

CHAPTER—XIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

The 1961 census counted in all 388 villages spread over in all the four regions of the Territory, apart from the four towns of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. However, for purposes of revenue administration the Territory was divided into 96 revenue villages. In the course of 10 years between 1961 and 1971, almost the entire rural complex of Mudaliyarpettai Commune covering 18 villages except Kuppam and Panchavadi had developed urban characteristics so that the whole commune came to be treated as a town. Similarly, 16 out of 49 villages in Ozhukarai* Commune had developed urban characteristics to give shape to the new town of Ozhukarai. Thus the new towns of Ozhukarai and Mudaliyarpettai emerged only after the 1971 census. During the same period all the 20 villages of Pondicherry Commune had developed urban characteristics to merge with Pondicherry town. Correspondingly the number of census villages in the Territory declined from 388 to 334. In another important development, the whole of Mudaliyarpettai Commune was merged with Pondicherry Commune for purposes of municipal administration. Thus, what for purposes of census was demarcated as two towns, came to be treated as a single town for purposes of municipal administration.

Abhishekapakkam

† (Abishekapakkam)

†† C. Ariyankuppam

A. 400.12 Ha.

P. 2,283 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 11.5 km.** south of Pondicherry. The name Abhishekapakkam seems to be the corruption of Azhisapakkam.

* This is referred to as Ulavarkarai in the map.

† The spellings of villages as followed by the Revenue Department are shown within brackets.

†† C = Commune.

A=Area: The area of villages as given in the Village and Town Directory and the Primary Census Abstract of the District Census Handbook are not the same. However, the area given here is taken from the Primary Census Abstract of the Census of India 1971.

P= Population.

** The distance given is according to the *arrêté* of 31 January 1941 and it is always from Rajnivas in respect of places in Pondicherry region and from the Government House in respect of places in Karaikal region.

An inscription found in the Thiruvendipuram Deivanayagaperumalkoil ascribed to the tenth regnal year of Sadayavarman-II Sundarapandya (1286 A. D.) refers to a Vanavan Pallavaraiyan as belonging to Azhisapakkam. Even Anandaranga-pillai in the XVIII century refers to the place as Azhisapakkam.¹ Abhishekapakkam is referred to as Archivak in French records.

This village was donated to Governor Dumas by the Moghuls in 1740. Even as late as in 1736, Abhishekapakkam was almost a forest providing shelter for thieves and depredators. But the French laid roads in the area even before they could dream of its donation by Moghuls.² Le Gentil who was stationed at Pondicherry in 1769 has left us a description of the area in his famous travelogue. According to him, the plain of 'Archiouac', very fertile in the olden days, was then found covered by sand blown from the east. The forest should have served as a rampart to the interior cultivable lands and the destruction of the forest must have possibly hit the cultivation when Le Gentil visited the area in 1769. To make the soil fit for cultivation, one had to remove the surface soil by one or two feet at least. This was done at many places in the area. But it was altogether a costly operation. He also refers to two big temples in that area, one in 'Archipacum' belonging to Pondicherry and the other in 'Chincacoil' (Singaricoil) under the jurisdiction of the Nawab.³ The temples of Sri Muthalamman and Sri Nallathamby Ayyanar, both ascribed to the eighteenth century, are of some importance.

Designated as a revenue village, it includes the village of Manamedu also. It has the largest concentration of scheduled caste population in any one village in the whole Territory viz., as many as 1,853 (81.17 per cent.) according to the 1971 census.

(Adingapet)	C. Bahur A. 63.56 Ha. P. 424 (1971)
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This village, also known as Adangapattu, falls within the jurisdiction of the Seliyamedu revenue village and is situated at a distance of 17.50 km. from Pondicherry. More than 85 per cent. of the villagers belong to the scheduled castes. The one-day *attru thiruvizha* celebrated in Sri Muthalamman temple in January attracts several thousand people. A fair is held during the festival when toys, flowers, articles of worship, etc. are brought in for sale.

Akalanganni (Agalankannu)	C. Tirunallar A. 96.44 Ha. P. 532 (1971)
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This village, situated at a distance of about 9.4 km. from Karaikal, forms part of the Settur revenue village. It is famous for its water-works and temples. The water-works located here serve as the fountain-head bringing succour to the town of Karaikal which faces a shortage a potable sub-soil water.

Ambagarattur (Ambagarathur)	C. Tirunallar A. 270.46 Ha. P. 3,507 (1971)
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This is the second largest village in Karaikal region situated at a distance of 13.8 km. from Karaikal on the Karaikal-Peralam road. Designated as a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Kannapur. The railway line from Karaikal to Peralam also passes through this village.

The Bhadrakaliamman temple here, though small, is famous. The twelve-day annual festival celebrated during May-June attracts many thousands of devotees. The festival is accompanied by a fair to cater to the visiting throng.

Aranganur (Aranganoor)	C. Bahur A. 177.92 Ha. P. 892 (1971)
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This is a revenue village situated at a distance of 17.5 km. from Pondicherry with jurisdiction extending over Nirnayapet village. It is one of the border villages, the population of which had shown abnormal growth between 1961 and 1971, i.e. from 555 to 892 registering an increase of 61 per cent.

There are three temples here, of which Sri Eramudy Ayyanar temple and Sri Muthalamman temple are of some importance. Every year the image of Sri Eramudy Ayyanar is taken in procession to Ponnaiyar for the *attru thiruvizha*. But more important still is the one-day *vasantha utsavam* celebrated in the month of January which attracts several thousand people from the neighbouring villages. A fair takes shape both during the *attru thiruvizha* and *vasantha utsavam*.

Ariyankuppam
(Ariankuppam)

C. Ariyankuppam
A. 270.25 Ha.
P. 6,333 (1971)

Situated about six km. south of Pondicherry town, it is the headquarters of the Commune Panchayat bearing the same name. It has also been designated as a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Kakkayantoppu and Periya Virampattinam. The name Ariyankuppam might be the corruption of Aruhankuppam, probably named after Buddha who was also known as Aruhan. As if to confirm this, Le Gentil the French astronomer located a granite statue of Aruhan (Buddha) in the vicinity of the village in 1769.⁴ This seems to suggest that the people in this area might have been once followers of Buddhism.

Excavations carried out at 'Arikamedu' near Kakkayantoppu, east of Ariyankuppam revealed the remains of a port town dating back to the first or second century A.D. The Chinese Celadon ware found in the area point to the close association between this place and the Chinese ports between the X and XII centuries.

Sri Drowpathiamman temple, Sri Kanniyakovil, Sri Vinayagar temple and Sri Mariamman temple are the main centres of worship for the Hindus. The Drowpathiamman festival celebrated every alternate year in Sri Drowpathiamman temple, the Annual Festival in Sri Kanniyakovil and the *brahmotsavam* in Sri Vinayagar temple are attended by a large number of devotees.

It is a fast developing village and has been identified as a Market Centre and a Rural Growth Centre serving the needs of about 24 surrounding villages. Several cottage industries such as spinning and weaving, manufacturing of pipes, rice milling, etc. thrive here.

Soon after the arrival of the French, a church dedicated to **Notre Dame de l'Immaculée Conception** was built in the area on a piece of land donated by Tanappa Modeliar (1690). Some of the statues in the church viz., that of St. Ignatius and St. Xavier are of Portuguese origin and are said to belong to the XVIII century.⁵ That the 10-day festival of the Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated in this church at least from the days of Dumas, is evident from the Diary of Anandarangapillai who refers to it on several occasions.⁶

(Ariyur)

C. Villiyanur

A. 195.01 Ha.

P. 2,178 (1971)

Ariyur, also known as Arugur, is situated at a distance of 17 km. west of Pondicherry on the Pondicherry—Villupuram road. Chinnababusamudram railway station (South Arcot) is about 1.61 km. from here.

An inscription ascribed to the period of Rajadhiraja in Tirubhuvanai temple refers to a place called Arugur, which may be none other than the present village. The inscription also refers to the existence of a Siva temple here although its traces are not to be found today. Sri Ulagavazhi Mariamman temple and Sri Muthu Ulagavazhi Mariamman temple are two notable temples in this village. Many hundreds of devotees gather at the annual festival celebrated in Sri Muthu Ulagavazhi Mariamman temple. *Masi magam* is another important festival celebrated in Sri Ulagavazhi Mariamman temple in the month of *masi* (February-March).

It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Anandapuram and Pangur. The village sprung into prominence only after the location of a sugar mill in 1960. The population of this village which was only 1,118 in 1961 increased to 2,178 in 1971, i.e. by more than 90 per cent. It has been identified as a Rural Growth Centre and a market place. Tanks and wells are the main sources of irrigation. Crops grown in this area include sugar-cane, paddy, *cumbu*, ragi and ground-nut.

Arumattapuram
(Arumathapuram)

C. Ozhukarai
A. 20.00 Ha.
P. 1,093 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 7 km. west of Pondicherry. It forms part of the Ozhukarai revenue village and is not to be confused with another village of the same name near Odiyambattu in Villiyanur Commune Panchayat. The name of this village seems to have been derived from the word 'Arumbatai', which means a supplier of victuals (*fournisseur*). Anandarangapillai so often refers to one Arumbatai Azhagappapillai in his Diary. Hence Arumattapuram appears to be only the corruption of Arumbataipuram. Even the progenies of the said Arumbatai are said to be still living in the village.

The fire-walking festival celebrated during April-May in the local Sri Drowpathiamman temple is of some importance.

This village has also been identified as a market place.

Bahur
(, ,)

C. Bahur
A. 894.03 Ha.
P. 4,641 (1971)

This village, situated at a distance of 20.5 km. south-west of Pondicherry (via Kirumambakkam) is the headquarters of Bahur Commune Panchayat. It is also designated as a revenue village. The copper plate inscription of Nrpatungavarman (IX century) refers to this place as Vahur which is its earliest known name. Several of the inscriptions in Sri Moolanathar temple also refer to this place as Vahur which seems to have changed into Bahur. During the Chola days it was known as Azhagia Chola caturvedimangalam, probably after Parantaga-II who was also known as 'Sundara Cholan'. Rajaraja-I is understood to have given the village and the surrounding areas as *brahmadeya* to Brahmins and hence came to be known as caturvedimangalam. Vahur was also the headquarters of Vagur Nadu during the Chola and Pallava days. The recent discovery of burial urns in the vicinity of Bahur pushes back the antiquity of this village to pre-historic times.

The Sri Moolanathar temple, said to have been built by the Rashtrakutas in the IX century, is a protected monument under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India. The fact that there was in this village a *vidyasthana*—a seat of learning—has been referred to elsewhere. The copper plate inscription of Nrpatungavarman offering three villages to this *vidyasthana* was discovered by L. Delafon in 1879 and sent to Paris. These plates, reportedly lost afterwards, were discovered by Julien Vinson in 1902. They are now preserved

in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*—577 (Tamoule-574). The Tamil portion is dated in the eighth year of Ko-Vijaya Nripa. Among the three villages donated to the *vidyasthana*, Vilangattukaduvanur is one and is now known simply as Kaduvanur. It lies 8.750 km. west of Bahur.

The 10-day *brahmotsavam* and the one-day *attru thiruvizha* in Sri Moolanathar temple and the annual festival in Sri Drowpathiamman temple are attended by several hundred people. A fair is held during the *brahmotsavam*. The Jeyarakini madha koil in the village built by Savarayalu Nayagar, the poet, was consecrated on 28 January 1866.

The famous lake, south of the village, known as 'Kadamberi' also must have been built by the Pallavas who converted several forest areas into fertile fields. Most of the people in this village are either cultivators or agricultural labourers. The lands are irrigated mainly by the waters of Bahur lake which is the second largest in the region and also by wells. Paddy, sugar-cane, ground-nut, ragi and *cumbu* are some of the major crops grown in the village. This village which has been identified as a rural growth centre and a market place is fast assuming the characteristics of a town. Bahur once served as a week-end resort for families from Pondicherry and an attraction for bird shooters who sometimes stayed in the Inspection Bungalow there.

(Dharmapuram)

C. Karaikal
A. 202.93 Ha.
P. 854 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 1.8 km. west of Karaikal which is the nearest town. This is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending over Pudutturai and Patchur.

Sri Yazhmurinatheeswarar temple in this village has the distinction of having been visited by Saint Thirugnanasambandar who has sung a *pathigam* in honour of the reigning deity of the temple (*Thirumara III-Pathigam* No. 136).

Both wet and dry crops are grown here. Paddy and pulses are the important crops cultivated in this area. Irrigation is carried out with the help of canals.

About 25 per cent. of the population are harijans. More than 80 per cent. of the working force in this village are engaged in agriculture. The rest are employed in other activities for their livelihood.

(Dharmapuri)

C. Ozhukarai

A. 108.00 Ha.

P. 1,381 (1971)

This village, situated at a distance of 6.5 km. from Pondicherry, is famous as a cattle market but does not show other signs of brisk social and economic activities.⁷ It forms part of the Ozhukarai revenue village. The villagers are mostly cultivators, agricultural labourers, handloom weavers and construction workers. Sri Drowpathiamman temple is the main centre of worship. The annual festival celebrated in this temple lasts for 25 days.

Embalam

(„)

C. Nettappakkam

A. 203.95 Ha.

P. 1,805 (1971)

According to inscriptional evidence, this village is at least nine centuries old. An inscription in Tirubhuvanai refers to the place as Emalam. It also refers to the existence of three temples in the village dedicated to Emalathu Mahadevar, Adhitheswaramudayar and Emalathu Durgaiyar Omkara Sundari. There are no traces of these temples in the village today. Situated at a distance of 17 km. from Pondicherry, Embalam is a revenue village with jurisdiction over Kambalikarankuppam, Nattamedu, Pudukkuppam, Sembipalayam and Thanikuppam. The village can be reached by road from Villianur railway station which lies at a distance of about 8 km. from here. It can otherwise be reached by bus. The village has been identified as a pre-historic site and a potential market place.

