CHAPTER II

French Settlements in India on the eve of the Indian Independence - Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, Yanam and Chandernagore

The Europeans right from the dawn of the sixteenth century established their settlements on the coastal regions of India. The first were the Portuguese who concentrated their attention on the western coast of India and took great interest in spices. Once high profit of the trade with India was brought to the notice of the Europeans in general, the English, the Dutch, the Danes and the French tried their level best to have a foothold on the coastal regions of India to enhance capital through trade. The English through the English East India Company acquired territorial possessions in India and gradually attempted for building of an empire. The French arrived on 10th March, 1667 and found Madagascar in ruins. They realized that prospects were bleak in Madagascar and so proceeded to Surat where they established in 1668 their warehouse on the Indian continent. Caron, the Director General of the French trading company, abandoned for Surat where business had better prospects. The king of Golconda authorized the French to establish a trading depot at Masulipatnam and permitted them to trade with his kingdom without export or import duties. In 1670 the French obtained from the King of Cannanore the warehouses of Tellicherry and Rajapoor on the Malabar Coast. The union territory of Pondicherry consists of four French settlements of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. In the 17th century, the French came to India and established

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their depot at Masulipatnam on 4th February 1670. In 1673, they landed in Pondicherry and established a settlement. The French arrived first in 1674 and stayed on to rule the larger period till 1954.

Capture of Santhome

Francois Martin seized the Fort at Valdavoor on September 1676 at the instance of Sher Khan Lodi who acted on behalf of the King of Bijapur. Before this received, the French fleet under the command of Admiral De la Haye, anchored off Triconamalle and with the permission of king of Kandy prepared to construct a fort. Francois Martin left Santhome and came to Pondicherry with sixty men in the same year. On 9th August, 1676, the chief of the ‘Loges’ at Balassore obtained from the viceroy of Bengal, permission to set up warehouses at Hoogly.33

Dacca, Casembazar and Balasore the ‘Loges’ at Hoogly was later transferred to Chandernagore in 1690. In 1703, Martin obtained from Nawab Davood Khan, representative of Aurangazeb a small village of Kalapet in order to obtain timber from the forests surrounding it for construction of houses. In 1706, the same Nawab ceded the village group Oulgaret, whose annual revenue amounted to nearly one thousand pagodas as well as the village groups of Murungapakkam, Olandai, Pakkamudayanpet and Karuvadikuppam. Martin died at 30th December 1706. The French Governor Francis Joseph Dupleix entered in the race. He did not get full support from the home country and as a result, his ambition to build a French Empire was completely destroyed and his forces were defeated at the battle of Plassey. Henceforth, the French had to retire to the five

33 C.A. Bayly, The Local Roots Of Indian Politics, Oxford, 1975, p. 7
settlements like Chandernagore, Yanam, Pondicherry and Karaikal on the East coast on India and Mahe on the Western coast.

Mahe

Mollandin, chief of the cabinet Loge, asked in 1721, Boyanor, Prince Badagore and his brother if they still had the intention like their uncle to give a piece of land to the French on the banks of the river of Mahe to establish a loge there. A treaty was signed on April 1721 for the cession of the spot at the mouth of the river with the right to maintain a garrison. The French withdrew to Calicut, but Marquis of pardaillan recovered it with a fleet of six ships on 23rd December 1725. In 1726, British persuaded Boyanor to push the French out of Mahe. On November 1726 Mollandin and Boyanor signed a Peace Treaty. On 20th March 1728, the French at Mahe and the British at Tellicherry signed a Treaty for the common good of the companies of France and England.

Yanam

The settlement of Yanam was founded in 1731.

