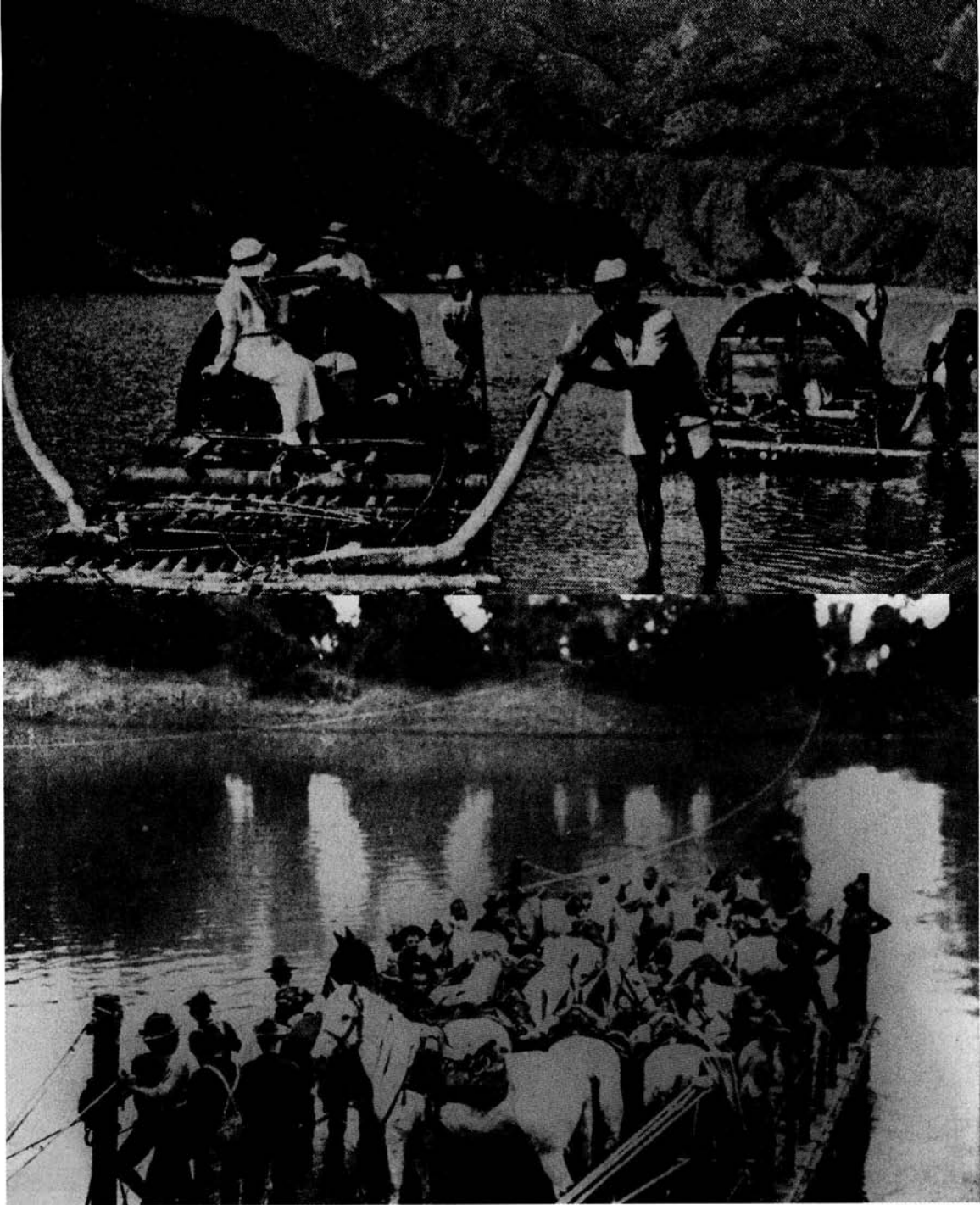
▼ The Narvacan Spanish Coastal Highway (Ilocos Sur, 1895) (ZA).