Erippakkam

(Eripakkam)

C. Nettappakkam

A. 138.16 Ha.

P. 1,068 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 25.25 km. from Pondicherry (via Kilur) and about 4 km. from Pallineliyanur railway station in South Arcot. It has been designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction extending over Andrasikuppam and Nattamedu. According to an inscription ascribed to the tenth regnal year of Sadayavarman Sundarapandya-II (A.D. 1286) found in the Deivanayagaperumal temple at Thiruvendipuram, some lands were offered to that temple in the name of 27 high officials. One of the officials was known as Eripakkamudayan. He may have been the official in charge of Eripakkam. Hence the antiquity of this village may be taken back to the XIII century.⁸

The annual festival celebrated in Sri Sengalathu Ayyanar temple is a notable event in the village which attracts a few hundred people. A majority of the population belong to the scheduled castes. Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers. Paddy, sugar-cane and ground-nut are grown here. Lands are irrigated by tanks and wells.

Gudappakkam
(Goodapakkam)

C. Villiyanur
A. 384.381 Ha.
P. 2,623 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 13.5 km. from Pondicherry (via Villiyanur) amidst an expanse of lush greenery fed by the waters of the nearby Usteri. Since the days of Anandarangapillai the name of the village has not undergone any change.⁹ The Villiyanur railway station is at a distance of only about 5 km. from here. It is designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction over Konerikuppam.

It has been identified as one of the market places in Pondicherry region. Mat weaving is a popular handicraft practised in the village. The Inspection Bungalow at Pathukannu only half-a-km. from here was built during the French period. Those who proceeded to Usteri during week ends in those days sought accommodation in this Inspection Bungalow.

Irulansandi
(Irulansanthi)

C. Bahur
A. 186.70 Ha.
P. 1,572 (1971)

This is a fast growing revenue village which lies at a distance of 23. km. from Pondicherry and about 8 km. from Tiruppapuliur railway station (in South Arcot District). The most significant feature of this village is that its population which was only 425 in 1961 had increased more than three fold within a period of ten years. Situated as it is on the eastern limits of Bahur enclave, it is likely that people from the surrounding villages have migrated to this place to derive the benefits of development programmes implemented by the Pondicherry Administration.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people who cultivate mostly paddy, sugar-cane, ground-nut and ragi.

Kadirkamam

(„)

C. Ozhukarai

A. 70.00 Ha.

P. 2,285 (1971)

Kadirkamam lies 4.5 km. west of Pondicherry. It forms part of the Tattanchavadi revenue village. The village is named after God Kadirvel, in whose honour the (village) temple is understood to have been built about 150 years ago. The first settlers of the village are said to have been poor Sengunda Mudaliars who migrated from Kanchipuram about 300 years ago probably during the period of François Martin.

The Muthumariamman temple in the village is famous for its 9-day *sedal* festival celebrated in the Tamil month of *thai* (January-February). On all nine days of the festival the idol of Muthumariamman is taken out in ceremonial procession in the evenings. The famous '*sedal*' festival takes place on the last day. '*Sedal*' is understood to mean a self-imposed physical torture undergone by devotees who usually pierce small silver hooks and spears in their body or tongues in fulfilment of some vow. It is said that some devotees pierce as many as 108 needles all over their body. They then go out in a procession after a bath, clad in turmeric stained clothes. Some undergo this ordeal not once but every year throughout their lives. This ritual is observed even by young children, women and aged persons. Even the cattle are put to such ordeal. On the last day of the festival, the goddess is taken round in ceremonial procession in a palanquin decorated with imitation pearls which is known in local parlance as *muthu pallakku*. The occasion of the festival is marked by a fair.

The six-day festival (of Kadirvel) takes place every year during the Tamil month of *masi*. The sixth day festival is known as *surasamharam*, when the destruction of Padmasuran by God Kadirvel is enacted through a mock show. Usually nine villagers perform the role of nine heroes and go out in procession with the deity with swords in hand. A poll planted in Kambathadi street in the village is used as a symbol of Padmasuran.¹⁰ Crackers are fired to mark the killing of Padmasuran. Thirupugal Swamigal of Thiruvamatoor has sung the praise of this Lord Kadirvel.

This village is subject to strong urban influence and the location of industries for the manufacture of safety matches, soap and camphor has imparted an industrial bias to its economy. But the traditional occupation of weaving still holds sway over others.

Kakkallippattu
(Kaikalpet)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 211.81 Ha.
P. 374 (1971)

The village is located north-west of Pondicherry at a distance of 22.5 km. on the bank of Sankaraparani (Gingee) river. It forms part of the Kodattur revenue village. The village may have derived its name from the word 'Kaikolars', a community of professional weavers who must have lived in the area many centuries ago. The word Kaikolar is said to have been derived from *kai* (hand) and *kol* (shuttle). Kakkallippattu may probably be the corruption of Kaikolarpattu or Kaikolar *patru*.

The most convenient way to reach the village from Pondicherry is to take the bus for Villupuram, alight at Kodattur and walk a distance of 2.41 km. in the northerly direction.

Many years ago, a masonry dam was constructed east of the village to divert the waters of Sankaraparani into a big canal leading to Usteri in Villianur Commune. But the dam does not directly benefit the agriculturists in the village who have to depend on the seasonal rains and the village tank which is fed by a canal called Narimoonji Odai from a tank near Vikravandi village in South Arcot District. At present mat-weaving is the chief occupation of the majority of the villagers and the mats produced here are in great demand. *Korai* grass which is the main raw material for mat-weaving is grown on either side of the river bed. The mat-weaving craft is said to have been introduced in the village more than a century ago when some mat weavers migrated to this village, attracted by the abundant growth of *korai* grass on the banks of Sankaraparani.

Kalapet

(Periya Kalapet)
(Chinna Kalapet)

Periya Kalapet

C. Ozhukarai
A. 431.49 Ha.
P. 2,866

Chinna Kalapet

C. Ozhukarai
A. 196.41 Ha.
P. 1,100

There are two villages bearing this name in the same commune separated by a distance of only about a kilometre. One is known as Periya Kalapet and the other as Chinna Kalapet. Both the villages are situated north of Pondicherry on the Coromandel Coast at a distance of 11.75 km. and 10.5 km. respectively on the Pondicherry—Marakkanam road. While Periya Kalapet is a revenue village with jurisdiction over Kanakachettikulam, Chinna Kalapet forms part of the Pillaichavadi revenue village.

The village was given as a gift to the French by Dawood Khan in 1703. Although the village is referred to as Kalapet or Kalapettai in recent times, the more probable appellation appears to be Kalapattu (or *patru*). Many villages in Tamil Nadu carry the suffix of *pattu*, which is but the corruption of *patru*. Even Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Kalapattu.¹¹ Interestingly the word 'Kala' refers to a particular variety of fish for which the coast is famous, although we are not certain of any connection between the name of this fish and that of the village. According to another explanation, the name is said to have been derived from the word 'Caliphate' although this suggestion seems farfetched.¹²

Kalapet was once famous for its forest wherefrom François Martin is understood to have brought all the wood required for building houses in the town. This slowly led to its ultimate denudation. Geologists believe that the Kalapet ravines must have developed only in the course of the last three hundred years.

Being a coastal village, fishing is the main occupation of the people here. Periya Kalapet is in fact the largest fishing village in the Territory. Vanniars who form the next predominant community in the village are mostly engaged in agriculture. It has also been identified as a rural growth centre.

Kalitirtakuppam
(Kalithirthalkuppam)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 377.95 Ha.
P. 2,196 (1971)

This village which lies at a distance of 25 km. west of Pondicherry (via Villianur) is also known as Kalithirthalkuppam. It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to the neighbouring Andipalaiyam, Kuchchippalaiyam and Silkaripalayam. Some years ago, 460 copper coins belonging to the period of Rajaraja-I were discovered here indicating thereby that this place must have been inhabited from the Chola days.¹³ The fact that there are eleven tanks and fourteen temples in this village is enough to exemplify its importance. The fire-walking festival celebrated every year in Sri Drowpathiamman temple attracts a large number of people.

Kalmantapam
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C. Nettappakkam
A. 120.11 Ha.
P. 641 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 2.25 km. from Nettappakkam and forms part of Pandacholanallur revenue village. It must have derived its name from the stone mandapam located here. The walls of the *mandapam* raised

on carved octagonal pillars, carry the images of deities, the avatars, maidens waving the *samaras*, or in dancing postures, etc. all carved in relief. The area has also been identified as a pre-historic/archaeological site. This is one of the few potential market places in the region.

Kanniyakovil
(Kannikovil)

C. Bahur
A. 94.67 Ha.
P. 487 (1971)

This village, situated at a distance of 17.5 km. from Pondicherry, forms part of the Manappattu revenue village. It must have derived its name from the temple built in honour of Patchai Vazhiyamman who is otherwise known as Kanni. With the passage of time, the village itself came to be called after the village temple. A 10-day *utsavam* is celebrated with a great deal of fanfare in the temple. The *theemithi* ceremony is held on the tenth day. A fair is held in the village during these days. Many thousands gather to celebrate the occasion. A one-day flower festival is also celebrated in the same temple.

There is also a durgha in the village.

Karaikal:

Several explanations are offered for the name Karaikal. The Imperial Gazetteer gives it the meaning of 'fish pass'. There is no doubt that the name is a combination of two words viz., 'Karai' and 'Kal'. The word 'Karai' has several meanings, one of which is lime mix. 'Kal' may stand for the canal. Based on this, it has been suggested that the name Karaikal may mean a canal built of lime mix. The traces of such a canal are nowhere evident now. According to Julien Vinson, the town is said to have been known as 'Karagiri' in Sanskrit. ¹⁴

In Peria Puranam Poet Sekkizhar describes the town as 'சுன்னி மாமதில் சூழ் மாடக் காரைக்கால்', i.e. the Karaikal of many mansions surrounded by an impregnable wall.¹⁵ In that the poet relates the life story of one Punithavathi who abandoned the material pleasures of life to devote herself

entirely to a life of prayer and penance to signify her devotion to Lord Siva. She was called 'Karaikal Ammayar' conveniently after the town which must have been famous already. The town is referred to in the *puranas* as 'Karai vanam' where Sri Dakshayani, consort of Lord Siva is said to have performed penance in human form, for the benefit of mankind. Later on, it came to be sanctified as the birth place of Karaikal Ammayar, one of the 63 celebrated Saivite saints known as Nayanmars. The later Pramanda Puranam in Sanskrit refers to the place as Sagamparipuram in honour of Sagamparidevi. Jouveau Dubreuil points out that Karaikal is mentioned in a copper plate inscription preserved in the Museum of Leyde University in Holland. The copper plate records the grant of certain privileges to a Buddhist monastery at Nagappattinam.¹⁶ It refers to a highway named after Karaikal as the western boundary of the monastery. If the highway should be named after Karaikal the conjecture is that it must have been a prominent town in those days. Jouveau Dubreuil also concludes that Karaikal was '**la capitale du pays au Nord de Negapatam**'. The period that followed is, however, shrouded in darkness. In 1739 the town of Karaikal and the villages surrounding it were ceded to the French by the King of Thanjavur (for further details see Chapter-I).

Karaikal town, with a population of 26,080 is situated on the northern bank of Arasalar, an affluent of Kaveri. It is a neatly built town with straight roads cutting each other at right angles. The cement paved side-walks along some of the main roads are provided at regular intervals with open squares exposing the ground for growing shady trees, although a large number of them seems to have been uprooted by the frequent cyclonic storms.

Being the administrative headquarters of the region, the Administrator, takes his residence in the town at the Government House. The present Government House was built in the year 1838 with a rectangular open ground in front.

Among the temples in Karaikal, those of Sri Uppiliamaniar, Sri Kailasanathar, Nitya Kalyanaperumal, Karaikal Ammayar, Sri Parvatheeswaraswami temple (Karaikovilpattu) and Sri Kothandaramaswami are famous. One interesting aspect about the management of all these temples is that properties are held in common for all the eleven temples of Karaikal and the income is utilised for the maintenance, daily rituals and festivals of all the temples. The *Mangani* festival is said to be celebrated for many centuries in the Karaikal Ammayar temple. The administration gives an annual grant of Rs. 500 for the celebration of the Mangani festival.

The Church of Our Lady of Angels built in 1891 is the chief place of worship for catholics in the town. The *thettaravu madha* festival is celebrated on the 15 of August every year. The festival commences with the flag hoisting ceremony on the sixth of August. On the tenth day, the statue of the Blessed Virgin, mounted on a beautifully decorated car, is taken out in procession along the main streets surrounding the church.

Of the various Muslim festivals, the Kandoori festival in the Karaikal durgah is the most important from the point of view of attendance as well as the interest evinced by the public. The festival is celebrated in honour of Syed Dawood, the muslim saint born at Bukkara, the capital of Turkistan. He came to India in search of his spiritual guide Halareth Syed Ahamed Kalkhel Diwan Oliulla of Tiruchchirapalli, spent his last years in Karaikal and passed away on 24 February 1829 (i.e. 1244 of the Muslim era) at the ripe age of 120 years. The body was entombed in the durgah at Karaikal where the annual Kandoori festival is celebrated. The festival which is marked by processions, music and dance is brought to a finale with an elaborate display of fire-works.¹⁷

Situated 16 km. north of Nagapattinam, it is also the terminus of the railway line which connects it with Peralam.

Karaikovilpattu
(Kovilpathu)

C. Karaikal
A. 316.05 Ha.
P. 3,494 (1971)

This village, ordinarily called Kovilpathu, lies at a distance of about two km. north-east of Karaikal. This is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Pillaittiruvasal. Kovilpathu (or more precisely Kovilpatru) is a common expression which means lands belonging to or adjoining temples. The village is referred to as Thiruthelicherry in religious lores. It may then be assumed that this village must have been the abode of an important temple. This is one of the four places in Karaikal region visited by Saint Thirugnana-sambandar who sang a *pathigam* in honour of Sri Parvatheeswaraswamy, the reigning deity of its principal temple. According to local tradition, Lord Siva assumed the name of Parvatheeswara after his marriage with Parvathi, who was born as daughter to Katyayana Maharishi at Thiruthelicherry, following her death out of shame at her father Dakshan's sacrificial penance (*velvi*).¹⁸ The statue of Parvathi in a state of *thava* and that of Siva in the guise of a tiller, now in the temple are considered unique.

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Surasambaram, Vijayadasami, Kadaimuzhukku and Thiruvadhirai festivals are celebrated in Sri Parvatheeswaraswamy temple. The Sri Kothandaramaswami temple is situated opposite to the Siva temple. It is said that the *panchaloka* statues of Kothandamar, Seethadevi, Lakshmanan and Hanuman now in the temple were discovered from one of the adjacent fields a few years ago.¹⁹ Among the festivals celebrated in Sri Kothandaramaswami temple, the two-day *masi magam* observed during February-March attracts several thousands. Side by side a fair is also held in the village.

