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## **The Birth and Death of A Mission: A Chapter in Philippine Church History**

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# The Birth and Death of a Mission: A Chapter in Philippine Church History

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WILLIAM HENRY SCOTT

THESE is a book by Powell Mills Dawley called *Chapters in Church History* whose title might very appropriately be borrowed for a history of the introduction of Christianity into the Philippines, for while the documentary sources in this area do not provide a consecutive history of the whole process, they do permit an occasional detailed look at some particular chapter in that history.

Such a chapter might be the story of the birth and death of the mid-eighteenth-century Augustinian mission to the Igorots in the neighborhood of Mount Santo Tomás in the present La Unión and Mountain Provinces. It might well begin by quoting the words with which the Rev. Fray Manuel Carrillo, Superior of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, opened his *Breve relación de las misiones de las cuatro naciones llamadas Igorrotes, Tinguianes, Apayaos y Adanes* in 1756:

When I reached the Ilocos during my first visitation in the recent year of 1753, I was moved to great sadness and compassion by the thousands of souls who inhabit those mountains without any knowledge of the true God. I proposed to the missionary fathers under my jurisdiction in this province as well as Pangasinan that each should undertake to befriend these fierce men with gifts and such means as

prudence directed, each taking responsibility for those bordering his own jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

The Godless folk who roused such becoming piety in the Augustinian Provincial had inspired a markedly different reaction among their Ilocano neighbors. Occupying the foot-hills and mountains a mile or less from the sea, they swept down often enough on plundering raids to keep sentries posted day and night in the smaller towns, and often carried off Christian captives into slavery. Lowland farmers working fields in the hills had to go out in veritable convoys, departing and returning at the signal of a drum and stationing guards on the edge of the fields during the day's labor. Indeed, Father Carrillo himself noted that it was necessary to travel with an armed escort even on the Royal highway, and the day before he arrived for his second visitation in 1754, a woman had been beheaded on the road between Santo Tomás and San Fabián. To the Spanish authorities they were a real thorn in the side, both in practice and in principle, for they not only lived in complete independence of Spanish law and tribute, but flourished off an illicit gold trade that provided means for obtaining modern steel weapons, the reception of lowland renegades with such novelties as the bow-and-arrow, and the amassing of personal fortunes ranging up to ₱5,000.

It was this very trade, however, which assured the presence in the Christian centers of such Igorots as the Augustinian Superior instructed his priests to cultivate, and they all watched with increasing distress as the Governor of Pangasinan stepped up measures to enforce his total ban on communications between mountain pagans and lowland Christians. In December of 1754 he started preparations for an actual punitive expedition, and Father Carrillo rushed back to Agoo to find that those Igorots who had responded so favorably to the father's overtures that conversion seemed a sure thing, no longer dared to come down, some of their companions already having been imprisoned in the provincial capital at Lingayen, their gold and goods confiscated by the Governor's agents.

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<sup>1</sup> Pérez, Angel, *Relaciones agustinianas de las razas del Norte de Luzon*, p. 101.

It happened that while Father Carrillo was conferring with the same prior in Aringay, he received word that a delegation of Igorots wanted to talk to him if they could be guaranteed safe conduct, and, such assurances being given, they presented a petition in Ilocano in which they requested three things: that a missionary priest be sent to them because they had decided to become Christians, that the threatened expedition be cancelled, and that the confiscated gold and goods be restored and their imprisoned townmates set free. Delighted by this turn of events, the Provincial had the petition translated into Spanish and forwarded with his own hearty endorsement to Governor General Arandia, a personal friend; and although the first attempt to have those Igorot chieftains deliver it themselves was foiled when they were captured passing through Pangasinan, it was subsequently delivered by six others who were received with flattering cordiality by the Governor General himself. Governor Arandia was so struck by the drama of the opportunity that he not only sent orders posthaste to Governor Arza of Pangasinan to suspend the proposed expedition, but had the Igorot messengers baptized in his own presence.

Father Carrillo has left the following account of this romantic service in which six tribal chieftains from the savage hinterlands of Northern Luzon were christened in the most sophisticated outpost of Spanish sovereignty in the eastern hemisphere:

The affair was prepared with all grandeur, and so arranged in everything, as the Governor General told me later, that he had never seen an occasion more joyous. He could hardly have felt otherwise since all that took place was so beautiful: the church in which it was celebrated (ours in Tondo) was well adorned, and the god-fathers were the most distinguished citizens of the City of Manila, who dressed their charges most decently in Spanish style. The minister of baptism was my own Vicar Provincial, the Rev. Fray Pedro Velasco. Many of the most illustrious of the City of Manila attended with the Governor General, and the crowd of religious, citizens and commoners was so huge that no more could squeeze in. With all this, and the other circumstances that caused such pleasure for all that every heart was filled to overflowing with joy that showed in their outward actions, the ceremony was carried out with such pious solemnity as there are not many examples of, as was to be seen in the be-

haviour of the Governor General who, not being able to contain his extraordinary happiness, rose from his chair, approached the newly baptized and kissed each of their hands, performing this edifying act before the whole crowded congregation.<sup>2</sup>