To the north west of Pondicherry town, a girdle of low hills (an elevated region, 30 metres high) extends in Eastern and North Eastern and Western and North Western direction. This high ground suddenly emerges from the low lying alluvial plain and is known as Les Montagnes Rouges or the Red Hills of Pondicherry or Korimedu, probably after the memorials put up during the first siege of Pondicherry (1760). The freedom struggle in Pondicherry is

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34 op.cit.p.37
otherwise known as Merger movements or Decolonisation in this typical region. This very name came into being due to the efforts of the people of Pondicherry with the Indian Union. There are many views prevailing amongst the scholars who are specialized in French India, about the role of people for the freedom struggle of this region. The freedom struggle was highlighted, there were yet many other political parties and people from various walks of life contributed their might and efforts for liberating Pondicherry from the French rule and merging the territories of Pondicherry state with the independent India. With this began the rise of the French regime in the sub-continent of India, which after a series of servings of fortune culminated in the treaty of Paris dated 30th May 1814. The English gradually established an Empire and the Crown took over the possessions of the English East India Company in 1858. But the residents of British India in due course of time organized popular revolts against British hegemony. The present work is to highlight the role played by Nehru in the liberation of the French settlements and merging them with the Indian Union. The five French settlements were divided into eight communes and the figures were based on the commune. This division took place under the decree of the 12th March 1880. Various historians in general have studied the nature of the movement for freedom in India and different strands of thoughts have been established. We can examine some of these conceptual frameworks to place the nature of the movement for freedom in the French settlements and examine their relevance. Jawaharlal Nehru played an important role in the merger movement. He did not want any foreign possession to be in India. He did not want to go away from the principle of Non-Violence. He did not want to see the world through English window or through French window, but
permitted people to opt for either French or Indian citizenship. But Indian Government will administer the territory. The National movement for freedom from the French was something indigenous originating the French settlement themselves and the residents. French nationals born in the territory of the Establishments and domiciled in the territory of the Indian union of the date of the entry into force of the treaty of cession shall become nationals and citizens of the Indian union. French India National Congress, Students congress, Mahajana Sabha, National Democratic Front and the Communist party were the political parties during the merger movement of the French settlements.

Cession of Pondicherry

Sher Khan Lodi on behalf of the king of Bijapur made an offer to the French, of a place for an establishment on the soil of his Government. It was a hamlet of fisherman known by the name of Puduchery, which Francois Martin, within a span of 33 years converted into a flourishing town of Pondicherry.36

Pondicherry situated between 11°46' and 12°3' north latitude and between 79°36' and 70°53' east longitude. The total area of Pondicherry including its eleven enclaves, is 290 Sq. kms. It is a flat land with an average elevation of about 15 metres above sea level. The deltaic channels of the rivers Gingee, Ponnaiyar and other streams form the two main drainage basins. There are several lagoons, lakes and tanks interspersed. This is the most prominent feature of the landscape. The river Gingee crosses the region diagonally from North

36 The French Settlements in India, Texts of Important Notes Exchanged between the Governments of India & France (From 22nd March to 9th April 1954), p. 35
West to South East. The Ponnaiyar forms the southern border. The alluvial delta of the Ponnaiyar is almost on level ground just a few metres above sea level. To the north west of these hills are fossiliferous limestone formations of the Cretacian age. To the south is the alluvial tract of Varahanadi (Gingee) and to the north the recent alluvium. Pondicherry has a hot, tropical, maritime climate, with huge humidity and moderate rainfall. The average rainfall is 127 cms of which 50 percent is recorded in October and November while 25 percent is recorded during the South West monsoon. The Pondicherry region consists of four geographical zones. The coastal zones comprises both new and old dunes, including saline areas of clayey texture. The saline zone is made up of the two plateaus called the Pondicherry Plateau and the Tiruvakkarai plateau, composed of a geological formation called the Cuddalore sandstone. The upper layers are made up of red transported ferrallitic soil. Marshy depressions are also frequently encountered in the plains of Valudavur. The flat alluvial zone occupies the rest of the region. The union of Pondicherry consists of four small pockets isolated from one another and has a total area of 180.9 sq. miles. It is divided into 16 communes - 8 in Pondicherry, 6 in Karaikal, one in Mahe and one in Yanam. Pondicherry town is the capital. When the census enumeration of 1961 took place, Pondicherry was not regarded a part of India. It was de facto administrated by the External Affairs Ministry of the Government of India, under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act. Even until 1961 it was administered by the External Affair Ministry. Pondicherry is bounded by the Bay of Bengal on the east and on the other three sides by previous South Arcot District of Madras State presently Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu. It does not

37 K.S. Singh, op. cit, p. 3
form a continuous area and is interspersed with the previous South Arcot District presently Villupuram District.

