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A Description of Thirty Towns in Yucatan, Mexico

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A DESCRIPTION OF THIRTY TOWNS IN YUCATAN, MEXICO

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At the present time, there are no written descriptions of Yucatan towns with the exception of a few in specific studies by scientists. Chan Kom, for instance, is described in a large sociological study (Redfield and Villa, 1934); Ebtun (Roys, 1939) and Chumayel (Roys, 1933) are mentioned in connection with the historical documents which were found there; the past and present of Piste is described in a book by the author (Steggerda, 1941); Merida is described in tourist literature; and a few Yucatan towns are mentioned in a Spanish geography (Martinez, 1937). Other than these, very little has been written about Yucatan towns. Information for travelers concerning the relative size of the interesting towns in Yucatan, their industries, cenotes¹ (see pl. 26, *a*), ruins (see pl. 26, *e*), and the percentages of Indians or mestizos among the population is not available as yet. The author describes here briefly 30 towns chosen from a list of approximately 100 which he visited during the course of a 10-year investigation.

Towns in Yucatan are similar in the respect that they center around a square plaza on which one generally finds a large colonial church (see typical interiors, pl. 27, *a* and *b*, and exteriors pl. 27, *c-f*). Another of the main buildings on this plaza is called a cuartel, which is the town meeting house. The church and the cuartel are built of stone. The other houses surrounding the plaza are also usually of stone, plastered over with mortar and often decorated with painted designs. These plastered homes are occupied by Spaniards, mestizos, and influential Indians. The common folk live farther from the plaza and generally in thatch-covered bush houses (see pl. 28, *a* and *b*). The streets are bounded with stone walls, and each yard is littered with limestone rocks (see pl. 26, *c* and *f*). The average family keeps

¹ In Yucatan most of the drinking water is obtained from natural water holes called cenotes.

chickens, one or more dogs, a few cows, and perhaps a horse. Most towns are built around one or more natural water holes, which are called cenotes.

The towns described here are arranged in alphabetical order and can be located on the map shown on plate 25.

AKIL

Akil is a mestizo town located along the railroad between Merida and Peto. Akil is situated at the foot of a range of hills called in Maya the "Puc." In this region there is an abundance of soil, and, because of this, fruits and vegetables grow luxuriantly. There is a large church in the village under the jurisdiction of Oxkutzcab, and the patron saint of Akil is St. Agnes. The school in the town is taught by two teachers. Several Akil families make pottery utensils, which they invariably bake on Fridays, while others occupy themselves by weaving hats from "huano" leaves. The Indian town of Pencuyut, located about 7 kilometers to the northeast, uses Akil as its railroad center.

CAUCEL

This village is located 14 kilometers northwest of Merida. It is estimated to have a population of 400 working men or approximately 2,000 inhabitants. There are no cenotes in the village, and the nearest one, Chen Ha, is located about 3.5 kilometers from Causal. In front of the large Spanish church there is a large grass-covered plaza with 2 cypress trees which, in 1938, were more than 40 feet high. The school here has about 50 children and 2 teachers. Previous to 1939 only a cart trail led to the village, but at that time a new road between Causal and Merida was opened to automobile traffic. There is also a narrow-gage track on which a gasoline car, formerly a streetcar in Merida, operates between Merida and Causal.

The town has no particular industry other than cattle raising, which seems to be the chief source of income. One man in Causal has as many as 350 cattle, and there are others who have over 100 head. Chickens, turkeys, and vegetables are raised in large numbers for the Merida market. Most of the inhabitants have numerous fruit trees, which provide a succession of fruits throughout the year. The extra produce of these trees is sold in Merida. In the church there were 3 Maya drums (tunkuls), which were used formerly by the Maya.

CHAN KOM

Chan Kom is an Indian town of approximately 200 people and is located about 12 kilometers south and a little east of Chichen Itza. It was established by people from Ebtun who arrived between 1880 and 1900. In 1910 the first school was established, and by 1926 the

community was an active and enterprising pueblo. The men most active in establishing the modern town of Chan Kom are Epifanio Ceme, Eustaquio Ceme, Eleuterio Pat, Ignancio Batun, Guillermo Tamay, Transito Tec, and Tibureio Caamal. They built the town around a large open cenote, and the most influential citizens built stone houses in the Spanish style, plastered smooth on the outside and decorated inside with painted ornaments. In 1938 there were at least a dozen of these stone houses, and two of them are two stories high. The town has an excellent school building and has had some remarkable school teachers, one of whom was Alfonso Villa, who has collaborated with some of the Carnegie Institution investigators.