Governor Arandia's decree not only cancelled the threatened punitive expedition, but directed that the confiscated goods be returned to the Igorots, those in prison be liberated, and the decree itself be translated and given wide distribution "to publicize the benignity with which the King our Lord, and his ministers, deal with the natives." Father Carrillo was still in Agoo when he received word of the decree, and happily explained it to the Igorot chieftains who happened to be present, and they set about submitting the first of a long series of lists of their townmates willing to accept the Christian faith and Spanish authority. These lists quickly totalled 1,772 names from 25 different villages, so the Augustinian Superior petitioned the Royal Hacienda for the support of two missionaries to take advantage of the Igorot invitation.

In January 1755 he assigned a new missionary to Agoo to study Ilocano, and left for Ilocos Norte to visit a new mission station called Banna. Returning to Agoo in February, he named Pedro de Vivar and Francisco Romero to the two new appointments, and baptized nine adult Igorots himself on the Feast of St. Matthias with sufficient pomp—triumphal arches, candles, drums and the pealing of bells—to make a lasting impression on all who were present. Yet despite the large number of Igorots who expressed the desire for baptism, this sacrament was not undertaken lightly by the Augustinian fathers, and those who received it had to submit to enough instruction to discourage the more impatient. Indeed, only 463 of those many listed by Father Carrillo in his *Brief Account* were finally baptized. The lists themselves were registers of submission rather than conversion, and the process by which the apostolic ministry sought to obtain this goal was expressed in the verb *reducir*, which might best be translated "civilize". A contemporary chronicler described the aim nicely: "They should duly embrace vassalage and homage to our Catholic

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<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 105-106

monarch and reduction to our Holy Faith . . . and form towns in which they might live politically and rationally in a sociable way, giving up the custom of living like wild beasts.”<sup>3</sup>

The Igorot headmen who submitted these census lists were forward-looking middlemen in the gold trade—like Lacaaden of Bukiagan who presented the petition, or slave-holding old Dulso of Luacan—friendly enough to take advantage of the Augustinian plan of attraction. Father Francisco Xávier de Córdoba of Agoo was particularly successful in dealing with these marginal Filipinos, often intervening on their behalf when the Pangasinan Governor’s agents were slow to carry out the directives of the Governor General’s decree, and receiving them with such frequent hand-outs that Father Vivar later found himself at a disadvantage by comparison. The Agoo Prior also held the Igorot’s personal dignity in atypically high esteem, believed that “they greatly resent going back on your word to them, since they are not so uncouth as they seem to us,” and even argued that failure to return one of their slaves who had come down for baptism would adversely affect the missionary endeavour.

Under this irenic policy, an impressive stream of Igorots flowed down from the mountains to make their submission, be catechized for baptism, or actually to settle in the outskirts of the Ilocano towns. Twenty of them formed a village on land ceded by the town of Tagudin, for instance, and a new settlement just east of Bauang attracted Igorot homesteaders from as far away as villages on the borders of the present Mountain Province municipality of Kapangan. A register of October 1756 lists such settlements as Bukiagan, Bangquilay (now Mankilay), Palina, Bilis and Lumtang in the modern municipalities of Tubao, Pugo, Tuba and Sablan, and even such distant places as Luacan and Pico in the Baguio area, as well as a number of now uninhabited sites in the same districts. On one day alone 500 came down to Agoo, and since it happened to be the very day when those six baptized in Manila returned from the capital (a special act of Providence, Fr. Carrillo sug-

<sup>3</sup> Concepción, Juan de la, *Historia general de Philipinas*, Vol. 14, p. 361.

gested), the fathers made the most of the situation by escorting them into town dressed in Spanish clothes, mounted on horseback, and carrying the ceremonial canes-of-office signifying their official appointment as headmen, to hold their fellow mountaineers spellbound with eye-witness accounts of the grandeur of Manila and the treatment they had received.

With two missionaries already appointed for assignment in Igorot villages, Father Córdoba was instructed to reconnoiter the heights overlooking Agoo to pick out likely sites for them. He set out from Aringay on March 10, 1755, and travelled all day on foot in the hot sun, accompanied by an armed escort but leaving behind the horses that were useless on such rugged trails through rocky streambeds and steep crests. He spent the night in Buyan (near barrio Rizal, Tubao) where the people greeted him with joy and kissed his hand, and where he met Chanao, the wife of one of those Igorots imprisoned in Lingayen who had not yet learned of her husband's pending release but who was moved to promises of baptism for her whole family upon hearing of it. Passing through Pintocoan (probably the modern Bintocang) the next day, where he was given some cold camotes for a snack, he reached Bukiagan, Lacaaden's own village, where everybody already knew how to make the sign of the cross and some could even recite the "Our Father". Here he spent two days as the center of attraction, receiving prominent leaders from neighboring villages, especially Laongan and Guilit of Tonglo who had come to escort him to their place, the largest barrio in the area. Continuing the upward trek toward Mount Santo Tomas the next day, he was delayed upon learning of the extreme plight of a leper living outcaste on the hillside; he cleaned out his miserable hut, baptized him, and took his 14-year-old boy with him to be raised as a Christian. With this delay, Father Córdoba didn't reach Tonglo until the 15th.