The eight communes in Pondicherry are Pondicherry, Mudaliarpet, Ariyankuppam, Ozhukarai, Villianur, Bahour, Nettapakkam, and Mannadipet.38

Area and Population:

According to the Census of India, 1961, Pondicherry has an area of (293.70 Sq. Kilometres) 113.40 Sq. miles, and Population 258,561.

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<tr>
<th>Commune</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Pondicherry Commune</td>
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<td>2. Ariyankuppam Commune</td>
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<td>3. Mudaliarpet Commune</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>27,560</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Ozhukarai Commune</td>
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<td>5. Mannadipet Commune</td>
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<td>6. Villianur Commune</td>
<td>25.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Bahour Commune</td>
<td>21.30</td>
<td>23,890</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Nettapakkam Commune</td>
<td>11.70</td>
<td>17,518</td>
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Villages

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, about the entire rural complex of Mudaliarpettai commune covering 18 villages except Kuppam and Papanchavadi 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 Mudaliarpettai emerged only after the 1971 census. During the same period all the 20 villages of Pondicherry communes had developed urban characteristics to merge with Pondicherry town. Corresponding the number of census villages in the territory declined from 388 to 334. In another important development, the whole of Mudaliarpettai Commune was merged with Pondicherry Commune for purposes of Municipal administration.

Abhishekapakkam

This village is under Ariyankuppam Commune and it is situated at a distance of 11.50 km south of Pondicherry. The name Abhishekapakkam seems to be the corruption of Abhishekapakkam.39

Adingapet

This village is under Bahour commune and it is also known as Adangapattu which falls within the jurisdiction of the Seliyamedu revenue village and is situated at a distance of 17.50 kms from Pondicherry. More than 85 percent of the villagers belong to the scheduled castes.

39 Francis Cyril Antony, Gazetteer of India, Union Territory of Pondicherry, Vol. II, Administration of the union Territory of Pondicherry, p. 1521
Aranganur

This is a village under Bahour Commune situated at a distance of 17.50 kms from Pondicherry with jurisdiction extending over Nirmayapet village. It is one of the border villages, the then population of which had shown abnormal growth between 1961 and 1971.

Ariyankuppam

This village is under Ariyankuppam Commune. It is situated about six kms south of Pondicherry town. It is the headquarters of Ariyankuppam Commune Panchayat bearing the same name. It has been designated as a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Kakkayantoppu and Periya Virampattinam. The name Ariyankuppam might be the corruption of Ariyankuppam, probably named after Buddha was also known as Aruhan.

Ariyur

This village is under Villianur Commune also known as Aruyur, is situated at a distance of 17 kms west of Pondicherry on the Pondicherry - Villupuram road. Chinnababusamudram railway station (Previous South Arcot and present in Villupuram District) is about 1.61 kms from Ariyur.

Arumpattapuram

This village is under Ozhukarai Commune and is situated at a distance of 7 kms 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 Odiambattu in Villianur Commune Panchayat. The name of the village is derived from the word “Arumbatai” which
means a supplier of victuals (fournisseur). Anandarangapillai refers to one Arumbatai Azhappa Pillai in his diary. 40

Bahour

This village is situated at a distance of 20.50 km south west of Pondicherry (Via. Kirummambakkam) is the headquarters of Bahour Commune Panchayat. It is also designated as a revenue village.

Dharmapuri

This village comes under the Ozhukarai Commune. This is situated at a distance of 6.5 kms from Pondicherry, is famous as a cattle market but does not show other signs of brisk social and economic activities. 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

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. An inscription in Tirubhuvanai refers to the existence of three temples in the village dedicated to Emalathu Mahedevae, Adhitheswaramudayar and Emalathu Dungaiyar Omkara Sundari.

Eripakkam

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. It lies at a distance of 25.25 kms. from Pondicherry (via. Kilur) and about 4 kms. from Pallineliyanur railway station of previous South Arcot and

40 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1526
present Villupuram District. It has been designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction extending over Andasikuppam and Mattamedu.

**Gudapakkam**

This village lies at a distance of 13.50 kms from Pondicherry (Via Villianur) amidst an expanse of lush greenery fed by the waters of the nearly Usteri. Since the days of Anandarangapillai the name of the village has not undergone any change. The Villianur railway station is at a distance of only about 5 kms from Gudapakkam. It is designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction over Konerikuppam. This village is under Villianur Commune.