In the course of 10 years between 1961 and 1971 the population of this village had increased from 1,963 to 3,494. Lands being very fertile, both wet and dry crops are grown here. Irrigation is provided by canals. Paddy is grown as wet crop and pulses as dry crops. There are a few rice mills in this area. The people in this village are employed in different occupations such as agriculture, construction, trade and commerce, manufacturing concerns and other services.

Karaiyamputtur
(Karaiyambuthur)

C. Bahur
A. 410.11 Ha.
P. 1,977 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 32 km. from Pondicherry (via. Bangara vaykkal). This is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Chinna Karaiyamputtur.

It is not known how the village acquired this peculiar name which literally means a place of white-ant hills. Even Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Karaiyamputhur.²⁰ The village is otherwise well-known for its 10-day *utsavam* celebrated in Sri Drowpathiamman temple. The festival is accompanied by a fair. There is also an Inspection Bungalow (P.W.D.) in the village. It has also been identified as a potential market place.

Karakalacheri
(Karakalacherry)

C. Niravi
A. 75 Ha.
P. 884 (1971)

Situated at a distance of about 3 km. from Karaikal, this village is remembered for its fort, the remains of which have almost disappeared now. Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Karukkilacherry.²¹ It forms part of Akkaravattam revenue village.

Sri Mariamman temple and Sri Vella Vinayagamurthi temple are the centres of worship in the village.

Kariyamanikkam
(Karimanickam)

C. Nettappakkam
A. 256.88 Ha.
P. 965 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 27.5 km. from Pondicherry and 3.2 km. from Pallineliyanur railway station (South Arcot). Villupuram is the nearest town from here. This is one of the few villages, the population of which had declined from 991 in 1961 to 965 in 1971. However the village has been identified as a Rural Growth Centre and as a market centre. One of the harijan hostels in Pondicherry region is also located here.

Designated as a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Thulukanpalayam, Kariyamanikkam, Kuchchipalaiyam, Molappakkam and Suramangalam.

Karkilambakkam
(Karklampakkam)

C. Nettappakkam
A. 328.88 Ha.
P. 1,740 (1971)

Karkilambakkam lies at a distance of 15.25 km. south-west of Pondicherry (via. Abhishekapakkam). It can also be reached by road via. Villiyanur. An XI century inscription in Tirubhuvanai refers to a village by the name Kazhukulampakkam. It is likely that Karkilambakkam is the corruption of Kazhukulampakkam. The reigning deity of the village temple was called Kazhukulampakkathu Mahadevar. Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Karukalampakkam. 22 It is designated as a revenue village.

Sri Kumareshwarar temple, Sri Mariamman temple, Sri Drowpathiamman temple and Sri Vinayagar temple are all said to be more than two hundred years old. A choultry said to have been built more than hundred years ago can be seen here in a dilapidated condition. The six-day annual festival celebrated in Sri Drowpathiamman temple during April-June attracts several hundred people. The village has been identified as having potentials of a market place.

Kil Kasakkudi	<i>Kil Kasakkudi</i>	<i>Mel Kasakkudi</i>
Mel Kasakkudi	C. Kottuchcheri	C. Nedungadu
(Keezhakasakudy)	A. 375.44 Ha.	A. 463.32 Ha.
(Melakasakudy)	P. 1,028 (1971)	P. 1,204 (1971)

This is one of the twin villages in Karaikal region bearing the common name of Kasakudi, although their separate identities are maintained by the prefix *Kil* or *Mel* depending on their location on the east or west respectively. According to the Chola inscriptions in the temple, the place was known as Udayachandra caturvedimangalam or Kayakudi. Kil Kasakudi is a revenue village and its jurisdiction extends to the adjacent fishing village.

Kil Kasakkudi lies at a distance of 4 km. north of Karaikal on the Karaikal—Tarangambadi road. The famous Kasakkudi copper plates discovered in this village in 1879 by M.J. Delafon and ascribed to Nandivarman-II throw much light on the high cultural level of the people who lived in this part of the country during the Pallava days. The Siva temple in the village is the principal centre of worship.

Mel Kasakkudi divided into two parts known as Thenpati and Vadapati lies at a distance of about 7 km. from Karaikal on the Karaikal—Nedungadu road. This is also a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Kil Puthagaram, Thiruvengadapuram and Kanjipuram Kovilpathu. Sri Varadaraja Perumal temple here, said to belong to the XII century, is protected as an ancient monument. Some of the stone carvings in the temple add to its monumental value. The Vaikunda Ekadesi and Masi Magam festivals celebrated in this temple attract several hundred devotees from the surrounding villages.

Thiruvathirai, Chithirai Pournami and Masi Magam festivals are celebrated in Sri Naganathaswamy temple. The 10-day annual festival in the Roman Catholic church is celebrated in June.

Katterikuppam	<i>Katteri*</i>	<i>Kuppam</i>
(Kattery-Kuppam)	C. Mannadipattu	C. Mannadipattu
	A. 237.66 Ha.	A. 303.85 Ha.
	P. 920 (1971)	P. 1,087 (1971)

Though for purposes of revenue administration etc., Katteri and Kuppam are treated as two villages, both are known under the common name of Katterikuppam. It is located at a distance of 21.5 km. from Pondicherry via. Valudavur and 20.50 km. if approached via. Suttukanni. It is about 9.7 km. from Chinnababusamudram railway station. This village has been identified as a market place.

A road running across the village serves as the boundary line separating Katteri from the so-called Kuppam. While in Kuppam as many as 528 belong to the scheduled castes, in Katteri the number is only 26.

Kirumambakkam
(Kirumampakkam)

C. Bahur
A. 438.96 Ha.
P. 2,303 (1971)

Kirumambakkam is situated at a distance of 15.5 km. from Pondicherry. It is designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Itchangadu, Aladimedu, and Pannittittu. According to certain inscriptions Kirumambakkam was known as Kirumampathi.²³ Anandarangapillai however refers to the place as Kirumampakkam in the XVIII century.²⁴ Cuddalore is the nearest town which lies at a distance of 11 km. and Bahur at a distance of four km. It can be reached by any bus plying between Pondicherry and Cuddalore. It appears that in the XVIII century the muslims had an entrenchment at 'Crimam-bankum'. In 1712 the place came under a sudden attack by the English, a description of which is left by Captain Roach.²⁵

More than half of the population in the village belong to the scheduled castes. Lands are irrigated by tanks and wells. Important crops grown in this village are paddy, sugar-cane, ragi, plantain and casuarina. Rice milling, manufacture of earthenware, pottery and sundry hardwares are the industries which provide employment to those other than agriculturists.

Kilur
(Kizhur)

C. Villiyanur
A. 135.15 Ha.
P. 638 (1971)

Though a small village about 21 km. from Pondicherry (via Mangalam), it rose to prominence in 1954 when elected representatives of the former French establishments met here on 18 October and voted in favour of merger with the Indian Union finally clinching the issue of freedom for French India. A memorial was unveiled on 16 August 1972 to commemorate the historic event. The nearest railway station is Villiyanur at a distance of 11.27 km. Villagers celebrate the annual festival in Sri Muthumariamman and Vinayagar temples.

It is a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Sivarantagam. The villagers are mostly engaged in agriculture for which both flow irrigation and lift irrigation are adopted. Principal crops grown in this village are paddy, sugar-cane, ragi, tapioca and ground-nut.

Korkkadu

(Korkadu)

C. Nettappakkam

A. 346.44 Ha.

P. 1,339 (1971)

The village lies at a distance of 15 km. from Pondicherry (via. Villiyanur). This is a revenue village where Vanniars and Reddiars are predominant. Its name seems to suggest that it must have been some kind of a forest in by-gone days. In fact an XI century inscription at Tiruvakkarai refers to a village by name Kokattur. It is also likely that this name had changed into Korkadu.

(Korkumedu)

C. Ariyankuppam

A. 30.01 Ha.

P. 204 (1971)

Although this is a small village situated at a distance of 11.5 km. from Pondicherry, it assumes some importance on account of the five-day annual festival in St. Anne's church held in July. It is attended by several hundred people. This village forms part of the Tavalakuppam revenue village.

Kottuchcheri

(Kottucherry)

C. Kottuchcheri

A. 586.90 Ha.

P. 2,991 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 5.7 km. from Karaikal and is the headquarters of Kottuchcheri Commune Panchayat. This is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to the fishing village of Akkampettai.

Nearly two-thirds of the working force in the village are engaged in agriculture. Sri Kodeeswaramudayar temple is the principal place of worship enjoying an ample income. A statue, a broken *kuthuvilakku* and some other vessels used for temple worship were unearthed from Perumalkoil *maidan* in this village on 28 March 1972.

The Kottuchcheri *macuary* with a population of 386 is situated close to the sea-coast where the people are mostly engaged in fishing.

(Krishnavaram)

C. Bahur

A. 23.68 Ha.

P. 485 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 13.5 km. from Pondicherry and forms part of the Uchchimedu revenue village. It assumes some importance on account of Sri Pattabiramaswamy temple. The one-day *attru thiruvizha* held in the month of January every year attracts several thousand people from all surrounding villages. During this festival the images of several deities are brought here in procession for the ceremonial holy immersion in the river. The festival is marked by a fair. It has been identified as a pre-historic/ archaeological site.

(Kudiyiruppupalayam)

C. Bahur

A. 85.73 Ha.

P. 603 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 18 km. from Pondicherry and forms part of Seliyamedu revenue village. The one-day *theerthavari* festival held in Sri Muthalamman temple is a major attraction. People from surrounding villages gather in thousands during the festival, which is accompanied by a fair. More than 86 per cent. of the population in the village belong to the scheduled castes. Although the village is referred to as Kudi-iruppupalayam with some refinement, the local people call it as Kuruvippalayam or Kurippalayam.

(Kumarapalayam)

C. Mannadipattu

A. 84.41 Ha.

P. 482 (1971)

This village which forms part of Tettambakkam revenue village, lies at a distance of 20 km. from Pondicherry. Although a small village in terms of population, its fame rests chiefly on the popularity of Sri Mariamman temple. The one-day Masi Magam festival celebrated here, usually on the banks of Sankaraparani river, during February-March every year, attract many thousands of people from all surrounding villages. The occasion is also marked by a fair. This is among the few villages in the Territory where there are no scheduled caste members at all.

Kunichampattu
(Kunitchampet)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 408.52 Ha.
P. 2,174 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 26 km. from Pondicherry, this is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Kondareddipalayam as well. This is one of the several villages the name ending of which has mistakenly changed from *pattu* to *pet*.

The 18-day long annual festival celebrated in Sri Drowpathiamman temple during March-April is marked by a fair. The festival attracts several hundred devotees.

(Kurumbagaram)

C. Nedungadu
A. 135.54 Ha.
P. 514 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 11.215 km. from Karaikal. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Nallattur, Kosatheru, Melpadugai, Adaikalapuram, Narikurumbai, Vadakattalai, Agarakurumbagaram, Mattalangudy and Panchatcharapuram. It is described as a pensioners' paradise.

The people in the village are mostly engaged in agriculture. More than 57 per cent. of the population are harijans. Both wet and dry crops are grown in the area. Paddy and pulses are the principal crops cultivated. Nandalar serves as the source of irrigation. Sri Lakshminarayanaperumal temple is the principal centre of worship where Vaikunta Ekadesi is celebrated with some measure of festivity.

Many of the Christians in this village are understood to be the progenies of a few families which migrated to this village from Pagasalai in Nannilam Taluk. Pulavar Muthusamypillai, the first biographer of Veeramamunivar and Head Native Master at the College of Fort St. George in the early years of the XIX century may be described as the most illustrious son of this village.²⁶ The church in the village was built in the year 1854.

Kuruvinnattam
(Kuruvinnatham)

C. Bahur
A. 263.02 Ha.
P. 1,290 (1971)

This village is at a distance of 27.75 km. from Pondicherry. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Soriyankuppam as well. According to inscriptional evidence, this village is understood to have been known as Kuruvimedu in the olden days.²⁷ Anandarangapillai however refers to the place as Kuruvinnatham and it continues to be known as such.²⁸ This is

one of the four villages, the population of which has registered a sharp decline from 1,810 in 1961 to 1,290 in 1971. Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers and the important crops grown in this village include paddy, sugar-cane, *cumbu* and ragi. Tanks and wells are the main sources of irrigation.

The temples of Sri Drowpathiamman, Sri Vinayagar, Sri Pidari, Sri Ayyanar and Sri Mariamman are the chief landmarks of this otherwise quiet village. A large number of people gather to celebrate the annual festival in the Drowpathiamman temple.

Madagadippattu

(Madagadipet)

C. Mannadipattu

A. 196.23 Ha.

P. 1,135 (1971)

This village, identified as a pre-historic and archaeological site, is situated at a distance of 24 km. from Pondicherry. It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Madagadippattupalaiyam, Nallur and Nallur Kuchchippalaiyam. *Kundankuzhi* appears to be the earliest name of Madagadippattu according to inscriptions. *Kundankuzhi* means a deep and beautiful water storage. The name Madagadippattu is said to have come into vogue only after the period of Vikrama Cholan. As in the case of many village names, the suffix *patru* or *pattu* has ultimately changed into 'pet'.

The village is famous for its Eswaran temple originally built entirely from stones during the period of Rajaraja-I in the XI century. It is now a historical monument under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India. The damaged structure of the temple is understood to have been rebuilt some years ago. In the process, the stones were displaced, rendering decipherment of the temple inscriptions very difficult. Some of the stone slabs bearing inscriptions are said to be found in some private gardens or used in some wells. One of the *dwarabalaka* statues of this temple is installed within the General Hospital campus in Pondicherry. The statues of Vinayaka, Durga, Brahma and Lingotbhava are now in the French Institute at Pondicherry.

The village, identified as a Rural Growth Centre and a market centre, is famous for its cattle shandy. Besides cattle, handloom cloth, vegetables, groceries, dry fish and toys are some of the items purchased and sold here.

Madukkarai

C. Nettappakkam

()

A. 305.84 Ha.

P. 3,119 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 28.5 km. from Pondicherry town. It appears to have acquired this name because, sometime in the past, it is said to have been close to a *madu* (a tank), and Madukkarai literally means the banks of a *madu* the traces of which are said to be found even now.