Tonglo in 1755 was a wealthy barrio of some 300 Igorots on the slopes of a mountain in the present Benguet municipality of Tuba—probably the one just east of Luding public school called Tengdeo by the Nabaloi—who lorded it over the surrounding villages on the basis of the profits from their trade

in buying raw gold from the mines just east of them, refining it slightly for sale in the Ilocos, and accumulating herds of cattle and silver currency in exchange. The most prominent man, Balasiao, whom Father Vivar was later to characterize as being "of noble heart but disfigured by drunkenness," was valued at ₱5,000 with all his possessions, and had the reputation of living over a gold mine and being able to multiply silver in his hands, although a little panning in the swollen streams during the rainy season by Tonglo's poorer classes seems to have been the only genuine mining activity. Daily life, however, was as rough as the mountains themselves: there wasn't enough land for even one irrigated field (rice isn't grown there even today), and the area was so denuded of trees and bamboo that fuel-gathering was a sun-to-sun undertaking and house construction a major project.

Father Córdoba's three days in Tonglo were a kind of triumphal tour, from his welcome on the trail and reception in Chief Laongan's house, before which a tall cross had been erected, to his ransoming a Christian slave for ₱42 (which included a 20% commission to the chiefs who acted as go-betweens). Since March 16 was Passion Sunday, he celebrated Mass (probably for the first time on the Cordillera Central since the Augustinians gave up their short-lived mission in Kayan a century earlier), and followed it with a dance in which both Christian lowlanders and Tonglo natives took part—each in his own style, of course. Hardly an hour passed without the arrival of visiting chieftains—Bulic and Biran from Albacan to the east, Amonin from the Trinidad Valley, and Baban from wealthy Boo to the north—, many of whom the father received with rifle salutes and as much attention as he could. He preached a little sermon and lectured them all on the purpose of his visit, namely, to solicit their submission to the law of Christ and the Spanish King, "to all of which"—according to Fr. Carrillo's account—"they responded very favorably and with signs of sincerity." With such displays of public affection and the good will of local chiefs like Laongan, who was nephew and heir to Balasiao and worth ₱1,000 in his own right, and Guilit, the chief enthusiast for locating the mission here, Father

Córdoba decided on Tonglo, and departed, taking the ransomed captive with him.

On April 28 the Prior of Agoo made a second reconnaissance, this time following the more southerly branch of the Alipang-Aringay River which rises on Mount Santo Tomas itself. He arrived in Bangquilay the next day, and was received as warmly as in Tonglo, everybody following his example in adoring the cross which had been set up. Having noted a plain called Ambangonan with sufficient space for a farming community of 400 houses, he proceeded upstream to Tunec the next day, where he said Mass and proposed to the inhabitants that they resettle in that convenient plain. So enthusiastically did they respond to this suggestion that when he returned a month later, he found they had already prepared the posts for a chapel, and although he ordered them then to stop construction till he made a further survey, this subsequently became the seat of the second Igorot mission.

Father Vivar had meanwhile arrived from Bacarra, and on May 12 he set out for his new assignment in Tonglo. Father Córdoba accompanied him for four days and made registers of the people of Palma and Sacaba (along the route the old folks in Tuba used to call the "old Spanish trail"), but turned back on the 16th because of the beginning of the heavy rains and the shortage of clergy in his own station. Proceeding on his own, Father Vivar passed through Bilis where he was welcomed by many who had already been registered in Bukiagan, but spent the night in Ambalat (now an uninhabited hillside) where the people refused to be registered. (Did he note with any apprehension that this was the second such case since parting with the Prior of Agoo that morning?) However, he received a warm welcome from Guilit and the people of Tonglo when he arrived on the 17th, and was put up in a small house that had been prepared for him.

The following day was the Feast of Pentecost, and the people presented him with a carabao and a basket of camotes, and Father Vivar celebrated his first Mass in Tonglo. Then, the Mass being finished, he set to work building a church. Thus,

on the anniversary of the descent of the Holy Spirit like cloven tongues of fire on the disciples of the early Church, the first Spanish missionary ever to make his home in a real Igorot village began his lonely apostolic ministry.