**Irulansandi**

This village is under Bahour Commune. This is a fast growing revenue village which lies at a distance of 23 kms from Pondicherry and about 8 kms from Tiruppapuliyur railways station (in Villupuram District). The most significant feature of this village is that its populations which was only 425 in 1961 had increased more within a period of ten years. Situated on the eastern limits of Bahour enclave, it is likely that people from the surrounding villages of Tamil Nadu area had 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, sugarcane, groundnut and ragi.

**Kadirkamam**

This village is under Ozhukarai Commune. Kadirkamam lies 4.50 kms west of Pondicherry. It forms part of the Thattanchavadi 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 migrated from Kanchipuram about 300 years ago probably during the period of Francois Martin.

Kakkallippattu

This village is under the Mannadipattu Commune. This village is located north west of Pondicherry at a distance of 22.50 kms. 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). Kakkalippattu may probably be the corruption of Kaikolarpattu or Kaikolar patru.

Kalapet (Periya Kalapet) & (Chinna Kalapet)

Both are under Ozhukarai Commune. 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 other as Chinna Kalapet. Both villages are situated north of Pondicherry on the coromandal coast at a distance of 11.75 kms. and 10.50 kms. respectively on the Pondicherry Marakanam road. While, Periya Kalapet is a revenue village with jurisdiction over Kanakachettikulam, Chinna Kalapet forms part of the Pillaichavadi revenue village. 41

41 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit,p.1531
Kalithiralkuppam

This village is under Mannadipattu commune. The village which lies at a distance of 25 kms. west of Pondicherry (Via Villianur) is also known as Kalithirthalkuppam. It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to the neighbouring Andipalaiyam, Kuchi Palayam and Silkaripalayam.

Kalmantapam

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. It is at a distance of 2.25 kms. from Netapakkam and forms part of Pando Cholanallur revenue village. It must have derived its name from the stone mandapam located there. The walls of the mandapam raised on carved octagonal pillars, carry the images of old derides, the avatars, maidens waving the samaras, or in dancing postures, etc. all carved in relief. The area has also been identified as a pre historical archaeological site. This is one of the few potential market places in the region.

Kanimlyakoll (Kannikovil)

This village is under Bahour commune, situated at a distance of 17.50 kms. from Pondicherry and forms part of the Manapattu revenue village. It must have derived its name from the temple built in honour of Patchai Vazhiamman who is otherwise known as Kanni. With the passage of time, the village itself came to be called after the village temple. A ten days 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.
Karilamputtur

This is under Bahour Commune, situated at a distance of 32 kms. from Pondicherry (Via. Bangaravaykal). 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 Karaiyamputtur. The village is otherwise well known for its 10 day utsavam celebrated in Sri Dropathiammman temple. The festival is accompanied by a fair. There is also an Inspection Bungalow(P.W.D) in the village.

Karikalampakkam

This village is located at a distance of 15.25 kms. south west of Pondicherry (Via Abhisehekappakkam). It can also be reached by road via Villianur. An XI Century inscription is Thirubuvanai refers to a village by the name Kazhukulampakkam. It is likely that Karikalampakkam is the corruption of Kazhukulampakkam. The reigning deity of the village temple was called Kazhukulampakkam Mahadevar. Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Karukalampakkam.\textsuperscript{42} It is designated as a revenue village.

Kariyamanikkam (Karimaniickam)

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. This village is situated at a distance of 27.50 kms. from Pondicherry and 3.20 kms. from Pallineliyanur railway station (South Arcot). Villupuram is the nearest town from Kariyamanikkam. The populations of which had declined as a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to

\textsuperscript{42} Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit., p.1537
Thavalakuppam, Kariyamanikam, Kuchichipalayam, Moalppakkam and Surmangalam.