In 1932 Chan Kom's overambitious Commissario led his men in building a straight road from Chan Kom to the Castillo of Chichen Itz. Unfortunately, owing to its impracticability, most of this road was abandoned after a few years. In 1936 the same leader secured for the town the right to become a municipio (similar to our county seat). In that year several members of the town embraced the Protestant faith, thus causing a rift in the town's harmony with the result that many of the inhabitants moved from the village.

Chan Kom is a young and rather prosperous community. Often one can count as many as 50 cattle on the plaza, not to mention horses, mules, and donkeys. Fat pigs, an exception in Yucatan, are found on the Chan Kom plaza mingling with an unusually large supply of chickens, turkeys, and ducks (see pl. 26, f).

Within the town limits there are ancient Maya ruins, and at a short distance can be found the larger ruins of Cosil, Tontzimin, and Kochila. For an excellent and detailed account of the founding and history of Chan Kom, the reader is referred to the book, "Chan Kom, A Maya Village" (Redfield and Villa, 1934).

CHAPAB

In 1935 the town of Chapab had a population of 1,865 persons. It also had an excellent schoolhouse with about 125 pupils. There are cenotes and caves in the vicinity as well as ancient Maya ruins, while approximately 15 kilometers to the northwest is a very large aguada, called Polol. This aguada, which might well be called a lake, has a circumference of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers. The Spanish church at Chapab was built in the early sixteenth century and was formerly under the jurisdiction of Mani. The patron saint of this town is St. Peter.

CHICHIMILA

Chichimila, an Indian town located about 5 kilometers south of Valladolid, has about 2,000 inhabitants, who are chiefly Maya, although the town leaders are mostly mestizos. There is a large church

facing a small plaza (see pl. 27, *e*) and on the north side of this church a small plaza of green grass can be seen. The church itself was built in 1609, and St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint. Hammock and zabucan (bag) making are the town's chief industries. The bush (trees and undergrowth) in these parts is very short, and the corn yield is often as small as 6 almudes per mecate, which is about 8 bushels to the acre. There is an experimental agricultural college for the training of school teachers in Chichimila.

CHUMAYEL

Located north of Teabo, Chumayel is of historic interest, since the early colonial book called "The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel," translated recently by Ralph Roys of the Carnegie Institution, concerns the history of this town.

Its large Spanish church, located on the town's plaza, is not oriented from east to west, as is customary for Catholic churches, but rather from north to south with the church facing south. Each year the town celebrates a festival to the Holy Cross which ends on May 3. The Virgin Mary is the patron saint of the village. In colonial times this church was under the jurisdiction of Teabo.

The town has a large cuartel and an excellent schoolhouse. There is a beautiful Spanish-made well on the plaza which should be noted. This community is chiefly agricultural at present, although hat and hammock making are also carried on.

CUNCUNUL

Cuncunul, which is 11 kilometers from Valladolid, has a colonial church which is now in ruins. Although it is not certain just when the church was built, it was probably around 1581. In 1938, the town began again to complete the arches for a new roof—only a chapel is in use at present. John the Baptist is the patron saint of the village. On the large, rocky plaza in front of the church is the cuartel. There is also a small formal park (garden) located on the plaza. This town is relatively large, having about 325 men, the majority of whom are mestizos.

DZAN

Dzan is a mestizo town of about 450 men, whose chief occupations are the raising of corn and tobacco. Hats are made here, but not to a commercial extent. There are no cenotes within the village, but there are more than 25 Spanish-made wells. One of these, located on the plaza, shows markings in the stone from the ancient Maya well ropes. These were worn into the rock before the pulley was introduced. There is an ancient Maya pyramid located very near the

present Spanish church which dates back to 1754. Some of the round columns from nearby Maya ruins were used in the construction of the present cuartel (town hall).

DZITAS

Dzitas, an ancient town founded by the Ah Canuls (a division of the Yucatan Maya before the Conquest), is a municipio and at present is considered a mestizo town. It is located on the railroad 140 kilometers from Merida, and before the Merida-Chichen Itza highway was built (1935) Dzitas served as railroad station for the Chichen Itza visitors. The town had, at that time, several automobiles, which carried tourists to the ruins 25 kilometers south. There is no outstanding industry in Dzitas. The town has a Presidente (mayor), two school teachers, and a Registro Civil. There is a small plaza on which is built a concrete platform similar to the one in Merida. Many of the Dzitas people are milperos (corn farmers), but some earn their living by cutting firewood for the railroad.