Father Vivar completed his little chapel with the help of Igorots carrying lumber, blessed it on May 24, and then settled down for the rainy season to consider the hard facts of life in Tonglo. Those clouds which made the mountain look so Olympian from below, on closer view obscured the sun from noon till night even when it wasn't raining. He had no place to raise pigs or chickens, much less to plant any rice: that cereal was carried up from the plain by raw manpower, quadrupling its price in the process and exhausting one-third the mission's annual stipend in the first month alone. The trip to the lowlands—for reasons of health or to look for funds—was painful: Father Vivar later said "you lose a kilo every time you come up or go down," and once he almost lost his life crossing the River with no companion but a ten-year-old boy. Father Córdoba urged him to make the trip to Benguet (i.e., the Trinidad Valley) as soon as possible to see if it was as lush as reputed and as suitable for a comfortable mission station.

The discovery that only five men in town spoke Ilocano—and a half-Igorot sort of business pidgin at that—inspired Father Vivar to tackle the local dialect. By the end of the rainy season he had mastered enough to translate a catechism and six little tracts, though still not adept in practical conversation because of the "innumerable elisions and inversions and many changes of sounds" (*inumerables síncopas y muchas metáforas de las letras*) of its pronunciation—a nice characterization of many Cordillera dialects today, and especially applicable to Nabaloi. He and his Superior argued at some length over the advisability of giving up Igorot to introduce Ilocano: when Father Carrillo reminded him of those Ilocano-speaking Igorots who had been baptized in Agoo, he retorted, "The reason they took it into their heads to be baptized when Your Reverence came was that, first of all, they supposed this was the best way to preserve their official appointments and ho-

nors." (Father Carrillo was later to boast of his missionaries' labors in learning Igorot himself, however,—“for in no other way could they preach, catechize or instruct them in the Mysteries of our Holy Faith.”)

Father Vivar was unable to reach the Trinidad Valley during the rainy season, but he did manage to make the Luacan trip in June. He had hardly gone half a league, however, when he was met by messengers sent to turn him back on various excuses but, exercising the tact of sending Laongan and other influential men ahead, and the firmness of ignoring further warnings, he reached the outskirts the same day. There Dulso and Amonin met him and explained the real reason: the community was celebrating a religious ceremony and nobody was allowed to come in—a custom of much Cordillera paganism to the present day. To fulfill the requirements of the taboo, he slept there that night and entered the town the following morning.

Although it was four days from the coast and had only limited possibilities for irrigated fields, Luacan struck Father Vivar as a more favorable location than Tonglo—as well it might, for modern surveyors have located the Baguio City Airport there. But he missed the warm cooperation which had characterized his and Father Córdoba's reception in the villages closer to the sound of church bells and Spanish musketry. Old Chief Dulso himself was in a bad mood (he had been looking forward to a visit from his old friend, the Prior of Agoo), and the leaders were unwilling to be registered without first consulting neighboring chieftains. (“They're always consulting together,” the missionary noted, “no matter what the priest asks.”) Their answer the following day was straightforward—to be listed, yes, but to change their religion would be offensive to their god so they'd better consult him first. So Father Vivar raised a cross and departed, listing 36 families there and in Duyoy, a small village in which he was laid up by a heavy down-pour on his way home—on the side of a now uninhabited mountain just east of the Tuba municipal hall.

The rainy season also discouraged travel on the part of those Ilocanos who had agreed to come up to act as godparents

for new Christians, so it was not until September that Father Vivar began baptizing. As soon as he baptized one of Guilit's children, however, the child's mother developed sore breasts, which was interpreted as a direct cause and effect so after that they only brought him children who were old enough to walk, 23 of whom he christened. Some of these were suffering from a common skin affliction called the Red Blight, which suggested to Father Vivar that his sacerdotal functions were considered at least medicinally efficacious. Adults, who could not be baptized without instruction, rarely qualified, not only because of the language problem but "because they're so taken up with their business ventures that what they learn in four or eight days they forget on the first trip to the mines." Nevertheless, his baptismal register listed 70 souls by the end of that year.

On October 17th Father Vivar was finally able to make the one-day hike to Benguet, and he found the spot every bit as idyllic as its reputation: pine-clad slopes with an invigorating freshness surrounded a little lake full of fish and birds and a plain probably capable of supporting 400 people, irrigated by streams that formed the headwaters of the Bauang River. (One of the Igorots had said to the priest's lowland companions as they crested the ridge into the valley, "Look, you Ilocanos, at a town better than any of yours!") His reception was also cordial: Chief Ulao [Mao?] had prepared a house for him where he set up a small altar and recited the Rosary before a silent and attentive crowd, and the following morning he said Mass and began listing the people. The townsfolk raised a cross in a beautiful spot where they said they would build a church when a priest came to live there.

The same day the missionary received a visit from a chieftain called Labangan from Buguias, four days away in the upper Agno Valley, who turned out to have been baptized as Pedro Meléndez by Father Pedro Casco in Bauang, which information moved Father Vivar to chide him for the indecency of a Christian's running around naked and to invite him to Tonglo for clothes. He also met two young Christian captives — Santiago, a 15-year-old Zambal from San Fabian who had

lived on the Cordillera so long he'd forgotten his own language, and 16-year-old Maria Rosa of San Juan who had only been taken the year before and so was a well-instructed Christian—, but since ₱60 was asked for each of them, he could do nothing more than promise to write their people. Then, presenting a colored print of Our Lady to the chief, and urging them to send any of their sick to him in Tonglo, he departed with high hopes.