**Katterikuppam (Kattery-Kuppam)**

Katteri is under Mannadipattu village. Kuppam though for purposes of revenue administration etc. Katteri and Kuppam are treated as two villages, both are under the common name of Katterikuppam. It is located at a distance of 21.50 kms. from Pondicherry via Valudavur and 20.50 kms. if approached via Suttukanni. It is about 9.70 kms. 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**

This village is under Bahour commune. It is situated at a distance of 15.50 kms. from Pondicherry. It is designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to be changed into Aladimedu and Pannittitu. According to certain inscription Kirumambakkam was known as Kirumamapathi. Anandarangapillai however refers to the place as Kirumamapakkam in the XVIII century. Cuddalore is the nearest town which lies at a distance of 11 kms and Bahour at a distance of 4 kms. It appears that in the XVIII century the Muslim had an entrenchment at “Grimamabakkam”. In 1712 the place came under a sudden attack by the English, a description of which is left by caption Roach.
Kilur (Kizhur)

This village is under Villianur commune. Though a small village about 21 kms. from Pondicherry (Via Mangalam) it rose to prominence in 1954 when elected representatives of the former French establishments met here on 18th 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 16th August 1972 to commemorate the historic event. It is a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Sivartantangam.

Korkkadu (Korkadu)

This village lies at a distance of 15 kms. from Pondicherry (Via. Villianur). 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 ley-gone days. In fact an XI century inscription at Thiruvakkarai refers to a village by name Kakathur. It is also likely that this name had changed into Korkadu.

Korkumedu

This village is under Ariyankuppam. Although this is a small village situated at a distance of 11.50 kms. 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 Thavalakuppam revenue village.

Krishnavananam

This village is under Bahour Commune. This lies at a distance of 13.50 kms. from Pondicherry and forms part of the Uchchimedu

43 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1539
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 thousands of people from all surrounding villages.

Kudiyiruppupalayam

This village is under Bahour commune, situated at a distance of 18 kms. from Pondicherry and forms part of Seliyamedu revenue village. The one day theerthavari festival held in Sri Muthalamman temple is a major attraction.

Kumarapalayam

This village which forms part of Tettambakkam revenue village, lies at a distance of 20 kms. from Pondicherry. Although a small village in terms of populations, 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, attracts 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 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, attracts many thousands of people from all surrounding villages.

44 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.,p.1541
Kunicchampattu (Kunitchampet)

This village is under Mannadipet commune, situated at a distance of 26 kms. from Pondicherry, this is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Kondareddipalayam. 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 koil during March April is marked by a fair.

Kuruvinattam (Kuruvinatham)

This village is under Bahour commune, situated at a distance of 27.75 kms. from Pondicherry. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Soriyankuppam. This village is understood to have been known as Kurivimedu in the olden days.

Madagedipattu (Madagadipet)

This village is under Madagadipattu commune. This village, identified as a pre-historic and archaeological site, is situated at a distance of 24 kms. from Pondicherry. It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Madagadipattupalayam, Nallur and Nallur Kuchichi-palayam. Kundankuzhi appears to be the earliest name of Madagadipattu 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.

45 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1543
Madukkarai

This village is under the Nettapakkam commune and is situated at a distance of 28.50 kms. from Pondicherry. It appears to have acquired this name because, sometimes 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. The village is famous for its Sri Manakkaleswaran temple, although the festivals there do not attract much crowd.

Manaveli (Manavely)

This village is under Ariyankuppam commune. Many villages in Pondicherry region are known by the name Manaveli, viz. one in Ariyankuppam commune Panchayat, two others near Kodattur and Kalitirthalkuppam in Manadipattu commune Panchayat and yet another near Odiambattu in Villianur Commune Panchayat. The village dealt with here is the one in Ariyankuppam Commune Panchayat. This village lies at a distance of 7.80 kms. (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.

Mangalam

This village is under the Villianur Commune, situated at a distance of about 13.50 kms. from Pondicherry and 15.60 kms from Villianur railway station. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Vadamangalam, which as its name suggests, lies on the north. The village of Kil Sattamangalam and Mel Sattamangalam are not far away.

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46 Francis Cyril Antony, op. cit., p. 1545
form mangalam. An inscription in the gangai varaga eswaran temple in Tirukkanji ascribed to the period of Kulothunga-I refers to one Cholakonar who is described as Puddhamangala Mudayar.

Mannadipattu

This village is under the Mannadipattu commune, situated at a distance of 25 kms. 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 Drowpathaiamman temple at Mannadipattu.