The Spanish church in Dzitas was built in 1619 and, at that time, belonged to the jurisdiction of Cenotillo. The patron saint is St. Ines.

ESPITA

Another large mestizo town is Espita, located about halfway between Dzitas and Tizimin on the railroad. The estimated population is between 5,000 and 6,000 persons. Consequently, the town has 3 schools, 2 of which have about 300 children in each; the third one has an enrollment of 138. The patron saint of this village is St. Joseph. There is a large church, built in 1612, which was formerly under the jurisdiction of Calotmul. In 1938, this church was in perfect repair and very neatly decorated. Moreover, there is a cuartel with a public clock; the town also has a park and a market place. Since Espita is in the center of the lumber industry, it has several sawmills; a large proportion of railroad ties are obtained from this region. In colonial times, cotton and sugarcane were raised here in large amounts. Now, oranges grow in such numbers that they are exported from the community. An owner of one orange grove in Espita said that it was not necessary to treat the orange trees for scale insects as is commonly done in the United States. Cattle and horses are also exported from this area.

Formerly, the town had two theaters—one called Progreso y Recreo (Progress and Recreation), which was founded on September 16, 1870, by Col. Meliodoro Rosado Erosa, and was destroyed by a hurricane on August 25, 1938; and a second, called Libertad (Liberty), which was established by Lazara Peniche in 1916, and was still being used.

In 1938 there were still no automobiles in Espita, but two horse-drawn coaches acted as taxis and were kept busy most of the day. On the other hand, there are four corn-grinding mills in town, two of which are run on gasoline power and two by power generated from charcoal.

EKPEDZ, CHIKINDZONOT, TIXCACALCUPUL, AND OTHER INDIAN
VILLAGES SOUTH OF CHICHEN ITZA

The following account was taken from the author's log, which describes not only these towns but also the smaller hamlets through which he traveled. The trip was made on horseback with Dr. Ralph Roys, and, from the time recorded at each landmark, the reader can estimate roughly the distance covered between the various points. (See map, pl. 25.)

March 15, 1937.—Left Chichen Itza (see pl. 26, *e*) at 8 a. m. and arrived at Chan Kom at 11:05 a. m. Leaving Chan Kom at 12:30 p. m., we arrived at the Cosil Cenote in about 20 minutes. Twelve years ago there were six families living at this place, but today there are none.

Arrived Tontzimin at 1:30 p. m. Visited the bottom of a dry cenote in which cocoa was formerly grown.

Arrived at Xanla at 3 p. m. Here we found a beautiful dry cenote. The bush houses are rectangular in this pueblo. There are a well, a cuartel, a church, and a schoolhouse with no side walls on the plaza.

Left Xanla at 3:20 p. m.; reached Xmax, which is due south of Xanla, at 4:15 p. m. At Xmax there were only three or four houses. Men wore only trunks, and the families that we saw were resting and looked very contented.

At 5:10 p. m. we arrived at Pocbilchen.² Here we saw eight houses. Women at the well were drawing their evening supply of water. The village of Chan Chichimila, which was our destination, was still 7 kilometers away.

The next village, or ranchería, was Hobonha. A few houses, a ruin, a cenote, and a large Yax che tree were all we could find. It was nearly dark when we left there at 6:10 p. m. Soon it became quite dark and we slowly wound our way over the bush-trail with a flashlight, dodging branches and hoping that the horses would not stumble.

Arrived at Chan Chichimila at 7:45 p. m. Sought out the school teacher and tried to get comfortable in the open-air schoolhouse. Built a fire on the schoolhouse floor, ate supper, swung our hammocks, and went to bed. Had covered 10 leagues (35 kilometers) from Chichen Itza. Chan Chichimila is a small town of perhaps 100 inhabitants, all of whom are milperos.

March 16, 1937.—Left Chan Chichimila at 8:30 a. m. and went due south for 7 kilometers to Chikindzonot. Passed through high forests of quite a different type from those in the Chichen Itza area. Both Chan Chichimila and Chikindzonot are relatively pure Indian towns. Chikindzonot is a much larger town, with perhaps 1,000 inhabitants. Only now is the town being repopulated, having been deserted during the War of the Castes in 1847. The church and convent we found to be large and interesting (see pl. 27, *a*). The schoolhouse is two-storied. The cenote at Chikindzonot is large and has four openings.

² These and other small hamlets are not shown on the map, plate 25.