This village is famous for its Sri Marakkaleeswarar temple, although the festivals there do not attract much crowd. But the six-day annual festival held at Sri Drowpathiamman temple and Koothandavar temple during May-June attracts several thousands. A fair is held side by side to cater to the festival crowd. This is a developed village and has been identified as a potential market place.

Mahe:

Mahe town which lies at a distance of 6.44 km. south-east of Tellicherry, is the headquarters of the region. The original Malayalam name of Mahe is said to be 'Mayyazhi' which means the 'black river mouth'. It was also known as 'Maihi' in an abridged form. But it was the French Commodore Pardaillan who changed it into Mahe to perpetuate the memory of Mahe de La Bourdonnais. Mahe was once a place of considerable trade but lost its importance after its successive fall into British hands. In 1782 its fortifications were not only razed to the ground but the town was also almost entirely burnt.

The region, comprising an area of 9 sq. km., had a population of 23,134 according to the 1971 census. The town alone has a population of 8,972. Situated amidst a picturesque setting on a small hill, at the mouth of the river by the same name, it lies surrounded on all three sides by Kerala. Some of the chief buildings in Mahe are situated along the river bank. The coastal road from Kozhikode to Tellicherry and Cannanore passes through the town. Covered by a dense mass of coconut palms, the area is noted for the fertility of its soil and the salubrity of its climate.

The Roman Catholic church, said to have been built first by the French in 1736, assumed its present shape in 1855, thanks to the devotion of some French marines. It is now an important landmark in the town. The 10-day St. Theresa's festival celebrated during October attracts a large number of people of different castes and communities. A fair also takes shape in the course of the 10-day festival. The statue of St. Theresa of Avila is kept exposed on the occasion for public veneration.

Manaveli
(Manavely)

C. Ariyankuppam
A. 115.70 Ha.
P. 3,274 (1971)

As many as four villages in Pondicherry region are known by the name Manaveli, viz. one in Ariyankuppam Commune Panchayat, two others near Kodattur and Kalitirtakuppam in Mannadipattu Commune Panchayat and yet another near Odiyambattu in Villiyanur Commune Panchayat. The village dealt with here is the one in Ariyankuppam Commune Panchayat. This village lies at a distance of 7.8 km. (via Ariyankuppam) south of Pondicherry. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Manaveli, Nonanguppam, Odavely and Chinna Virampattinam.

Sri Mariamman temple, Sri Drowpathiamman temple and Sri Pandurangar temple are the principal centres of worship in the village. The fire-walking festival in Sri Drowpathiamman temple and the annual festival in Sri Mariamman temple attract a large number of devotees.

(Mangalam)

C. Villiyanur
A. 250.00 Ha.
P. 1,074 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 13.5 km. from Pondicherry and about 15.6 km. from Villiyanur railway station. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Vadamangalam which, as its name suggests, lies on the north. The villages of Kil Sattamangalam and Mel Sattamangalam are not far away from here.

An inscription in the Gangai Varagha Eswarar temple in Tirukkanji ascribed to the period of Kulothunga-I refers to one Cholakonar who is described as Puddhamangalamudayar.²⁹ It is likely that this Puddhamangalam is the old name of Mangalam. The close proximity of several villages under the common name of Mangalam seems to suggest that it must have been once a famous Buddhist centre. Interestingly, this is one of the spots identified as a prehistoric/archaeological site.

Mannadipattu
(Mannadipet)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 76.36 Ha.
P. 1,422 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 25 km. from Pondicherry. Although the commune is named after this village, it is not its headquarters. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Monbranpet, Sombattu and Tirukkanur. The village of Monbranpet may have been named after the Montbrun family. About 500 people attend the annual festival celebrated in the Sri Drowpathiamman temple at Mannadipattu.

Mudaliyarpettai

(Mudaliarpet)

As per the census of 1971 the best part of Mudaliyarpettai Commune came to be treated for the first time as an urban area. With a population of 42,933, it forms part of the Pondicherry urban agglomeration embracing besides Mudaliyarpettai the residential settlements of Kalarpet, Karamanikkuppam, Kirapalaiyam Kommapakkam, Kusappalaiyam, Murungappakkam, Nainarmantapam, Nellitoppu, Orlayanpet, Ottampalayam, Pillaitottam, Pudukalaiyampet, Sakkilipalayam, Savannapet, Subrayapillai chatiram, Thengathittu and Veeraraghavamudalithottam

Mudaliyarpettai, situated at a distance of three km. south of Pondicherry on the Pondicherry-Cuddalore road, is the industrial hub of Pondicherry where three textile mills and several small scale industrial units are located.

Kirapalaiyam was once very close to the estuary of the now blocked Pondicherry river. It now lies north of Thengathittu and covers the two localities of Vamba-Kirapalaiyam and Olandai-Kirapalaiyam. While the former lies within the limits of Pondicherry urban area, the latter falls under the Mudaliyarpettai Commune. It has been suggested that the word 'Olandai' is the corruption of '*Hollandais*' as the Dutch are believed to have settled in the area before the arrival of the French. This explanation is however not acceptable. An inscription in Tiruvandarkovil refers to a place called Uzhandai and it is quite likely that it refers to this Uzhandai. There is no proper explanation for the name Kirapalaiyam. It is likely that the village must have developed into a 'palayam' or a settlement of mercenary soldiers subsequently.

Thengathittu, about 4.8 km. from Pondicherry, lies close to the sea coast surrounded on all sides by Uppar (Uppanar) formed by the backwaters of the Bay of Bengal merging with Ariyankuppam river. Thengathittu literally means a coconut island.³⁰

Kusappalaiyam lies at a distance of two km. west of Pondicherry flanked by Nellitoppu on the south and Pudusaram on the north. Understandably, the village must have been named after the predominant community in the village, namely Kosavar or Kuyavar (potters) from which the name 'Kosapalayam' or the more preferred 'Kuyavarpalayam' must have been derived.

It is certain that the settlement is more than two centuries old, as Anandarangapillai quite often refers to the village in his diary. It was François Martin who invited the potters to Pondicherry and encouraged them to carry on their traditional craft of toy-making, etc. with a view to exporting the products to France and other countries. The potters have not always been prosperous and naturally quite a number of them have since migrated to outside places. The number of people engaged in the traditional craft has dwindled considerably of late. Though similar toys are made in places like Murungappakkam, Ariyankuppam, etc. those of Kusapalaiyam have a distinct character. They make a wide variety of toys depicting the costumes, the cultural arts and the deities of South India.

Murungappakkam is situated at a distance of 5 km. south of Pondicherry town on the northern bank of Ariyankuppam river. It is noteworthy that Silapathigaram refers to a Maruvurpakkam near the ancient Pumpuhar. According to one scholar, Murungappakkam is the corruption of Marungaipakkam.³¹ It is however interesting to note that a fragmentary inscription found on the north basement of the newly constructed Vinayagar temple inside the *prakara*, refers to Uzhandai and Murungaipakkam. In Murungappakkam the six-day annual festival celebrated in Sri Drowpathiamman temple, sometime during April-June, attracts several thousands of people. The festival is also marked by a fair. Kommapakkam is referred to as such and as Commayapakkam by Anandarangapillai. The five-day Sedal festival celebrated in Sri Sengazhunceramman temple at Kommapakkam during June attracts many hundred devotees.

Orlayanpet lies on the Pondicherry-Villupuram road, about two km. west of Pondicherry town. The name of this locality is probably linked to Orléans of France. As Anandarangapillai refers to the place in his diary, its existence since his days is confirmed. Nellitoppu literally means a gooseberry garden. It is located just three km. west of Pondicherry town alongside the Pondicherry-Villupuram road. The foundation for Our Lady of Assumption church in the locality was laid on 18 January 1841.

Pillaitottam lies at a distance of about 8 km. west of Pondicherry along Tindivanam road. The name 'Pillai' refers to Thiruvengadampillai, the uncle of the Diarist. Understandably, the Anandarangapillai family must have had a garden in the locality.

Ottampalayam is a small locality with few amenities and of little importance. But its origin must have been as a *palayam* of mercenary soldiers belonging to the Otten community. Pudukkottai and Sakkipalayam are adjacent localities not so developed, although it is provided with such amenities as road, electricity and protected drinking water. Karamanikkuppam is relatively more developed with amenities like road, electricity and protected drinking water. Kalarpet. Nainarmantapam, Savannapet and Subrayapillai chatiram are backward chunks with few public amenities.

The name Veeraraghavamudalithottam is self-explanatory, as it should have acquired the name by the very fact that Veeraraghavamudali must have had a garden in the locality. It is also a backward area inhabited mostly by the poor and with very few public amenities.

A majority of the working force in Orayanpet, Karamanikkuppam, Kirapalayam, Murungappakkam, Nellitoppu and a sizeable population of Kommapakkam and Nainarmantapam are mill workers. Kommapakkam, Kusapalayam, Murungappakkam, Mudaliyarpettai, Nellitoppu and Pillaitottam have been identified as market places.

Muttirapalayam
(Muthirapalayam)

C. Ozhukarai
A. 85.00 Ha.
P. 1,822 (1971)

Muttirapalayam which forms part of the Tattanchavadi revenue village lies 5.5 km. west of Pondicherry. It is likely that the original inhabitants of this village belonged to the Mutratcha or Muttirajulu or Muttarasan caste of the Telugu country. They were employed by the Vijayanagar kings to defend the frontiers of their dominions and were honoured with the title of palayakars. The members of this caste are known as Muthiriyar or Palaiyakkaran in the Tamil country.³² Anandarangapillai also refers to the place as Muthirapalayam.³³

There is an interesting story behind Ayikulam—a tank in the village—named after a *devadasi* called Ayi. According to this tale, when Krishnadevaraya, the Vijayanagar ruler was on a tour around South India in the company of his minister Appaji, the entourage made a halt at Villiyannur. Once while passing through the village, it seems the king saw a dazzling mansion spreading a captivating aroma all around. Devaraya and his Minister taking it to be a temple, offered their obeisance. When told that it was the residence of a danseuse named Ayi, the king in a fit of anger ordered the mansion to

be razed to the ground and directed that a well and a tank be dug on the very same spot thereby causing profound grief and deep anguish to this lady accomplished in the arts. She sought the king's indulgence by offering to dig the well and the tank herself and did accordingly. The Ayi tank is thus believed to have been dug sometime in the early part of the XVI century.

The 11-day annual festival celebrated in Sri Sengazhuneer Mariamman temple during June-July attracts several thousand people from all nearby villages. The festival is accompanied by a fair. The village, with as many as 22 public service institutions, has been identified as a Rural Growth Centre with considerable social and economic activities.³⁴ Situated as it is in the middle of seven ribbon villages, it serves as a shopping centre for the rural folks.

	C. Tirunallar
(Nallambal)	A. 95.83 Ha.
	P. 1,369 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 12.3 km. from Karaikal on the Peralam road, and forms part of the Nallazhandur revenue village. Sri Tantonreeswarar temple ascribed to the Chola period is an important landmark in the village. The outer walls of the temple carry many inscriptions which do not appear to have been published so far. There are also a few exquisitely carved granite statues in the temple.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers. Both wet and dry crops are raised in this village. Paddy is the main wet crop. Plantain and pulses are the chief dry crops. Noolar serves as the main source of irrigation.

Nedungadu	C. Nedungadu
(,)	A. 178.20 Ha.
	P. 1,736 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 10.3 km. from Karaikal town, it is the headquarters of Nedungadu Commune Panchayat. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Keezhannavasal, Melannavasal, Nedungadu, Agara Mankudi, Paruttikkudi, Kil Ponbetti and Mel Ponbetti. The most sensational find of bronze images in the Territory was reported from this village in 1948. They included the images of Pillayar, Manickavasagar, Thirugnanasambandar, Skandan, Uma, Jnanasakti (a pair), Sivakamasundari, dancing Siva (Anandatandavam) besides a trident, a conche, a pair of sandals, a copper tripod and a plate.³⁵

The Siva (Sri Tantonreeswarar) temple in the village was declared as a protected monument in 1971. The walls of the Siva temple carry important inscriptions. The Thiruvadhirai festival of Sri Tantonreeswaraswamy temple and the annual festival at Sri Mariamman temple attract a large number of devotees.

A cotton textile mill was established here recently. Members of the *asari* community in the village are mostly engaged in blacksmithy and carpentry, while *pathars* work as goldsmiths. This is one of the fast developing villages in the region.

Nettappakkam

(„)

C. Nettappakkam

A 210.52 Ha.

P. 1,251 (1971)

Situated at a distance of about 29.5 km. south-east of Pondicherry, it serves as the headquarters of Nettappakkam Commune Panchayat. Villupuram is the nearest town from here. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Mettutheruvu, Pudupattu and Sembadapet.

Inscriptions at Thirumanikkuzhi, Tirukkanji, Thiruvendipuram, Thirthanagari and Tirubhuvanai refer to this village as Nettaipakkam. We are certain of its existence since the days of Rajadhiraja-I. During the days of Kulothunga-I it was known as Poopalasundaranallur, named after one Poopalasundaram, otherwise known as Cholakkonar. The fact that Boopalasundaram was a great warrior is attested by Vikrama Cholan Ula (lines 143-146) which describes him as the conqueror of the Gangas, Marathas, Kalingas, Kongars and Kudakas. He was again responsible for carrying out repairs in the lake near Tirubhuvanai.³⁶

Here is an ancient Siva temple, often ascribed to the IV or V century A.D. which is unlikely. Although it is not known when and by whom this temple was built, according to a legend Saint Agasthiar is said to have performed poojas here. Ten songs (pathigams) sung by a devotee in praise of this temple are available. The 10-day *surasamharam* festival celebrated in Sri Ramalingeswarar temple during October-November is the most important of all festivals celebrated in this village.³⁷ Sri Venkatesa Perumal temple is another important place of worship in the village. Agriculture and weaving are the two main occupations of the people in this village. Lands are mostly irrigated by tanks and wells. This is one of the highly developed villages in the Territory. Local people prefer Villupuram for Pondicherry to purchase their requirements.

The village attained fame in 1953 when a number of leading politicians left Pondicherry and formed a Liberation Government here to fight for the freedom of French Indian establishments.