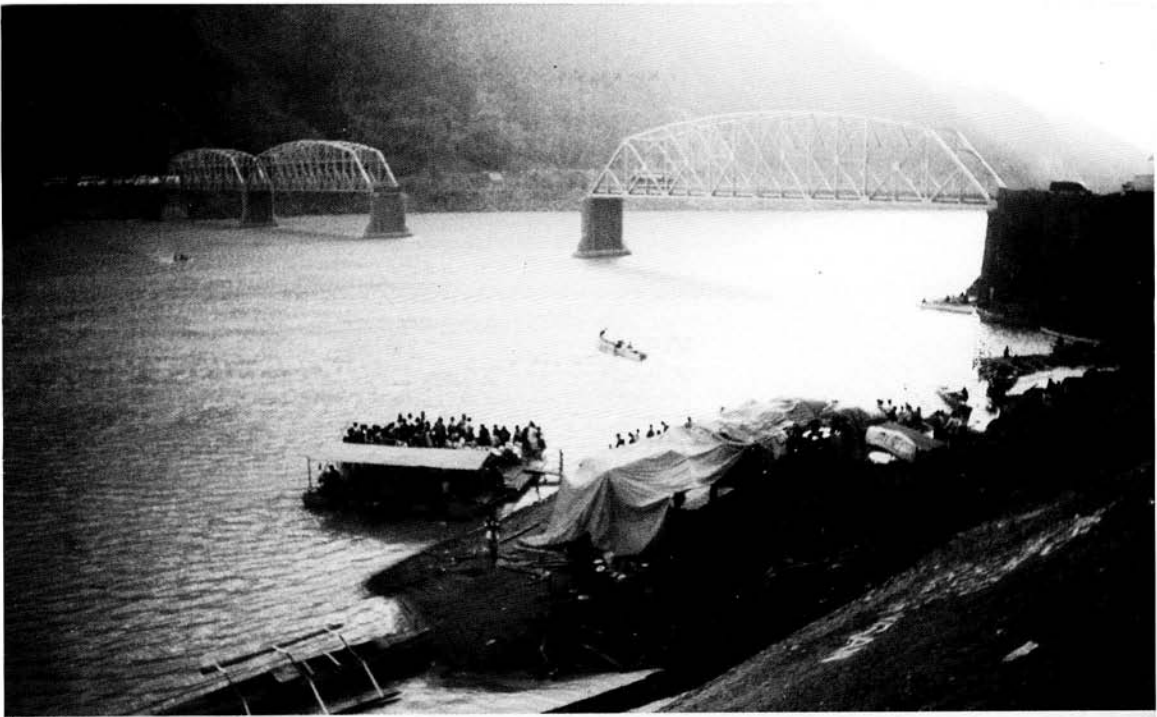
- ▲ The Spanish Coastal Highway connecting Santa and Narvacan (Ilocos Sur, 1898) (ZA).
- ▼ Kilometer 18 in Narvacan. Note the beautiful pilgrims' altar on the left (Ilocos Sur, 1915) (ZA).



- ▲ Juan de Salcedo Monument dedicated to the founder of the City of Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Salcedo loved Vigan so much that he bequeathed his entire *encomienda* to the people of Ilocos (Ilocos Sur, 1894) (ZA).
- ▼ The Father Jose Burgos Monument in Vigan, Ilocos Sur was erected in memory of a 35 year old native of Vigan who, on February 17, 1872 together with Father Mariano Gomez and Father Jacinto Zamora, was garroted for his revolutionary ideas (ZA).



- ▲ A bamboo raft , transporting American missionaries and their cargo across the Abra River (Ilocos Sur, 1914) (ZA).
- ▼ American Cavalry and their horses being ferried across the river (Ilocos Sur 1898) (ZA).



- ▲ The Quirino Bridge spanning the Abra River, Ilocos Sur was destroyed by typhoon Ferie on July 4, 2001. People traveling to Vigan and Ilocos Norte had to be ferried across on bamboo rafts and bancas (ZA).
- ▼ A gasoline truck pumping fuel across the Abra River through a long rubber pipe (ZA).

DISTRITO JUDICIAL DE

Provincia de Ilocos Sur.

ESTADO por pueblos que determina la extensión superficial que comprende el distrito judicial actual de distancia de la Cabeceira á la Capital de la provincia y á la del Archipiélago, medios de comunicación con uno y otro, tiempo que ordinariamente se emplea en recorrerla, número de habitantes clasificados en europeos é indigenas, razas de estos y dialectos que hablan.