Mudaliyarpettai (Mudaliarpet)

This village is under the Mudaliarpet commune as per the census of 1971 and the best part 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 Kalapet, Karamanikuppam, Kirapalayam, Kommapakkam, Kusapalaiyam Murungapakkam, Nainarmandapam, Nellithoppu, Orleanpet, Ottampalayam, Pillaiithottam, Pudupalaiyampet, Sakkilipalayam, Savannapet, Subrayapillai Chatiram, Thengaitittu and Veeraraghambalithottam. Mudaliyarpettai, situated at a distance of three kms. 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
This is situated very close to the estuary of the now blocked Pondicherry river. It now lies north of Thengaiathittu and covers the two localities of Vamba Keerapalayam. While the former lies within the limits of Pondicherry urban area, the latter falls under the Mudaliarpettai commune. It has been suggested that the word "Olandai" is the corruption of "Hollandai" 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 Tiruvandarkoil 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 Kirapalayam.

Thengathittu

This place is about 4.80 kms. 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.

Kusappalaiyam

It lies at a distance of 2 kms. west of Pondicherry flanked by Nellithopu on the South and Pudusaram on the North. The village is 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.

Muttirapalaiyam (Muthirapalayam)

Muttirapalaiyam which forms part of the Tattanchavadi revenue village lies 5.50 kms. 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. Anandarangapperilai also refers to the place as Muthirapalayam.

Nallambal

This village lies at a distance of 12.30 kms. 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.

Nedungadu

Situated at a distance of 10.30 kms. 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 image of Pillayar, Manickavasagar, Thirugnanasambandar, Kandan, Uma, Jnanasakti (a pair), Sivakamasundari, dancing Siva (Anandatandavam) besides a trident, a conche, a pair of sandals, a copper tripod and a plate.

Nettappakkam

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48 Diary (Tamil), Vol. v, p. 436
Situated at a distance of about 29.50 kms. south-east of Pondicherry, it serves as the headquarters of Nettappakkam Commune Panchayat. Villupuram is the nearest town from Nettappakkam. 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 Netapakkam. 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 Tirubhuvani.49

Niravi

The village, situated at a distance of 5.30 kms. 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 Thiruvathiral (December-January) and Thirukkarthikal festivals (November-December) are celebrated in this temple. Several hundred people take part in the Thiruvathiral 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 Tirumalarayapattnam. It

49 Pulavar S. Kuppussamy, op. cit, p. 167
was the pride of this poet which was subdued by poet Kalamegham. The village assured some importance after the Oil and Natural Gas Commission carried out test drills to locate possible deposits of petroleum at Neravi.

Odiyambattu
This is a revenue village situated at a distance of 8.50 kms. from Pondicherry with jurisdiction extending to Arumattapuram, Karaiyamputtur, Manaveli, Periapet, Tattanchavadi and Valluwanpet. The village is referred to as Udayampattu in Villaipuram (Stanza 125) although Anandarangapillai refers to it as Odiampattu. It is more likely that the village may have derived its name from Odiam tree which is very common at Odiyambattu. 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 Brahmothsayam during February-March is marked by great festivity. A fair is also held at the place. An estimated crowd of 60,000 attend the celebrations.

Oduturai
This is one of the twin villages in Karaikal regions, 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 at Oduturai. Lands in the area are irrigated by the Oduthurayan channel. The annual festival celebrated in Sri Kaliomman temple and the naming festival of Child Jesus in St. Antony’s Church are of some importance.

Ulavarkarai (Ozhukarai) (Oulgaret)

50 Diary (Tamil), Vol. III, p. 231
Situated at a distance of 6.50 kms. west of Pondicherry, Ulavarkarai is the headquarters of the Commune Panchayat bearing the same name. Presently it is upgraded as Oulgaret Municipality. It is nowadays wrongly referred to as Ulavarkarai. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Arumattapuram, Dharmapuri, Mulakkulam, Muttupillaipalaiyam and Pichchiviranpet.

**Padudarkollai**

Forming part of the T.R. Pattinam Commune, it is a very small village situated at a distance of 8.50 kms. 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**

This village is situated at a distance of 26.50 kms. south west of Pondicherry. According to inscriptions in the Malligarjuneswarar temple here, the village must have been 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 Pandithacholanllur, after Rajaraja II who was otherwise known as Rajapandithan, erudite as he was both in Tamil and Sanskrit.\(^1\) The name Pandithacholanallur may have changed into Pandasozhanur.