Back in Tonglo, however, the same dry weather that had made the Benguet trip possible also heralded the advent of the annual community religious ceremonies and brought Father Vivar into his first head-on clash with his professional competitors. Relying on the good will of his chiefly supporters, he suggested that this year the festivities be celebrated without the presence of either the pagan priestess or her idols, and they easily gave their verbal agreement. But the woman herself looked him straight in the eye and said, "If you're the priest of the Christians, so am I of the Igorots, and if you have your god, I have mine," so unnerving him by her coolness that he left the spot feeling rather indisposed. Balasiao actually gave over his own functions in the ceremony to somebody else, but when prevailed upon by the guests, he finally told the father, "It's no easier for the people to give up their ancient practices for the word of a priest than for him to give up what he believes, especially considering the brilliant success of the very ceremony he wants them to quit."

He was no more successful in the matter of the pig idol they venerated. Having once broken it to pieces only to have them put it back together again, he tried to destroy it for good, but the people actually threatened him, and although they later apologized for this discourtesy, when he made another attempt they offered to stone him and did not apologize. Recourse to the use of reason only brought him up against the firm but simple statement, "This pig is our god and so it shall be." Father Vivar wound up attending the ceremonies both day and night himself, and took his share of the pork distributed.

The fair weather brought a lot of Igorots from other villages to Tonglo, and Father Vivar could see from their attitudes that the honeymoon was over. His attack on the local faith was the subject of much resentful discussion, and he was already in bad favor for having been party to an agreement, along with Laongan and GUILIT, by which a lowland slave of Old Dulso's would be permitted to go to San Fabian for baptism and then be returned to his master, but whom the Dominican prior there now refused to send back. In November things got a little rough: one night some Igorots from Batan threatened to kill him for wine, and another time some tried to persuade him a Christian boy captured in Bauang had been kidnapped for bad debts with the permission of the Prior of Agoos. The Father Provincial was just then due to arrive in Agoos and wished to see him, but he sent word down to explain that he couldn't get away, having nobody with him but his cook. (He never had an armed escort, of course, since the Governor of Pangasinan reasoned speciously that none would be needed among a people so peace-loving and orderly that his own punitive measures against them had been cancelled by the highest authority in the Islands.)

Things came to a head on the last of the month. A Vigan couple with their son had sought refuge in the area, but the man they killed outright, and the boy was sold into slavery in Luacan for a few iron spearheads, the woman in Benguet for 12 *reales*. Learning that there was a Spanish father living in Tonglo, she contrived to get to ailing Chief Baban in Boo and offered to get medicine for him in Tonglo, where, although well-guarded, she bolted for the priest's house. Father Vivar was in no position to help her outright, but she was placed in one of the chiefs' houses with kindness, while her pursuers demanded the ₱150 they claimed to have paid for her, and posted a guard outside the house and many more on the trail. That night they intercepted a letter the priest tried to send out, and in the morning he woke to find his house surrounded by Boo warriors whose prowess was held in high respect both in Benguet and in Tonglo.

Meanwhile, Father Córdoba had learned of his plight and dispatched 60 armed men to the rescue. But when they arrived, Father Vivar, mindful of his unfulfilled calling, deliberately left most of them there and started down the trail with so few of them that he was again menaced by Igorots on the way. Retaining his composure, he assured them of his good will and as an evidence of his desire to give them no cause for grievance, invited them to go down with him and receive satisfaction for the pledges they had given in the case of the runaway slave. Some of the Tonglo chieftains did so, demanding ₱50 as was their custom in such cases, and although the Prior of Agoo was only able to raise ₱20, the missionary had made his point and was able to part with the people of Tonglo without an open breach. Indeed, when he transferred the mission headquarters in December to Guimutbungan, a site already selected by Father Córdoba farther down the Aringay Valley, the Tonglo chieftains were among those who responded favorably to an invitation to consider the advantages of leaving their swidden fields on the Cordillera heights that had to be relocated every April, and settle permanently in this fertile little plain.