NOMBRE DE LOS PUEBLOS	EXTENSION SUPERFICIAL	DISTANCIAS			MEDIO	DURACION DEL VIAGE			NÚMERO DE HABITANTES		RAZAS DE ESTOS	DIALECTOS QUE HABLAN
		DE LA CABECEIRA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA		DE LA CABECEIRA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA	EUROPEOS	INDIGENAS		
Castroville	1800	2	461	461	Por tierra	2 2	56	11765	noles.	Indios y Ilocos	Manila y Espana	
San Mateo	1800	2	461	461	Por tierra	2 2	6	3111	Indios y Ilocos	Manila y Espana		
San Juan	749	2	460	460	Por tierra	2 16	1	3117	Indios	Ilocos		
San Antonio	1581	7	454	454	Por tierra	2 16	1	5972	Indios	Ilocos		
San Carlos	1620	21	446	446	Por tierra	2 1	1	1966	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
San Marcos	1999	31	430	430	Por tierra	2 2	4	1854	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
San Lorenzo	1350	33	422	422	Por tierra	2 2	4	683	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
San Esteban	1521	32	422	422	Por tierra	2 2	4	2679	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
Sancti Spiritus	1571	42	419	419	Por tierra	2 2	2	4126	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		

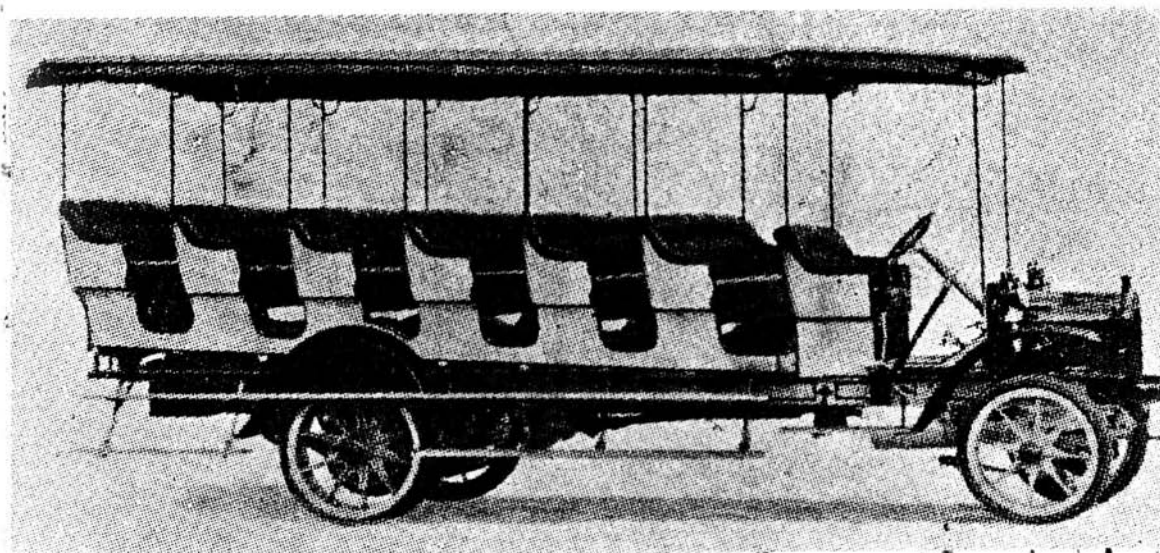
NOMBRE DE LOS PUEBLOS	EXTENSION SUPERFICIAL	DISTANCIAS			MEDIO DE LA COMUNICACION	DURACION DEL VIAGE			NÚMERO DE HABITANTES		RAZAS DE ESTOS	DIALECTOS QUE HABLAN
		DE LA CABECEIRA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA		DE LA CABECEIRA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA	CAPITAL DE LA PROVINCIA	EUROPEOS	INDIGENAS		
Sancti Spiritus	1023	7	461	461	Por tierra	2 2	5	2913	Indios	Ilocos		
San Juan	2107	13	474	474	Por tierra	2 2	1	2222	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
San Pedro	1110	21	472	472	Por tierra	2 2	1	6556	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
San Carlos	1747	27	479	479	Por tierra	2 2	1	7555	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		
Sancti Spiritus	2208	35	477	477	Por tierra	2 2	1	7557	Indios y Ilocos	Ilocos y Ilocos		

Vigan 16 de Mayo de 1885.

El Alcalde

J. J. M. M.

The Mayor of Vigan's judicial report of 1885 stated that travel time between Manila and Vigan consisted of six days by land, and two days and nine hours by sea. Vigan is described as possessing an area of 1,800 hectares. In it were 56 Spaniards, 6 Spanish mestizos, 11, 765 native Ilocanos, 3,111 Chinese mestizos who spoke Ilocano and Spanish (National Archives of the Philippines).



- ▲ A white, open-sided city and provincial bus in use in Ilocos during the American Period. It was owned and operated by Bachrach's Garage and Taxi Cab Company, Inc. (Ilocos Sur, 1916) (ZA).
- ▼ Botica Boie Drugstore, Vigan branch (1930) (ZA).