Niravi

(Neravy)

C. Niravi

A. 373.92 Ha.

P. 3,778 (1971)

This village, situated at a distance of 5.3 km. from Karaikal town, is the headquarters of Niravi Commune Panchayat.

The village is noted for its temple of Sri Jambunathaswamy claimed to be about 300 years old. The *thiruvathirai* (December-January) and *thirukkarthikai* festivals (November-December) are celebrated in this temple. Several hundred people take part in the *thiruvathirai* festival. A fair is held on the occasion when articles of worship are kept on sale. *Vaikunta Ekadesi* is celebrated during December-January in the Kariamanickaperumal temple. This village is believed to be the birth place of the famous Adhimadura kavi who adorned the court of Thirumalairayan, the king who ruled from Tirumalarajanpattinam. It was the pride of this poet which was subdued by poet Kalamegham. The village assumed some importance after the Oil and Natural Gas Commission carried out test drills to locate possible deposits of petroleum here.

Members of the Muslim community are engaged in mat weaving, Vanniar in basket-making and Asari in blacksmithy and carpentry.

Odiyambattu

(Odiampet)

C. Villianur

A. 234.01

P. 997 (1971)

This is a revenue village situated at a distance of 8.5 km. from Pondicherry with jurisdiction extending to Arumattapuram, Karaiyamputtur, Manaveli, Periapet, Tattanchavadi and Valluvanpet. The village is referred to as Udayampattu in Villaipuranam (stanza 125) although Anandarangapillai refers to it as Odiampattu.³⁸ It is more likely that the village may have derived its name from 'Odiam' tree which is very common here. It is clear that the suffix pattu has changed into 'pet'. The village is otherwise famous for its Kasi Viswanathar temple, where the 10-day *brahmotsavam* during February-March is marked by great festivity. A fair is also held at the place. An estimated crowd of 60,000 attends the celebrations.

Oduturai (Oduthurai)	<i>Mel Oduturai</i>	<i>Kil Oduturai</i>
	C. Niravi	C. Niravi
	A. 208.39 Ha.	A. 96.40 Ha.
	P. 794 (1971)	P. 1,077 (1971)

This is one of the twin villages in Karaikal region, one known as Kil Oduturai and the other as Mel Oduturai, together forming a revenue village.

Villagers are mostly engaged in agricultural activities. Both wet and dry crops are grown here. Lands in the area are irrigated by the Oduthurayan channel. The annual festival celebrated in Sri Kalliamman temple and the naming festival of Child Jesus in St. Antony's Church are of some importance.

Ozhukarai:

Based on the criteria adopted for the 1971 census, several of the villages which formed part of the Ozhukarai Commune were grouped under the Ozhukarai urban area for the first time to form part of the Pondicherry Urban Agglomeration. With a total population of 26,080 the Ozhukarai urban area covers the old settlements of Delasupet, Ellupillaichavadi, Karuvadikkuppam, Laspettai, Muthulingapet, Navalkulam, Pillaichavadi (Kuppampet), Pakkamudiyanpet, Pedduchettipettai, Puduppettai, Pudusaram,* Saint Paulpet, Samipillaithottam, Sanarapet, Tattanchavadi* and the new colonies of Bharathi Nagar, Dhanwantarinagar, Gandhinagar, Jeeva Colony, Sankar Nagar, Tagore Nagar and Vivekananda Nagar. The urban complex does not include Ozhukarai proper.

Delaspet should more appropriately be called Delarchepet. Karuvadikkuppam is referred to also as Karukudikkuppam by Anandarangapillai in his Diary.³⁹ Although this settlement is more than two centuries old, it still remains a backward area with few public amenities. Laspettai which lies at a distance of about 4.2 km. from Pondicherry, is one of the many *pettais* which sprang up around Pondicherry after the arrival of the French. This settlement is understood to have been named after Captain Law, an Irishman who was in the service of the French between 1748 and 1755. The locality rose

* There are two different places known under the same name of Saram and Tattanchavadi. The other Saram is in Mudaliyarpettai Commune and Tattanchavadi in Villianur Commune.

to prominence after merger, with the location of Tagore Arts College, Motilal Nehru Polytechnic, the Junior Technical School, St. Joseph de Cluny High School and also the government servants housing colony. It has also developed into a market place.

Pakkamudiyanpet might have developed around 1675 as according to S.P. Sen, "at the time of his departure from the Coromandel coast, de la Haye had given to (François) Martin, money for the subsistence of four Indian captains for their gallant and loyal service at St. Thome. In order to utilise this money to the best advantage, Martin farmed a village named *Pacamodiampet* from Sher Khan within half-an-hour's reach from Pondicherry."⁴⁰ Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Pakkamudayanpattu.⁴¹ The temples of Mariamman and Ganapathi are the two landmarks in the area.

Settlements adjacent to large towns are commonly known as Saram in the Tamil country. It is possible that the village Saram must have acquired the name because of its proximity to Pondicherry town. That the village is more than two centuries old is certain as Anandarangapillai himself refers to it in his Diary.⁴² It lies only 1.5 km. west of Pondicherry on the road to Tindivanam. Pudusaram forms part of Saram which lies divided into Pazhayasaram and Pudusaram. Pudusaram area is of later growth. While Pazhayasaram is designated as rural for purposes of census, Pudusaram forms part of the Ozhukarai urban complex. Pudusaram takes pride in the fact that Mahavidwan Periasampillai, a Tamil scholar and the author of *Puthuvaikkalambagam*, was born in this village.

Tattanchavadi rose to prominence with the establishment of the Industrial Estate in 1963. The three-day Annual festival celebrated in the Sri Ayyanar temple here attracts hundreds of devotees.

The Dhanwantarinagar area was until very recently known as Gorimedu and less frequently as Red Hills because of its altitude and the ferruginous soil. The area rises to a height of about 14 metres above sea-level rendering the climate less humid and more salubrious. The establishment of the T.B. Sanatorium, the JIPMER Hospital together with its residential complex, the Police Housing Colony, the Public Health Laboratory, the Government Tourist Home and the adjacent Indira Nagar have all added to the importance of the place. A few churches and temples, lodges, banks, hotels and a police station

There are three inscriptions of Rajanarayana Sambuvarayan (1339-1363 A.D.) in the Villiyannur temple which refer to this place as Kulothungacholannallur. That this place was the seat of powerful and influential political chieftains during the Chola days is also supported by several inscriptions.

Later inscriptions refer to this place as Ozhukarai. It may therefore be assumed that Ozhukkai-Vadakarai must have come to be known as Ozhukarai in course of time.

The French adventurer La Farelle who was in Pondicherry between 1725 and 1735 refers to a temple situated at a distance of $1\frac{1}{2}$ 'lieues' (about 6 km.) from Pondicherry. He has left us a description of a spectacular procession from the Siva temple in Pondicherry (Kizha Kovil) to the principal temple (Mel kovil) at Ozhukarai. As many as twenty to thirty thousand people participated in the procession. There are no traces today of the Ozhukarai Melkovil referred to by de la Farelle. According to Jouveau Dubreuil, the town of Ozhukarai once upon a time extended up to the present day Pondicherry which was only its suburb. The temples of Sri Mariamman, Sri Ellayamman and Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarar are important places of worship for Hindus at present.

The lands here are very fertile and both wet and dry crops are grown here. Usteri serves as flow irrigation and wells are used for lift irrigation. Important crops raised in this village are paddy, ground-nut, plaintain and sugar-cane. This village has also been identified as a market place.

(Padudarkollai)

C. T.R. Pattinam

A. 16.8 Ha.

P. 208 (1971)

Forming part of the T.R. Pattinam Commune, it is a very small village situated at a distance of 8.5 km. from Karaikal. It forms part of the Melaiyur revenue village. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the only enclave which lies detached from Karaikal region, surrounded on all sides by Tamil Nadu territory.

Pandacholanallur
(Pandasozhanur)

C. Nettappakkam
A. 214.36 Ha.
P. 1,608 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 26.5 km. south-west of Pondicherry. According to inscriptions in the Malligarjuneswarar temple here, the village must have been known as Thirumudavanpalli during the days of Kulothunga-I (XI century), named after Thirumudavan, probably a chieftain in whose honour the *palli* was built. The name of this *palli* may have been ascribed to the village in due course. Since XII century the village is said to have been called Pandithacholanallur, after Rajaraja-II who was otherwise known as Rajapandithan, erudite as he was both in Tamil and Sanskrit.⁴⁴ The name Pandithacholanallur may have changed into Pandasozhanur.

The temples of Sri Mallikarjunaswamy and Sri Muthumariamman are the two important centres of worship in the village. The 12-day *brahmotsavam* celebrated every year during July-September in Sri Muthumariamman temple is an important festival in this village.

Lands are irrigated by both flow and lift irrigation. Paddy, sugar-cane, ground-nut, ragi and *cumbu* are some of the important crops grown in this village. Nellikkuppam is the nearest town from this village which is linked by a bus route.

The first set of 150 low cost houses for harijans was built in this village recently.

Pillaiyarkuppam
(„)

C. Villiyanur
A. 260.54 Ha.
P. 1,362 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 17.00 km. from Pondicherry on the bank of Sankaraparani river. This is not to be confused with the Pillaiyarkuppam in Bahur Commune Panchayat although both the villages have been identified as pre-historic/archaeological site. The Pillaiyarkuppam in Villiyanur Commune is well known for its temples and festivals. The 18-day annual festival held during April-May in Sri Koothandavar temple is the most famous. Devotees throng in thousands to witness the celebrations to which the festival fair adds colour and gaiety.

Pillaiyarkuppam

(,)

C. Bahur

A. 45.26 Ha.

P. 811 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 17.25 km. (via Cuddalore road) from Pondicherry, this is one of the places identified as a pre-historic and archaeological site by Prof. J. Dubreuil. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Kandanpet Narambai and Valluvarpet.

Paddy is the principal wet crop grown here, while casuarina, ragi and tapioca are some of the dry crops. Tanks and wells are the main sources of irrigation. Coir industry provides part-time work to some of the villagers. The artisans mostly working with their hands use coconut fibre to make coir, ropes, etc. which find a good market both in villages and towns.

Ponbetti

(Ponbethy)

Mel Ponbetti

C. Nedungadu

A. 67.07 Ha.

P. 450

Kil Ponbetti

C. Nedungadu

A. 93.30 Ha.

P. 277

Ponbetti is a twin village, viz. Mel-Ponbetti and Kil Ponbetti both lying close to Nattar. The name Ponbetti is said to be the corruption of Ponbattri. It has also been suggested that Ponpattrikavalan Buddhamitran, the author of Veerachozhiam is a native of this village.⁴⁵ This name indicates that he must have been a Buddhist by religion. Interestingly even the old Siva temple in the village is built in the shape of a Buddha vihara.

Pondicherry :

(,)

'The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea' written in the I century A.D. and the Geography of Ptolemy (II century) mention 'Poduke' as a port town on the Coromandel Coast.⁴⁶ The identification of a Roman trading centre in the immediate vicinity of Pondicherry adds weight to the equation of Poduke with Pondicherry. Although this equation has been suggested by more than one writer, the equation of Poduke with 'Puduvai', the name by which the town was known in the days of Kambar and Ottakoothar, seems to be more probable. The ruins of this port town were identified at Arikamedu near Kakkayantoppu on the southern banks of river Ariyankuppam. The general indications given for 'Poduke' by the Periplus and Ptolemy are inferred

to be consistent with the position of Arikamedu. The findings of Arikamedu have therefore confirmed that the site surrounding Pondicherry must have been in occupation from the first century B.C. or the beginning of the first century A.D.⁴⁷

According to one tradition, the town was once upon a time an abode of scholars well versed in the vedas and hence came to be known as Vedapuri. The inscriptions of the demolished Vedapureeswarar temple suggest that the town must have been known as Vedapuri, the reigning deity of the town being the 'Iswarar' of Vedapuri. The numerous Chola coins of the eleventh and adjacent centuries (A.D.) found in the area go to indicate that the town must have continued to flourish even during the Chola period. Interestingly, during the days of Ottakoothar and Kambar in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Puducheri is said to have been known in its shortened form as 'Puthuvai'. This town, according to some scholars, belonged to Thiruvennainallur Chadayappa Mudaliar, the benefactor of Kamban the great.⁴⁸ 'Puthuvai, must have then formed part of the country called Tirumunaippadi in Nadunadu, its capital being Tiruvennainallur.

Early in the sixteenth century, the Portuguese had a factory here which they must have established after Nagappatinam (in 1521) and before San Thome (in 1524) as evident from 'Da Asia', a book of Geography published by J. Barros in the year 1553.⁴⁹ A map of Pierre Berthelot (1635) lists 'Polesere' as a Danish trading port on the Coromandel Coast indicating that the Danish contact which began in 1616 continued in spite of the Dutch having been allowed into the town.⁵⁰ In 1639, Francis Day, an English explorer from Madras visited 'Pullicherri' twice and stayed in the Danish lodge.⁵¹ In 1648, the Council of Madras called the town 'Pullicherry'. Hobson-Jobson cites an English reference to the place in 1680 under the spelling 'Puddicherry'.

The Hindus are understood to have called the town 'Puthuvai' or 'Puthucceri' while Musalmans called it 'Pulcheri'.⁵² As if to confirm this, Bhimsen in his memoirs (1694-95) entitled 'Tarikh-i-Dilkasha', writes that they "looked at Phulcery port from outside. It is a strong fort of the French and the Dutch live here. They have many guns artillery material in fine weapons."⁵³

The Portuguese 'Puducheira' became the Danish 'Polesere' and the Dutch Pollochire', but it was the French merchants of St. Malo who seem to have mixed up the 'u' for 'n' and transformed 'Poudicheri' into 'Pondicheri'.

Pondicherry was built neatly and compactly as an ordered whole and in pursuance of a definite plan.⁵⁴ As it exists to-day, it is a blend of the Occident and the Orient and a model of Medieval European town planning. It is oval shaped with parallel streets cutting each other at right angles and an esplanade about three km. in length skirting the town. A visitor to the town cannot but feel that he is seeing a little piece of France set down in India.