There, the following fall, Father Vivar brought to a close the record he had been keeping of "The Missions of Ilocos." It was October 11, 1756, and he had just returned from a trip to Tonglo across trails now partially obscured by the new fields being opened by the Igorot homesteaders in Guimutbungan. It must have been with mixed emotions that he quoted Horace's *Parturiunt montes nascetur ridiculus mus* in summary—"That 'the mountain will labor' has sounded through these missions; may it not please God that 'it will bring forth a mouse,' as there are signs of," — and with no small irony that he went on:

When the news was published of those 800 Igorots who were first listed with such grand hopes for further progress, everybody got the idea our hands would be wearied with baptizing, like Saint Francis [Xavier]. If such fine progress was experienced in the beginning even without missionaries, what might the future not bring? The acclaim was not small in Manila that reached even Madrid and Rome. Yet

today not a baptized adult is to be found in these mountains, except in a case of dire emergency—which certainly seems “ridiculous”.<sup>4</sup>

Whatever grand hopes Father Vivar himself may have had when he first climbed the Cordillera 18 months before were now reduced to manageable proportions by the wisdom of hindsight. Those 2,000 souls were listed in 32 barrios simply because their leaders said they wanted to become Christians—he could now write—, “and the same might easily be accomplished throughout all Igorotland with a cow, a jar of wine or a handful of beads in each village.” Nor did he now find anything remarkable in those glowing reports of Igorot good will by the fathers in the Ilocos towns:

The Igorot comes down on his business and makes a habit of visiting the priest, not because he likes his face but to cover some debt of the many he owes the Christians, or for some cloth or wine, etc.; indeed, nobody comes to the priest without asking for something. So the priest takes the occasion to talk about becoming a Christian and being registered, and the Igorot, who isn't slow with his promises, assures him and says yes or no as the priest wants, and, having got what he was seeking, agrees to whatever the priest says as often as he says it.<sup>5</sup>

Whether for the reasons propounded by Father Vivar or because “it is as clear as the sun that it was the work of God alone,” as his Superior believed, a significant Igorot migration took place in 1755. At the end of that year many were to be found planting sugarcane and cotton alongside the farmers of Agoos, Bangar and Tagudin—some 80 of them already baptized—, despite the fact that others had been robbed and murdered by lowland brigands, and still others had succumbed to an epidemic which did not reach the mountain villages but wiped out 14,000 lowlanders under Augustinian care alone. There was also a decrease in the Igorot raids on lowland communities: when Father Carrillo made his third visitation, he found new fields being worked east of Bangar, and asking the reason was told “the Igorots now have missionaries, and are friends, and don't make war any more.” Nor was the

<sup>4</sup> A pun is here intended on the “mouse” of Horace's Latin, which is *ridiculus mus*, lit., a fieldmouse. — Pérez, Angel, *op. cit.*, p. 146. p. 146.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

work of the two interior missions ended, either. Father Romero, who had proved a slow language student and so hadn't entered the mountains until January 1756, was duplicating the Guimutbungan resettlement plan a few miles to the south in that plain called Ambangonan, where he built a house and chapel, subsequently burned, and welcomed homesteaders from six surrounding villages, baptizing 58 of them. He and Father Vivar were still the chief ornaments of the Augustinian Mission when Father Carrillo wrote a final report in March 1758 on this harvest of so "great a number vassals for God and for the King our Lord, without arms, without soldiers, without force, fear or violence."

But the end was not far off. It came in the fall of 1758 as irrevocably and as matter-of-factly as it was reported 35 years later in Juan de la Concepción's *Historia general de Philipinas*:

Having been informed that the pagan Igorot mountaineers were infesting the nearby towns of the provinces of Pangasinan and Ilocos with their raids, Señor Arandia ordered the Alcalde Mayor of the Province of Pangasinan, who was Don Manuel de Arza y Urrutia, to mount expeditions in the season and manner in which they had customarily been made in the past against the pagan Igorots inhabiting the mountains and ridges near that province.<sup>6</sup>

Governor Arza called a meeting of all the local captains for November 4, where it was decided that 800 to 1,000 troops should be raised by local conscription, with a volunteer reserve force, and that they could best take the field between January and May. Then he sent for Chief Lacaaden of Bukiagan, of whom he had last heard four years before when that statesmanlike Igorot had refused to receipt for the confiscated goods being restored by the Governor's agents on the grounds that his gold had been debased with copper, and gave him 30 days to round up such of his people as were willing to give allegiance and so be spared in the attack. Lacaaden's brother, Patay of Pintocoan, showed up in Lingayen a month later with word that Lacaaden himself was ill and a list of some 336 of their people willing to submit and form a discip-

<sup>6</sup> Concepción, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

lined barrio. In return, they were given some land Lacaaden had selected in Guinitaban (Tubao), and ten years' exemption from tribute, but were especially warned against having any traffic with a Tonglo confederation of villages that had just threatened an attack upon Agoo where another expeditionary force was being outfitted (in the sad presence of Father Córdoba, we must suppose).

The main force marched out of San Fabian on February 22, 1759, under the command of Governor Arza himself, and left the plain at Sobosob (near the present junction of the Kennon Road and Highway No. 3), planning to cross the mountains into the Ambangonan area for a rendezvous with the Agoo force for a joint attack upon Tonglo. They failed to make contact, however, being delayed by sharpened bamboo stakes in the bed of the Angalacan River, a sturdy boxwood barricade in a narrow defile, and several threats of attack. On the night of the 24th they camped near Balangabang, which they burned the next morning though sparing 53 Igorots who surrendered, including Chief Ampaguey of Soquiao whose head was wanted by the whole company for his raids on San Fabian and San Jacinto. After an overnight march to burn Soquiao, they pushed on to the new settlement in Guinitaban, already christened San Pablo, where they were met by Father Romero.