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\(^1\) Pulavar S. Kuppusamy, op. cit, pp. 110–111.
Pillaiyarkuppam

This village is situated at a distance of 17.00 kms. from Pondicherry on the bank of Sankaraparani river. This is not to be confused with the Pillaiyarkuppam in Bahour Commune Panchayat although both the villages have been identified as pre-historic archaeological site. The Pillaiyarkuppam in Villianur Commune is well known for its temples and festivals. The most famous 18 day annual festival held during April-May is Sri Koothandavar temple. Devotees throng in thousands to witness the celebrations to which the festival fair adds colour and gaiety. Situated at a distance of 17.25 kms. (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.

Ponbetti

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 Buddhhamitran, the author of Veerachozhiam is a native of this village. 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.

There were also other villages like Akalanganni (Agalankannu), Ambagarttur (Ambagarthur), Sermavilangai, Settur, (Agarasethur) (Pandarava Sethur), Sorakkudi (Sorakudy), Tennagudi, Tirunallar under Tirunallar commune. Karaikal under Karaikal commune, Pondicherry under Pondicherry commune, Aranganur, Soriankuppam
and Seliamedu under Bahour commune, Suramangalam under Nettappakkam commune, Suttukanni, Sombattu, Tirukkanur, Tiruvandarkoil, Tirubhuvanai, Sellipattu under Mannadipattu commune, Talatteruvu under Karaikal commune, Tavalakuppam and Thimmanaiakkenapalayam under Ariankuppam commune, Tirukkanji, Tondaimanattam, Tutipattu, Uruvaiyar, Usteri, Sedarappatu, Ramanathapuram, Poraiyur and Villianur under Villianur commune, Tiruvettakudi and Varachakudi under Kottuchcheri commune, Vanjiyar (Kil Vanjiyur and Mel Vanjiyur) and Tirumalarayanpattinam under T.R. Pattinam commune, Satamangalam (Mel Saattamangalam and Kil Sattamangalam) under Villianur commune Reddiarpalayam under Ozhukarai commune and Puttukudi under Nedungadu commune.

Beginning of Political Awakening

Subramania Bharati (1882-1921), unquestionably the greatest among modern Tamil poets, happened to be the first Indian nationalist to set foot on and operate for full ten years from the soil of Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo too arrived a year and a half later, for the same reason as Bharati to escape from the clutches of the British police. Sri Aurobindo’s arrival marked a total break with his past. He, in fact, declared in so many words that Lord Krishna had taken over the burden of Indian liberation and that he was withdrawing from the struggle in order to immerse in yogasadana. But the life of Bharati and his friends in French Pondicherry remained devoted to the cause of India’s freedom. 1908 was a year of repression for the followers of Tilak.