The XVIII century **Palais du Gouverneur**, now christened Raj Nivas, the old Tribunal now housing the Legislative Assembly, the **Cercle de Pondichéry**, the General Hospital, the Maternity Hospital, the Ashram Dining Hall and the United Commercial Bank are so lined up on three sides to form the **Place du Gouvernement** with a monument as the point of attraction rising at the centre of a well laid garden. Some exquisitely carved monolithic pillars adorn the **Place**. These pillars, ascribed to the XVII century, were brought from Gingee to Pondicherry after the capture of its fort in 1751. As the pillars were found lying scattered in a state of neglect since 1761, they were ordered to be buried in 1836. They were then dug out and erected at different points to add to the beauty of **Place de Napoleon III** which was inaugurated in 1866*. The **Place** was subsequently renamed **Place de République**. The **Hotel de Ville** (Town Hall), the War Memorial, the 4.25 metre tall Gandhi statue facing the sprawling Gandhi maidan, the 27-metre tall lighthouse, the Sea-View Restaurant and the Pondicherry Distillery are notable points of attraction along the 1500—metre long promenade (Cours Chabrol) edging the coast. The New Pier and the beach opposite to it are popular resorts. The railway-station, the bus-stand, the Kamban Kalai Arangam, the Botanical Garden, and the Jawahar Bal Bhavan are the other important landmarks of the town.

The **Institut Français** and the **Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient** are edifices of learning and research where studies are carried out in Indology, Archaeology, Lexicography, Palynology, Pedology and Cartography.

The statue of **Jeanne d'Arc** opposite to **l'Eglise de Notre Dame des Anges**, that of the goddess of travel in front of the railway-station, that of Selvaraju Chettiar in a private park on the beach road, the statues of Bharathidasan and Annadurai are grateful mementos to a meaningful past. The roads and streets named after historic personages of Pondicherry recall to mind fading memories of yester years.

* The granite pillars inside the Grand Bazaar were also from Gingee. The three figures in one of the pillars are said to be that of Muthukrishnappa Naik and his two wives.

Rue Jawaharlal Nehru and rue Mahatma Gandhi are the fashionable shopping quarters of Pondicherry. The **Grand Bazar**, the **Petit Bazar**, the **Bazar Saint Laurent** serve as market centres of the town. Muttiyalupettai is also a market centre of repute that serves the locality.

There are very few streets in the town not sanctified by the precincts of a temple, a church or a mosque. There are in fact more than 32 temples besides several churches and mosques in the town. Of these, the Manakula Vinayagar temple (rue d'Orléans), Muthumariamman temple (Muthumariamman koil Street,) Drowpathiamman temple (close to West Boulevard), Kamatchiamman temple (rue Bharathi), Varadarajaperumal temple and Sri Vedapureeswarar temple (rue Mahatma Gandhi) are very famous. Some festival or other is celebrated all through the year in these temples spreading a festive mood all around. The celebrations are marked by colourful processions, musical performances, *upanyasams* and the display of fire-works.

Masi magam is celebrated on the seashore near Kurichchikuppam with a great deal of fanfare, probably since the beginning of this century. Deities from as many as thirty-eight temples as far as Mailam (32.20 km.) Deevanur (54.54 km.) and Gingee (69.23 km.) participate in the celebration. The pious and well-to-do people of Pondicherry encouraged the celebration by munificent donations to meet the expenses for bringing the deities and for making other arrangements. On *masi magam* day the *utsavamoorthies* or the festival images are brought in procession to Pondicherry and from there taken around the town in a clock-wise direction to the accompaniment of nadhaswaram music. On arrival, the Saivite and Vaishnavite deities are arranged near the seashore. The *soolam* (trident) of Saivite deities and the *chakram* of Vaishnavite deities are removed and dipped with the usual ceremonies in the sea and then the images are installed in a row in the nearby temporary pandals. The idols are arranged according to convention, in a determined order from north to south, all of them facing east. A large number of devotees take bath in the sea after performing a *sankalpam* before bath assisted by priests who assemble there for the purpose. Three of the thirty-eight deities, viz. of Mailam, Gingee and Deevanur stay on for two or three more days in the *mandapam* of Mailam *devasthanam* situated in Mission Street, the Vedapureeswarar Varadaraja Perumal Vidyalayam or Calvé Rajagopalasami Bungalow in West Boulevard respectively. Sri Subramaniam temple of Mailam and Sri Poyyada Vinayagar temple of Deevanur are given an annual grant of Rs. 225 each to enable their participation in the *masi magam* festival.

The ten-day annual festival in Muthumariamman temple is celebrated in the Tamil month of *thai* (January - February). Here too, the 10 predominant communities of the town, viz. Vannar, Senaithalaivar, Naidu, Vysia, Vellalas, Vanniar, Sengunthar, Vaniar, Ariya Vysias and Brahmins conduct the festival respectively on each day according to a longstanding agreement. The procession on each night is marked by music and display of fire-works. The 10-day annual *Brahmothsavam* of Manakula Vinayakar Temple is celebrated since 1957. According to a common agreement, each day's expenditure is met by a particular community in the town.⁵⁵ A 22-day festival is celebrated in Drowpathiamman temple in the month of *adi* (July-August). This festival, associated with the fire-walking ceremony, is very famous and attracts a large crowd. On the eighteenth day the Goddess is taken to Vellavari, a place two kilometres north of Pondicherry town where the famous fire-walking ceremony takes place. Those who vow to take part in the ordeal observe 40 days fast and wear saffron coloured clothes and after a purificatory bath, walk through the fire to the astonishment of the spectators.⁵⁶

The annual *kinni radhothsavam* of Kamatchiamman temple is celebrated in the Tamil month of *chittirai* (April-May). The word *kinni* means a metallic hollow disc. During the festival the chariot (*ratham*) in which the deity is installed for the ceremonial procession is decorated with numerous such well polished discs which glitter beautifully in moonlight. The festival, marked by processions of the Goddess in different *vahanas* to the accompaniment of nadhaswaram music and display of fire-works, is so named because of this special decoration.

The Varadarajaperumal temple is a simple, modest and impressive structure. It has a prized possession of antique jewellery. Srimath Andavan has sung the glory of this shrine in his Mangala Sassanam.

Amongst the churches, the *Eglise de Notre-Dame de l'Immaculée Conception* in *rue des Missions Etrangères*, the *Eglise de Notre Dame des Anges* in *rue Dumas* and *Eglise de Sacré-Coeur de Jesus* in South Boulevard are the most noteworthy, each representing a different style of architecture viz., Indo-Saracenic, Roman and Gothic. Of them the *Eglise de Notre Dame de l'Immaculée Conception* was first built in 1692 and took its present shape in 1791 after its destruction in 1761. It is noted for its Saracenic features. The church of *Notre Dame des Anges* built between 1851 and 1855 is noteworthy for its masonry ornamentation carried out with the finest *chunam* mixed with the white of eggs which almost gives to the walls the effect of white marble. The church in Kurichchikuppam was

built in the year 1843. The Sacred Heart Church, consecrated only at the beginning of this century, stands out as a specimen of gothic splendour. The stained glass panels that adorn the doors and windows add beauty to the interior of the church.

In the eastern wing of the town, especially in **rue Capucins** (now **rue Romain Rolland**) are little mansions and cottages protected by columned portals. The **Ouvriers des Soeurs de St. Joseph de Cluny**, is a beautiful XVIII century structure which may probably have escaped the destruction of 1761. Several public as well as private buildings, like **Ecole de la rue des Missions Etrangères** (now V.O.C. High School) and **Collège Calvé** carry the impress of continental architecture. As a specimen of Indo-French architecture one may cite the mansion of Anandarangapillai in **rue Rangapillai** built sometime in 1733 and that of Kattoukara Appavu Pillai in **rue Jawaharlal Nehru** both of which have been declared as historical monuments.

The police band used to play at the specially built bandstand within the municipal nursery garden. Nowadays it plays Western and Indian musical compositions every Saturday at the pentagonal platform at the centre of the Gandhi maidan. The town is otherwise famous for its eating places which serve French as well as Vietnamese food. The roof garden restaurants and bars are an added attraction.

Verily as the tourist brochures proclaim, "for those in quest of a relaxed leisurely holiday while simultaneously imbibing of India's great spiritual and cultural heritage, there is no better place than Pondicherry".

Poraiyur

(„)

C. Villiyanur

A. 82.34 Ha.

P. 769 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of about 5 km. from Pondicherry town and about 2.5 km. from Villiyanur railway station. An inscription in the Villiyanur temple ascribed to the period of Sadasivadevarayar refers to a place called Pirayoor. The Villaiyuranam which belongs to a much later period also refers to the place as Pirayoor. The word 'Piray' means the crescent and the suffix 'oor' refers to the place. It may therefore be safely assumed that the name 'Pirayoor' may have changed into 'Poraiyur'. The village has assumed some importance with the establishment of some industrial units in the vicinity. Harijans constitute more than 67 per cent. of the population of this village.

Puttakudi
(Puthakudy)

C. Nedungadu
A. 181.15 Ha.
P. 192 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of about 7 km. from Karaikal. The name of the village suggests its possible early association with Buddhism. Interestingly a granite statue of Buddha was unearthed in the village some years ago. Puthamangalam and Agaraputhakudi are the names of two other villages in the region. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Agaraputtakudi, Vadamattam and Mel Kottuchcheri. The population of the village which stood at 224 in 1961 declined to 192 by 1971, although the reason for the decline is not known.

Ramanathapuram
(")

C. Villiyanur
A. 325.52 Ha.
P. 1,077 (1971)

This is a revenue village which lies at a distance of about 15 km from Pondicherry. Villagers are mostly engaged in agricultural and allied activities. Ragi, *cumbu*, ground-nut, gingelly and cotton are the important dry crops grown in the area. Paddy and sugar-cane are the wet crops. Irrigation is carried on with the help of tanks and wells. The Primary Health Centre in the village was transferred to the control of JIPMER in 1965 for running a Rural Health Centre.

The village has been identified as a prehistoric and archaeological site by Prof. J. Dubreuil.

Reddiarpalaiyam
(Reddiarpalayam)

C. Ozhukarai
A. 140.00 Ha.
P. 2,046 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 4.5 km. west of Pondicherry. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Ellupillaichavadi, Karamanikkuppam, Kavundanpalaiyam, Kondupet, Kundupalayam, Pavazhakaranchavady and Poomiampet. According to one tradition it grew up as a palayam of Reddiars who had migrated from the Telugu country after their conversion to christianity. Anandarangapillai calls it as Tambireddipalayam, which must have later changed into Reddiarpalaiyam.⁵⁷

There are three churches and a convent in this village. One of the three churches is more than 200 years old. This is evident from an event recorded in the Diary of Anandarangapillai under the date of 30 November 1745. According to this report, the Christian dubash Kanakaraya Mudaliar installed some images in the church built by him and celebrated the occasion. He invited Brahmins, Vellalars, Komuttis, Chetties, Goldsmiths, Weavers, Oilmongers and people of other castes besides Europeans and Christians and entertained them to a feast at Ozhukarai. All the arrangements were made in strict conformity with the religious scruples of each caste and the people who attended it received every attention.⁵⁸ The large number of rentiers and retired officials in the village has earned for it the name of Pensioners' Paradise. Some follow agricultural avocations. Quite a few of them are engaged in industrial and manufacturing ventures. This is one of the fast developing villages in the region with its population having increased from 1,181 in 1961 to 2,046 by 1971.

Sattamangalam

(Kizhasathamangalam)

Melasathamangalam)

Mel Sattamangalam

C. Villianur

A. 48.96 Ha.

P. 282 (1971)

Kil Sattamangalam

C. Villianur

A. 157.61 Ha.

P. 1,023 (1971)

This is one of the twin villages in Pondicherry region. They are known as Kil Sattamangalam and Mel Sattamangalam and lie separated by a distance of a few hundred metres. Mel Sattamangalam lies at a distance of 16.25 km. and Kil Sattamangalam at a distance of 15.25 km. from Pondicherry. These two villages together constitute a revenue village. The word 'Sathan' is associated with Buddhism, and it is likely that the villages, lying not far from Ariyankuppam has had some links with Buddhism in the early centuries of this era. An inscription in Tirubuvanai temple ascribed to the period of Rajadhiraja-I (1051 A.D.) refers to the deity of the village temple as Sathamangala Mahadevar. It is possible that by the XI century the influence of Buddhism had declined and Saivism had established itself. This village has also been identified as a prehistoric/archaeological site.

Sedarappattu
(Sedarapet)

C. Villianur
A. 461.36 Ha.
P. 1,757 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 16 km. from Pondicherry. Anandarangapillai also calls it Setharapattu.⁵⁹ In 1969 the village was chosen for development as a model village to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Mahatma Gandhi. There are eight temples in this village. The festival celebrated in Sri Sengazhaniemman temple is of some importance.

Cultivators and agricultural labourers constitute the major working force in this village. Important crops grown include paddy, sugar-cane, *cumbu*, gingelly, tapioca and casuarina. Lands are irrigated both by tanks and wells.

Seliamedu
(Seliamedu)

C. Bahur
A. 256.93 Ha.
P. 1,423 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 18.5 km. from Pondicherry. The population having increased from 827 in 1961 to 1,423 in 1971 it emerges as one of the fast growing villages in the region. There are in all eight temples here. The annual festivals celebrated in the temples of Sri Muthalamman, Sri Mariamman and Selva Vinayagar attract a large number of devotees. The village is otherwise famous as the birth place of Poet Rangasami Naidu, popularly known as Vanidasan.

Paddy, sugar-cane, banana, ragi and ground-nut are the important crops grown in this village. Irrigation is carried on with the help of tanks and wells. The village has also been identified as a market place.

As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Adingapet, Kudiyiruppalayam, Pudunagaram and Sarcasimedupet.

Sellippattu
(Sellipet)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 273.93 Ha.
P. 1,344 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of about 17 km. from Pondicherry.

The temples of Sri Drowpathiamman, Sri Renukai Mariamman and Sri Subramaniam are the three important places of worship in the village. A large number of devotees gather at the 13-day annual festival celebrated in the Renukai Mariamman temple in April.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers. Both wet and dry crops are raised in this village. Irrigation is carried out mainly by bore wells energised by electric-motors. There are also a couple of establishments engaged in blacksmithy and goldsmithy.

Serumavilangai

(,)

C. Tirunallar

A. 184.91 Ha.

P. 655 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 9.65 km. from Karaikal, this village forms part of the Sorakkudi revenue village. Sri Kailasanathar temple is the most important landmark here. The *masi magam* festival celebrated in Sri Kanniamman temple is of local interest. There is a Harijan Boys' Hostel in the village.