The Agoo detachment under Captain Don Antonio del Rosario had meanwhile run into more serious trouble. Having failed to make contact with the Pangasinan force, they proceeded up to Tonglo and had almost reached their objective when they were attacked in Apatut (where Father Córdoba had baptized the leper). After a brisk encounter, the Tonglo commander raised a cross as a flag of truce and come down to surrender—it was Father Vivar's old Procurator of Igorots, Guilit—, saying that nine of his companions had been killed and many wounded. Taking him at his word, Captain Rosario went through the formalities of capitulation, took the road for Aringay, and very quickly found himself ambushed in a narrow pass. A complete rout followed, during which the Captain himself was reported killed and his men panicked, but

the second-in-command, Don Joseph Gaspar, managed to break through to Guimutbungan where he was now standing off siege with about 250 men.

Governor Arza sent a hand-picked force of 200 men to the rescue with orders to hold out and continue the campaign after the arrival of reinforcements under the command of his namesake, Don Manuel de Arza y San Pelayo, but before Don Manuel even got there he was met by the captains who had been unable to prevent the retreat of their troops, who were still more depleted by desertions by the time they were marched to Bauang. The Governor was meanwhile having the same experience: on his way to Agoos he was met by 400 troops that had failed to reach Benguet as ordered because of "rebel infestation" of the mountains, an excuse offered by an equally unsuccessful detachment from Bacnotan which, however, at least presented seven Igorot heads as a token of their efforts.

Reforming his forces, then, Don Manuel left Bauang on March 11, 1759, at the head of 1,375 men with no-nonsense orders to get through to Tonglo, and burned every house and field he found along what is now the Naguilian Road until he reached Lumtang, where he camped the night of the 15th. The next day, as his forces were burning the last two villages before Tonglo, they were attacked and the major engagement of the campaign began. The Igorots endured five hours of concentrated fire from rifles and six pieces of artillery before withdrawing with a loss of some 200 men including the most valorous warriors of Lumtang and six of Guilit's own relatives. On the 18th Don Manuel at last marched into a deserted Tonglo and completely razed it. He wanted to continue on to Benguet and the rich Pangotcotan (Pamucutan) mines where the largest enemy concentration was reported, but his men, considering the recent example of Igorot stoicism under fire and the depletion of their own supply of ammunition, had no desire to test the valor with which these people might defend their most valuable mines, and when some experienced Mexican miners among them noted evidence of rich surface veins after they passed Lumtang, they were unwilling to proceed farther.

Thus was the principal intention and goal frustrated—to force the Igorots to pay tribute, form towns and live civilly and politically, a difficult undertaking because of the barbarism in which they are raised, in complete freedom, subject to no authority, without any ambition other than trading with the neighboring provinces, where they rob and murder, and giving no lasting loyalty to the obligations they undertake as subjects, or to religion.<sup>7</sup>

If proof of the frustration is wanted—Juan de la Concepción wrote with more profound insight than he probably realized—, it is to be found in the fact that among those Igorots who defended the slopes of Mount Santo Tomas and survived the battle of March 16th was one who had had five years of experience with the Spanish colonial regime, one who knew the value of its currency and the interior of its jails, the charity of its faith and the harshness of its laws, the corruption of its agencies and the power of its authority—Lacaaden of Bukiagan.

And if a fitting close is wanted for this chapter in Philippine Church history, it is to be found in a cold little statistic in an Augustinian report of “Missions of Igorots and Tingyans belonging to the Province of Ylocos” of the year 1760:

	No. of New Christians	No. of Catechu- mens
Territory of Agoo	12	9
Territory of Iringay	0	20 <sup>8</sup>