V.O.Chidambaram Pillai and then Subramania Siva were arrested in Tamil Nadu, and four more Tamil ‘radicals’, associated
with Bharati-Krishna swami Sarma, Hari Sarvothama Rao, Narayana Rao, and then Surendranath Arya were also arrested one after another in Madras on charges of sedition, for writing articles and making speeches in support of India’s freedom. Bipan Chandra Pal left for Europe on 20th August 1908 to get away from India. In the same month, the Madras Government ordered prosecution of Inthiya, the journal of Bharati, its office was raided by police on 20th August 1908; and its nominal editor and publisher M.Srinivasa Iyengar. The same day the great Nationalist Leader and journalist, G.Subramania Iyer of Swadesamitran, was arrested at Courtallam. It was feared that Bharati’s arrest was imminent. The poet was urged by friends and that this voluntary exile would be brief, but it turned out to be of ten years duration. Bharati arrived at Pondicherry carrying a letter of introduction from a friend to one Chitti Kuppusamy Iyengar of Perumal Koil Street, a merchant admirers to seek shelter in French Pondicherry and continue his activities in the service of the nation. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai too sent word to Bharati from Coimbatore prison advising him to go. An employee of the police department, an admirer of Bharati, whose name was kept secret by the poet also passed on information about the move for his arrest. Bharati made up his mind, took his wife to Kadayam in Tirunelveli in the last week of August, left her there, returned to Madras to elude the police at Madras Egmore, arrived at Pondicherry the next morning, in the first week of September 1908. The Madras police learnt the news only after the bird had flown. Though he was only 26, Bharati showed the way to others like Sri Aurobindo, all his seniors in age, to escape by fleeing to Pondicherry. He hoped of modest means. He went to the latter’s house early in the morning and was well received, after the fatigue of
the intensely anxious night journey. The British at once alerted the French police about the arrival of the dangerous Swadeshi, Bharati, in their town, and the police summoned Kuppusamy Iyengar and issued a warning against harbouring the ‘rebel’. Bharathi informed the French administration in the very first issue of Intihiya on 10\textsuperscript{th} October, 1908, that peace, order and progress constituted the motto of his paper, and that it would not meddle in affairs of Pondicherry. He scrupulously kept aloof from the filthy politics of the town dominated by the factors under Nadu Shanmuga Mudali, Henri Gaebel their ‘peaceful’ and ‘open’ campaign for Swarajya from foreign soil. V.V.S.Iyer (Varaganeri Venkatesa Subramanana Iyer), contributed several articles to Intihiya in Pondicherry. His first article in the series was published in the issue of March 20\textsuperscript{th}, 1909, with an introduction by Bharati in which he grieved over the Tamils ignorance of world history and politics. Subramania Bharati left Pondicherry and was eager to return to the Tamil province, Bharati went on appealing to the Madras Governor, and at last, to Ramsay Mac Donald, the leader of the British Labour Party in Parliament, explaining his activities and complaining against the repression of the British India Police. This letter got published in the Hindu under the title, Police Rule in India, and the matter was raised by the congress member P.V.Narasimha Iyer in the Madras legislature. To this, the Governor made the reply that Bharati was a fugitive from law and if he desired an enquiry to establish his position and charged the Government which spread falsehood. The First World War broke out. The British slackened their repression a little, coinciding with release of Tilak and V.O.Chidambaram. Indian leaders too sympathized with Britain and France in the war, and there was an expectation of some constitutional offer for the good of India.
Bharati was anxious to return to Tamil Nadu. All the more so, as he was feeling suffocated, immobilized and inactive in the narrow 'prison' of French Pondicherry; he missed the wide open world of Tamil Nadu with its newspapers and journals which could carry his articles and poem, thereby bringing him some money to ease his poverty. He would have left Pondicherry earlier and he received a favourable reply from the Governor or the Police Commissioner. But some months after the commencement of the World War, Bijoy Kant, a follower of Sri Aurobindo intending to return to Bengal was kept imprisoned until the end of the War. His arrest forewarned Bharati that he too would meet the same fate if he left Pondicherry.

At the end of the War, Britain and France signed an Agreement in April 1918, under which France agreed to curb the activities of Indian nationalists living in her Indian pockets and to extradite them if demanded. Bharati had earlier that year written to the Governor of Madras, in response to which a top C.I.D officer visited Pondicherry to hold consultation with him. The British then declared a general amnesty to the nationalists. Feeling encouraged by these, Bharati and his family left Pondicherry on 20th November 1918 by road to Koodalur. He was then taken into custody even without a warrant. After a legal battle fought and articles, and also planted the seeds of Indian nationalism in its soil. Diplomacy was taken up.

Through continuous resistance by non-violent means the national leaders succeeded in obtaining independence from the English by 1947. This gave a fillip to the residents of the French settlements and finally through the treaty of de jure transfer the French left their possessions in India once and for all. Yet, their erstwhile settlements in
India continue to foster French culture and more than 8000 French people with French citizenship continue to live in these areas. The treaty of cession was delayed because of the problem in France. De-facto on the basis of agreement between two Governments came into effect and the de-jure transfer became legitimized. Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam on the basis of agreement took place later. After the fall, the Government did not take the charge. On November 1st 1948 they took charge and met at Pondicherry. Treaty of cession was detailed. Control of French administration in June 1949 had referendum. In Chandernagore they could not co-operate the terms and conditions. It was purely on the basis of talks, mutually agreed arrangements that French would leave India in 1954 and it was agreed by the French Parliament. The de-facto transfer in 1954 had to be solved and rectified by the Parliament in the de-jure transfer 1962.\footnote{Tara Chand, History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol’s. 1-4, New Delhi, 1961, p. 72}