Settur

(Agarasethur)*

(Pandaravadai Sethur)

C. Tirunallar

A. 202.79 Ha.

P. 942 (1971)

This is a twin village comprising Agara Settur and Pandaravadai Settur. They lie at a distance of about 10.9 km. and 11.39 km. respectively from Karaikal on the Karaikal—Peralam road passing through Tirunallar. They together form a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Kumarakudi, Sathankudy and Tenbidagai. Sri Prathapasimmeswarar temple which may be ascribed to the XIII or XIV century is a notable landmark of Agara Settur village. There are Chola inscriptions in Sri Prathapasimmeswarar temple which is now a protected monument under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Paddy is the wet crop and pulses, gingelly and casuarina are the main dry crops raised in this village. Nular provides irrigation for lands in this village.

* Several villages in Karaikal region carry the prefix 'Agara' to its name, like Agara Kasakkudi, Agara Kurumbagaram, Agara Mankudi, Agara Neivachcheri, Agara Puttakudi.

Sombattu
(Sompēt)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 114.66 Ha.
P. 667 (1971)

This is a small village situated at a distance of 24.50 km. from Pondicherry (via Sorappattu) and forms part of the Mannadipattu revenue village. It is otherwise known for the festivals celebrated in Sri Renugaparanjothiamman temple. Among the many festivals celebrated here, the 10-day annual festival held during July-August attracts several hundred devotees. The occasion is also marked by a fair where articles of worship, plantains, coconuts, toys and edibles are traded.

Sorakkudi
(Sorakudy)

C. Tirunallar
A. 248.51 Ha.
P. 1,113 (1971)

It is situated at a distance of 7.8 km. from Karaikal. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Serumavilangai as well. Sri Somanathaswamy temple and Sri Lakshminarayanaperumal temple are two important landmarks of the village. The discovery of two bronze idols of antique value i.e. Sri Thiripurantaka of about 60 cm. height and Thiripurasundari of about 45 cm. height from Periatthope near this village on 30 May 1971 seem to confirm its antiquity. The idols are now in the Pondicherry Museum.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in the village. Paddy is the chief crop grown here. Nular is the main source of irrigation. Blacksmithy and carpentry are the crafts practised in the village.

One peculiar feature is that there has been a decline in the population of this village, i.e. from 1,191 in 1961 to 1,113 in 1971 probably due to emigration of agricultural workers and the educated to urban areas.

Soriyankuppam
(Soriankuppam)

C. Bahur
A. 210.24 Ha.
P. 1,613 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 23.5 km. from Pondicherry, this village forms part of the Kuruvinnattam revenue village. It is otherwise well known for its Sri Sedal Sengazhuneeramma temple. The 10-day Sedal festival celebrated during May-June attracts several thousand people from all surrounding villages.

The Tiruppapuliyur railway station is only at a distance of five km. from here.

Suramangalam
(Sooramangalam)

C. Nettappakkam
A. 121.54 Ha.
P. 1,468 (1971)

This village is situated at a distance of 26.75 km. from Pondicherry (via Kariyamanikkam) and forms part of Kariyamanikkam revenue village.

According to an inscription ascribed to the tenth regnal year of Sadayavarman Sundara Pandya-II (A.D. 1286) found in the Theivanayagaperumal temple at Thiruvendipuram, lands were offered to a temple in the name of 27 high officials. One of the officials who had signed it was known as Soorapakkizhavan. This may be the shortened form of Soorapakkam kizhavan. It has been suggested that Soorapakkam could be the present village of Suramangalam.⁶⁰ If this is correct, the village must be at least seven centuries old.

It has also been identified as a potential market place.

Suttukanni
(Suthukeny)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 394.82 Ha.
P. 1,096 (1971)

This village which lies at a distance of 23 km. from Pondicherry rose to prominence in 1950 with the discovery of megalithic burial sites by J.M. and G. Casal, the French archaeologists.⁶¹ The findings of Casal have shown that it is a prehistoric site of great importance. This is now one of the fast developing villages in the Territory as its population has more than doubled in a decade i.e. from 884 in 1961 to 1,906 in 1971. Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers. Paddy is the wet crop while ragi, *cumbu* and ground-nut are the dry crops grown in this village. Irrigation is carried out both by tanks and wells.

The annual festival celebrated in Sri Drowpathiamman temple attracts a large number of devotees. The Inspection Bungalow in this village situated close to the banks of Gingee river near the anicut formerly served as a popular week-end resort.

Talatteruvu
(Thalatheru)

C. Karaikal
A. 339. 53 Ha.
P. 1,539 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 4.6 km. north of Karaikal town. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Kilinjimedu also. Almost 45 per cent. of the population in this village belong to the scheduled castes and about 70 per cent. of the working force are engaged in agriculture. Both wet and dry crops are grown here. Paddy is the main wet crop and pulses are the dry crops raised in this area where canal irrigation is available.

Sri Sivaloganathaswamy temple is the centre of worship where the celebration of the annual festival and *masi magam* evokes some popular interest.

Tavalakuppam
(Thavalakuppam)

C. Ariyankuppam
A. 80.10 Ha.
P. 805 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 9.5 km. from Pondicherry. Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Tavalakuppam and tells us that there was a choultry here.⁶² It has been suggested that the village may have derived its name from the word '*Thavalum*' standing for white lily, for which the area is even now famous. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Andipalaiyam, Edaiyarpalaiyam, Kasanthittu, Korkumedu and Thanampalayam. It has also been identified as a market centre.

Tennagudi
(Thennankudy)

C. Tirunallar
A. 195.15 Ha.
P. 576

It is situated at a distance of 6.5 km. west of Karaikal on the Peralam road. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Mathur, Kottapady and Muppattankudi. This is yet another village in Tirunallar Commune where the population had declined from 666 in 1961 to 576 in 1971 probably due to emigration of farm labour.

Almost three-fourths of the villagers are engaged in agriculture. Both wet and dry crops are grown here. Irrigational facilities are provided by canals emanating from Nular. Some villagers are engaged in the handicraft of pottery-making.

(Thimmanaikkenpalayam)

C. Ariyankuppam

A. 380.21 Ha.

P. 1,710 (1971)

The village lies south-west of Pondicherry town at a distance of 14.5 km. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Theduvanatham. A XVI century Telugu inscription in Tiruvandarkovil, ascribed to the period of Narasingaraya, refers to one Thimma Nayakan, an agent of Annamarasa who was a minister of Saluva Narasingarayan. It is possible that this village derives its name from this Thimma Nayakan. Anandarangapillai however refers to the place both as Thimmappanaikkanpalayam and Thimmiappanayakenpalayam.⁶³ A majority of the population belongs to the scheduled castes.

The Thimmanayakenpalayam-Abhisekapakkam lake which lies north of the village is the principal source of irrigation. It is fed by the surplus waters of Bahur lake which lies south-west at a distance of 5.63 km. The Malattar flows on the western side of the village.

The temples of Sri Muthumariamman and Sri Vinayagar are the two important places of worship. The 10-day annual festival celebrated in Sri Muthumariamman temple sometime during July-August attracts hundreds of devotees. The festival is marked by a fair where toys, fruits, etc. are brought in for sale.

Tirukkanur

(Thirukkanur)

C. Mannadipattu

A. 195.32 Ha.

P. 1,707 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 16 km. from Pondicherry. It is famous for the 9-day annual festival held at Sri Muthumariamman temple during July-August. Several hundred people gather to celebrate the occasion which is also marked by a festival fair.

It has also been identified as a Rural Growth Centre and a market centre.

Tirumalarajanpattinam

(Thirumalarayanpattinam)

C. T.R. Pattinam

A. 121.08 Ha.

P. 7,461 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 5.4 km. from Karaikal, this village is the head quarters of Tirumalarajanpattinam Commune Panchayat. This forms part of the Melayur revenue village. It lies south of Karaikal along the Nagappattinam

main road. The nearest railway station is Karaikal. The village is otherwise called T.R. Pattinam for the sake of brevity. Anandarangapillai refers to it as Thirumalairayanpatinam.⁶⁴ The French called it 'Grand' Aldée'-meaning a big village. Appropriately it is the largest village in the Territory at present. The village is said to have been named after Thirumalrayan who was the representative of the Vijayanagar ruler in Tamil Nadu. He is said to have built the new town of Thirumalarayanpattinam and reigned from here. Even Tirumalarajanar is said to have been dug by this ruler. His inscriptions are found at Thiruvanaikkaval, Thanjavur, Papanasam and Pattichuram. Poet Kalamegham added lustre to his fame by serving as his court poet. This position was held before by Adhimadura Kavirayer.⁶⁵

According to a legend, the king is reported to have built 108 temples and an equal number of tanks or ponds in this place.⁶⁶ The village is even now famous for its numerous temples and wells although their number is small. The Jadayupureeswarar temple is said to be the oldest in the village. The legend connected with the temple says that Ravana after abducting Sita passed through this village and that Jadayu, the legendary bird of the *puranas* fought Ravana at this place while speeding to Lanka with abducted Sita. Jadayu having been killed in the encounter, not only attained *moksha*, but also had a *darshan* of *Siva* here. Among the festivals held in this temple *masi magam* is the most important and is attended by several thousand devotees. It is celebrated for three days in the month of *masi* (February-March). Scenes from the Ramayana are re-enacted with the help of wooden images during this festival.

The temples of Sri Abiramiamman, Sri Ragunathaperumal, Sri Venkatesa perumal, Sri Vizhi Varadarajaperumal and Sri Kamakshiamman are the other important places of worship in the village. The one-day *masi magam* festival celebrated every alternate year in Ragunathaperumal temple and every year in Sri Varadarajaperumal temple attracts several thousand devotees. A fair is also held on the occasion. The one-day Vijaya Dasami festival in Sri Venkatesaperumal temple and Sri Jadayupureeswarar temple held during September-October, attracts a few thousand people and in both the places it is accompanied by a fair.

This is one of the well developed villages in the Territory.

Tiruvandarkovil
(Thiruvandarkoil)

C. Mannadipattu
A. 250.88 Ha.
P. 1,461 (1971)

This village is situated about 21 km. west of Pondicherry. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Kottapurinattam as well. There are grounds to believe that around VII century A.D. this place must have been known as Thiruvadukur as Saint Thirugnanasambandar visited the place and sang a *pathigam* in praise of the reigning deity of the temple. Although there are no traces today of either Vadukur or the temple of Vadukanadhar sung by the Saint, a spot now known as Lingathumedu is supposed to have been the former location of this temple.

Although the inscriptions (16 in all) in the temple here pertain to the period from the X to the XVI century A.D. none of them refers to the place as Vadukur. They refer to three Shiva temples within the limits of Thirubuvana-mathevi Caturvedimangalam viz, Thiruvarainakkan koil, Thirunakeswaramudayar koil and Arulagara Iswaramudayar koil. However there are traces of only one temple today viz. Thiruvarainakkan koil, which in due course came to be known as Thiruvandarkoil. This is evident from a later inscription ascribed to the period of Saluva Narasinga Maharayar. This inscription refers to the reigning deity as Thiruvandar and the temple may have been known as Tiruvandarkoil. It is possible that the name of the temple came to be applied to the village in course of time. Anandarangapillai also refers to the place as Thiruvandarkoil.⁶⁷

The said temple is an important protected monument under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India. It is otherwise noted for its remarkable stone sculptures.

On the southern wall of the *karuvarai* is found the image of Dakshina-murthy, on the west that of Lingotbhavar, on the north that of Brahmadevar. On the south of the *arthamandapam* is found the image of Pitchadanar and on the north Durga, besides that of Ganeshar, Arthanari, Idaparudar, etc. At the entrance of the *arthamandapam* are found two images of *dwarapalakas*.⁶⁸

Tirubhuvanai

(Thirubuvanai)

C. Mannadipattu

A. 325.30 Ha.

P. 2,358 (1971)

This is the biggest village in the commune, and serves as the headquarters of the Mannadipattu Commune Panchayat. It lies on the Pondicherry-Villupuram road at a distance of about 23.5 km. west of Pondicherry. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Tirubhuvanaipalayam.

Ouralmedu and Lingathumedu, both in the vicinity of this village, have been identified as prehistoric and archaeological sites. Since the days of Parantaka-I this place was known as Tirubhuvanamadevi Caturvedimangalam. Inscriptions of Kopperunjinga refer to this place as Thirubhuvanamadevi. Even this abridged name was further shortened into Tirubhuvanai in later days.

There was a *vidyastana* in Tirubhuvanai as in Bahur. According to an inscription, there were as many as 12 teachers and 190 students in this institution. The students enjoyed scholarships in the form of paddy, the total requirement of which came to 9,525 *kalams* per annum. In order to meet these requirements, lands measuring 72 *velis* were given as grant. The yield from these lands amounted to 12,000 *kalams* which were used for the maintenance of the college. The lake near this village was known as Kakkizhanadi per-eri.

The village is noted for its Varadaraja Perumal temple ascribed to the Chola period. It is one of the four protected monuments in Pondicherry region. The *attru thiruvizha*, Garuda Sevai and Vaikunta Ekadesi are the major festivals celebrated in this temple. A statue of Aranganathar unearthed a few years ago near Tirubhuvanai was installed in a newly built *mandapam*.

An image of Lord Vinayaga, said to belong to the early Chola period is now found installed in the Mariamman temple. This image is said to belong to the old Siva temple of Tirubhuvanai. The bronze images of Nataraja, Sivagamasundari and Uma Maheswarar together with a conch bearing an inscription belonging to the Chola period, were found in the vicinity of this village in 1974. They are now in the Pondicherry Museum. One of the dwarapalakas now in the General Hospital is said to have been brought from this place.

This is one of the few villages in the region claiming a *stalapurana*. The *stalapurana* written in prose on palm leaves is said to remain unpublished.

Tirukkanji
(Thirukanchi)

C. Villiyanur
A. 352.94 Ha.
P. 1,166 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 13 km. from Pondicherry. The temple in Tirukkanji is dedicated to Sri Gangai Varagha Eswarar and Kamakshi, his consort. The XII century Siva temple in the village was almost swept away by the river, in spite of the efforts taken to preserve it. The *lingam* is understood to have been removed from the old sanctuary and installed in a new temple built south of the old one.⁶⁹ There is said to be a *stalapurana* for the village.