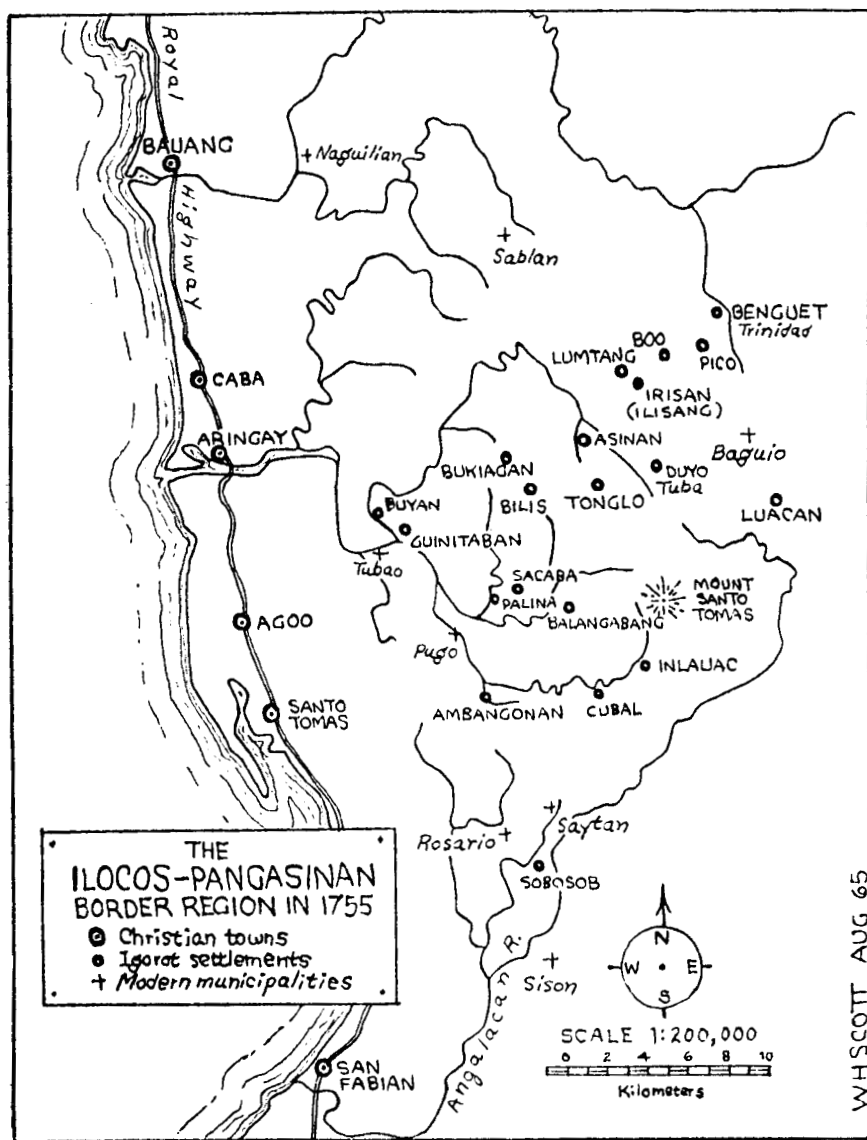
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#### A NOTE ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF PLACE NAMES

The author is indebted to the Rev. Fathers Henri Geeroms and Cirilo Calagne, C.I.C.M., former parish priests of Tubao and Pugo, La Union, respectively, for the identification of some of these place names, the others having been located on a hiking trip from Baguio to Pugo. Unfortunately, neither personal search nor inquiry through the parish priests of Ba-uang, Naguilian, Caba, Aringay and Agoo has located the important site of Guimutbungan, to which the Tonglo mission station was removed in 1756. Such identification as has been

<sup>7</sup> Concepción, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

<sup>8</sup> Blair & Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. 48, p. 57.



possible, however, would suggest modification of the late Felix Keesing's statement:

A striking point is that none of the 32 rancherías under Tonglo mission influence still exist, at least under the same names . . . This seems to indicate in vivid fashion a later dispersal of the accessible settlements in the face of Spanish tribute collections, and of punitive military expeditions . . . (*The Ethnohistory of Northern Luzon*, p. 81)

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The primary source for the history of the Tonglo Mission is a collection of Augustinian documents published by Angel Pérez in Parts 3, 4 and 5 of his 1904 *Relaciones agustinianas de las razas del Norte de Luzon*, which include Manuel Carrillo's 1756 *Breve relación de las misiones de las cuatro naciones llamadas Igorrotes, Tinguianes, Apayaos y Adanes*, and his 1758 *Breve y verdadera relación de los progresos de las misiones de Igorrotes, Tinguianes, Apayaos y Adanes*; Pedro de Vivar's *Las misiones de Ilocos*; and five 1755 letters between Vivar, Carrillo and Francisco Xávier de Córdoba. The first of these was originally printed in Madrid by the *Consejo de Indias*, and reproduced in Vol. I of Wenceslao E. Retana's *Archivo de Bibliófilo Filipino* in 1895, where the spelling of Igorot place names occasionally varies from the Pérez edition; it is also included in Francisco Antolín's unpublished *Noticias de los infieles igorotes en lo interior de la isla de Manila, de sus minas de oro, cobre y su comercio, y de varias entradas, tentativas y gastos hechos, para su descubrimiento y pacificación* (c. 1790), four MSS copies of which exist in the Dominican Archives, Manila. To this collection must be added the 14th volume of Juan de la Concepción's *Historia general de Philipinas* of 1792. There is also a brief account of the mission in Chapter 6 (pp. 79-86) of Antonio Mozo's 1763 *Noticia histórico natural*, whose author was Carrillo's personal secretary at the time.

The late Felix M. Keesing has given a brief survey of these works in his *The Ethnohistory of Northern Luzon* (1962) on pages 80-83, and a summary of the Mozo notice is given in Vol. 48 of the Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*.