Because of its location on the bank of Varaha River, it is called Gangai Varaha Eswarar temple. The 11-day *brahmotsavam* at Kanjinathar temple celebrated during February-March every year, attracts many thousands. The fair held at the same time serves as an added attraction. The Census of India 1961 puts the number of those who attend the festival at 50,000. The village has been identified as a prehistoric and archaeological site by Prof. J. Dubreuil. Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers. Both tanks and wells are used for irrigation. Important crops grown in this area include paddy, sugar-cane, tapioca, ragi and ground-nut.

Tiruvettakudi
(Thiruvettakudy)

C. Kottuchcheri
A. 453.81 Ha.
P. 1,564 (1971)

This village, situated at a distance of 9.9 km. north of Karaikal, may be reached by taking a turn to the east on the Karaikal-Tarangambadi road north of Kottuchcheri. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Kalikuppam, Mandabathur and Mannankoil.

Sri Thirumeniazhagaraswamy temple with its 45 feet tall gopuram is the most important landmark of the village. The presiding deity of the east facing temple is Lord Siva, known here as Sundareswarar and his consort Soundarya-nayagi. To the left of the *prakaram* is the shrine of Lord Ganesa and to the right are the shrines of Chandikeswarar, Durgai, Ayyanar, Soorya and Chandra. At the centre of the *prakaram* is the *maha-mandapam*, from where one may have a view of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Lord in the form of a Lingam. Behind the *sanctum sanctorum* may be seen the shrines of Lord Subramaniam, Punnaivana-nathar and Mahalakshmi. The glory of the presiding deities of the temple has been sung by such great Saivite Saints as Thirugnanasambandar and Thirunavukkarasar. According to a legend,

Arjuna is said to have performed his *pooja* here to obtain the *pasupatha asthram*. It could not be ascertained whether the unpublished Tiruvettakudi puranam, still in palm leaves, is the *stalapurana* of this village. The *masi magam* festival celebrated in the temple attracts thousands of devotees from far and near.

The inhabitants of this village are mostly engaged in agricultural activities. Canal irrigation is available for the lands. Paddy is the wet crop and groundnut and pulses are the dry crops grown here. Paddy is the main item of trade in this village.

Tirunallar
(Thirunallar)

C. Tirunallar
A. 340.33 Ha.
P. 2,695 (1971)

This village which is the headquarters of Tirunallar Commune Panchayat is situated at a distance of about 5 km. west of Karaikal town on the Peralam-Karaikal road. This is one of the few villages in the Territory which can lay claim to a published *stalapurana*. However it is of interest to note that a granite statue of Buddha was discovered from a site belonging to Darbaranyeswarar temple in 1966. The place is otherwise famous because of the Darbaranyeswarar temple situated there. Although Darbaranyam is said to be the original name of this village, there is no evidence to support the claim. According to a legend the place was originally a forest of *darbha* grass and it is told that the *Linga* even now carries impressions left by the *darbha* weeds with which it was once found wrapped. There are a few Chola inscriptions on the northern wall of the *mandapam* in front of the shrine. According to another legend, the great king Nala of puranic fame got himself rid of the affliction of Saturn or Saneeswarar, after worshipping the Lord consecrated in this temple. Saint Thirugnanasambandar sang a *pathigam* in praise of the deity here. The *moolavar* of Darbaranyeswarar is said to be a Swayambhu lingam. The Lord is also known as Adhimoorthi or Nallarar. The one-piece emerald idol of the deity here is claimed to be the largest of its kind in the country, while the image of Thiagar here is believed to be the outcome of divine handiwork.

The temple has separate *sanctum sanctorum* for Sri Darbaranyeswarar, Thyagarajaswamy, Vinayakar, Subramanyar, Mahalakshmi and Nataraja in the first *prakaram* and for Pranambigai and Saneeswarar in the second *prakaram*. The sanctum of Ambal and of Nataraja face south. In addition, granite images of Bhairavar, Surya, Durgai, Dakshinamurthi, Chandikeswarar and the 63 Saivite saints are also installed in the temple at appropriate places. There are five *thirthams* associated with the temple, namely *Brahma-thirtham* and *Vani thirtham* on the east and south, *Anna thirtham* and *Agasthiar thirtham* on the north and *Nala thirtham* on the north-west of the temple.

The *Sani Peyarchi* festival is celebrated on a grand scale once every two and a half years, as according to astrology, Saneeswaran moves from one sign (house) to the next in the Zodiac once in two and a half years and the day of his transit is observed as a festival in Tirunallar. This festival attracts several thousand devotees from all over the country. Sri Darbaranyeswarasamy temple runs a tourist home for the convenience of visiting pilgrims. An orphanage is also run under the auspices of the temple.

A fair is held during the festival here where all kinds of utensils are brought for sale, and the merchants of nearby places open vessel shops at least a few days prior to the festival. 70

Tondamanattam

(Thondamanatham)

C. Villiyanur

A. 457.32 Ha.

P. 1,664 (1971)

This village lies at a distance of 15 km. from Pondicherry. An inscription in Tirubhuvanai temple ascribed to the period of Vikramachola refers to a Thondaiman whose accomplishments as a warrior are referred to in several other inscriptions. It is likely that this village (natham) may have been named after this Thondaiman. It is definitely more than two centuries old as Anandarangapillai refers to the place in his Diary.⁷¹ Both flow and lift irrigation sources are utilised for watering the fields. Important crops grown in this area are paddy, ground-nut, tapioca, sugar-cane and ragi. Some villagers operate kilns for the preparation of lime which finds a ready market in and around Pondicherry.

Tuttipattu

(Tuthipet)

C. Villiyanur

A. 276.34 Ha.

P. 410 (1971)

This is a small village about 19 km. west of Pondicherry and can be reached via. Suttukanni. As 'pet' appears to be the corruption of 'pattu', 'Tuttipattu' seems to be the more correct name of the village.

There are three temples and a church in this village. Festivals celebrated in the church and temples attract a large number of devotees. Lands are irrigated both by tanks and wells. Important crops grown in this village are paddy, *varagu*, *cumbu* and *cholam*. This is a very backward village. There is a model farm in the village set up by 'Volontariat'—a social service organisation, with a view to training farmers on modern farm techniques.

Uruvaiyar

(,)

C. Villiyanur

A. 184.35 Ha.

P. 1,535 (1971)

Uruvaiyar, located on the southern bank of Sankaraparani river (or Gingee river), lies at a distance of 12.5 km. south-west of Pondicherry town. An inscription in the Tirubhuvanai temple, ascribed to the period of Rajadhiraja-I refers to this village as Uruvaru or Uruvathur. The deity of the village temple is called Uruvathur Mahadevar.

Sri Drowpathiamman temple and Sri Sengazhuneer Mariamman temple are the two important places of worship in this village. The annual festivals celebrated in these temples, especially the 10-day festival in Drowpathiamman temple during March-April, attract a large number of devotees.

This village is famous for its *stapathis* who are experts in making bronze icons. The bronze images cast in an alloy of copper and brass are in good demand and Uruvaiyar is the only place in Pondicherry where this handicraft is practised. This village has also been identified as a pre-historic site.

Agricultural labourers constitute the highest percentage of the working force in this village. Tanks and wells are the main sources of irrigation. Important crops grown in this village are paddy, ragi, ground-nut and tapioca.

Usteri

(Oussudu)

C. Villiyanur

A. 281.79 Ha.

P. 213 (1971)

The importance of this village may be attributed to the lake which is known as Usteri. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Poraiyur and Sendanattam. According to an inscription in Chandramouleeswarar temple at Tiruvakkarai, assigned to the period of Kopperunjinga, he is said to have built sluices and a canal to bring water to a lake. And the lake seems to be none other than Usteri. In those days, the lake is understood to have been known as 'Pariyan-eri' and 'Ozhukarai-eri' 72 While the *Karnatakarajakkal saritham* referred to the place as Oosutheri, Anandarangapillai called it differently as Soosarettiri, Oosutteri, Pughasoodu-eri and Ushteri. 73

Situated at a distance of 11 km. west of Pondicherry, it has the reputation of a summer resort. Week-end visitors to the lake used to stay in the Inspection Bungalow at Pathukkannu. This has also been described as one of the promising picnic spots in Pondicherry. The lake site with a winding water frontage is endowed with scenic beauty adding colour and charm to the entire backdrop of the lake. A scheme for the beautification of the lake area was prepared by the Town and Country Planning Office some years ago.

Vanjiyur

(Keezhavanjoor)

(Melavanjoor)

Kil Vanjiyur

C. T.R. Pattinam

A. 300.01 Ha.

P. 350 (1971)

Mel Vanjiyur

C. T.R. Pattinam

A. 100.00 Ha.

P. 283 (1971)

This village consists of two distinct settlements known as Kil Vanjiyur and Mel Vanjiyur. The two settlements together constitute a revenue village.

The Nagore railway station is at a distance of only 1.6 km. from here. The Saint of Nagore, known as Nagore Andavar is said to have performed for forty days the last meditation called Kalvath in a subterranean chamber covered by wooden planks. 74

The Rangayyasami madam is also situated in this village.

Varachchakudi

(Varichikudy)

C. Kottuchcheri

A. 434.27 Ha.

P. 2,192 (1971)

Situated at a distance of 7.9 km. north-east of Karaikal, this is one of the well developed villages in Karaikal region. Varachchakudi-North and Varachchakudi-South form two revenue villages. While jurisdiction of Varachchakudi-South covers Rayampalaiyam, Koozhkuditha Agraharam and Pulianthope, that of north covers Varachchakudi and Konnakavaly.

The Sri Varadarajaperumal temple which is said to be about one hundred and fifty years old is an important landmark of this village. The images of Sri Varadarajaperumal together with his consorts Sridevi and Bhodevi are held in great veneration. Vaikunda Ekadesi and *Masi magam* are marked by festivities. Agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers. Paddy is the main wet crop and ground-nut and pulses are the dry crops raised in the village. Nandalar and Nattar are the main sources of irrigation.

Villiyannur
(Villianur)

C. Villiyannur
A. 238.13 Ha.
P. 3,217 (1971)

Villiyannur, lying to the west of Pondicherry on the Pondicherry-Villupuram main road at a distance of 9.5 km., is the headquarters of Villiyannur Commune Panchayat. Sri Gokilambal Tirukameswarar temple is very famous and from the architectural point of view, the finest in Pondicherry. The temple campus comprises an area of 1.44 Ha. The two *gopurams* on the east and south, respectively of 21.35 m. and 27.45 m. height, are lofty structures of excellent craftsmanship. The southern *gopuram* is of eight stories placed in such an alignment that a staircase of 83 steps leads to the top, passing through all the seven stories. A little over two centuries ago this *gopuram* served as an observation post for the French who kept a watch over the movement of enemy soldiers across the highways leading to Pondicherry. The sculptures are specimens of high artistic skill, chiselled on granite slabs said to have been brought from Gingee hills, about 50 km. north-west of Pondicherry. The holy tank of the temple has an attractive *neerazhimandapam* at the centre. The *moolavar* in the *sanctum sanctorum* is a *Swayambu Lingam* formed of earth. Hence it is annointed only with *punugu oil*; granite images of several other deities such as Dakshinamurthi, Vishnu, Balaganapathi are however, available, not to speak of bronze *utsavars* of Somaskandar, Gokilambal and many others.

This is one of the very few places which can claim a *stalapurana* known as Villaipurana, composed by Veeraraghava kavi. It consists of 495 poems and was first published in 1940 through the initiative of U.V. Saminatha Iyer. The *purana* refers to the place as Kamisam, Vilva-puri and Vilvamanagaram.

The *stalapurana* refers to a Saiva *kalvi madam* on the Odiyambattu road and Egambara Swami *madam* in Sannadi *veethi*. Besides these, there were mutts for other communities as well.

The 10-day annual festival (*brahmothsavam*) of this temple held in May-June attracts many hundreds of devotees. The commencement of this festival is so timed that the ninth day falls on the full-moon day when the ruling star is *Vaisakam*. The temple car rising to a height of 15.25 m. is copiously decorated and pulled out of its usual position. The launching of the car itself used to be a ceremonious affair with the Governor

pulling the rope attached to the car along with the other devotees. This practice is followed even now. Since the French days, the temple has also been the proud recipient of a grant from the government for holding the festival. The fair held on the occasion adds colour to the festivity.

The church of **Notre Dame de Lourdes**, consecrated in the year 1877, is another important landmark in the village.⁷⁵ One special feature of this church is that there is a tank in front where a *theppa thiruvizha* is held.

The village is otherwise famous for its batik sarees and lungis made by its local craftsmen who have survived the onslaught of three centuries.

The location of a Block Development Office in the village has created better opportunities for its development. This is now a well developed village and has been identified as a Rural Growth Centre and a market centre.

Virampattinam	Periya Virampattinam	Chinna Virampattinam
(Sinnavirampattinam)	C. Ariyankuppam	C. Ariyankuppam
(Periavirampattinam)	A. 105. 46 Ha.	A. 65.51 Ha.
	P. 2,688 (1971)	P. 346 (1971)

This is an easily accessible coastal village lying south of Pondicherry at a distance of about 8.25 km.⁷⁶ Chinna Virampattinam is situated about one km. south of Virampattinam, otherwise called Periya Virampattinam. It has been suggested that Virampattinam must have been known in short as 'Veerai' which expression occurs in stanza 106 of *Agananooru*. It has also been suggested that Veerai Velianar, the author of poem number 320 in *Purananooru* and Veerai Velian Thithanar, author of poem number 188 in *Agananooru* must have hailed from this Veerai during the Sangam period.⁷⁷

The famous eighteenth century Sengazhuneeramman temple dedicated to Mariamman is located in this village. The *brahmotsavam* and Muthupallaku festival celebrated for 11 days during the months of July-August attracts thousands of devotees. A fair is held at the time when brisk trade is carried on in articles of worship, fruits, vegetables, toys, earthen vessels, sweetmeat, dry fish, etc.

The Pattinavars form the majority of the village population who find their calling in sea-fishing. As there are neither tanks nor wells to irrigate the land and as agriculturists have to depend entirely on rains for their cultivation, only a few are engaged in agriculture and they raise only dry crops such as *cumbu*, *thinai* and vegetables. The rest of the working force is employed in trade and commerce, and other services.