At noon we left and traveled to Ekpedz, $6\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers to the east. This town of 40 families, chiefly Indian, has an interesting church and 2 cenotes. It was made famous during the War of the Castes, for both rebel and government troops used Ekpedz as a base when attacking the village Tihosuco. Furthermore, it was in this region that the rebellion began.

At 3:30 p. m., we went on, in a northeasterly direction, to San José, where we spent the night. We traveled 21 kilometers today. Again the schoolmaster allowed us to use his building for sleeping quarters. All the townfolk were in fine spirits. One hundred and two people, representing 18 families, live in this village. A Flor de Mayo tree was in bloom. There is only 1 store.

March 17, 1937.—Left at 7 a. m., having experienced a fine attitude among the townfolk. The road between San José and Tixcacalcupul is very long, tiresome, and actually of little interest.

At 8:07 a. m. there was a road on the right which seemed to lead to Itz Mool, which was said to be 2 kilometers distant. There were several trails turning off from the main road, but they led to milpas and not to inhabited places.

At 10:30 a. m. we arrived at the Kancab Cenote, and 1 kilometer farther we came to Dzui, where there is another cenote. Near there we saw a stone cross at which Indians still worship, and to which a well-trodden path leads (see pl. 26, *b*). Saw a moan bird (*Micrastur semitorquatus naso*) at the cenote. After an hour or more we came to a very large ancient Maya city in ruins, composed of at least six huge mounds. The name of this ruin was not determined.

At 2:15 p. m. we passed the ruins of a Spanish hacienda. On the way we saw a sight which is typical of the migrating Maya—a Maya woman carrying a chicken on her arm and a baby on her back. Then came a dog, followed by a man driving a pig; on the man's back was his pack, on top of which sat a girl of about 4 years of age. The man also carried a lantern.

At 3:10 p. m. we crossed the Sac Be (ancient Maya road). The road was very well preserved at this juncture.

At 3:25 p. m. we passed a large cenote on the left of the road, just outside of Tixcacalcupul.

Reached Tixcacalcupul by 3:50 p. m.—7 or 8 leagues from San José (see pl. 26, *d*). The town plaza of Tixcacalcupul is very much like that of Chichimila in that there is a small plaza in front of the church and another alongside of it. The Spanish church is large, and people had recently worshipped there for candles were still burning. (NOTE.—This was the period during which the Mexican churches were closed.) As I tried to open the huge wooden door, several pigs scampered out of the side door. The Apostle St. James is the patron saint of the village: and in colonial times this town was a parish by itself, though it is under the jurisdiction of Valladolid today. Took photographs of the church, inside of which was an image of a black Christ. It was originally white but had been painted recently. The baptismal fountain was large but not as beautifully carved as the one in Chikindzonot. There are 150 workmen in Tixcacalcupul—chiefly Indian.

Left at 4:45 p. m. for Ekal, a small town to the west and slightly south. Road fine for most of the distance. Passed through Xyat at 5:30 p. m. and arrived at Ekal at 6:00 p. m. This is a rancheria (small ranch) with three houses. That night I attended a Maya prayer meeting where Catholicism was obviously mixed with paganism. Catholic chants and prayers were being offered in singing fashion before six bowls of pozole (corn gruel) placed on an altar. One bowl for the departed souls hung in the doorway. After the prayers were over, there was the repetition of numerous buenas noches (good-

nights), and then the pozole was drunk. Unfortunately, there were many fleas in our house, and pigs came in during the night and ransacked our belongings.

March 18, 1937.—Gave the children candy, balloons, and other presents. Paid a peso (about 30 cents) for six eggs, a peso for feed for four horses, another peso for our tortillas, and 3 pesos for the house. Everyone was happy. Left at 7:35 a. m. While traveling in the State of Yucatan, it is possible to purchase food from the natives. This food consists chiefly of chicken eggs, beans, tortillas, and chocolate.

At 8:00 a. m., having traveled 2 kilometers, we struck a crossroad which led from Tekom, southwest to Chan Chichimila. There was another road going due south to Xnuc Kancab, which was only 6 mecates (120 meters) away.

At 8:10 a. m. we left the road for a trail to the west and at 8:45 a. m. we were 2 kilometers due south of the village of Sacal. Everything went well until 9 or 9:10 a. m., when our guide lost his orientation and our troubles began. Upon several occasions our horses rubbed trees which held wasp nests. Near confusion was caused by the fact that the horses reared in their hurry to escape the wasps. Everyone in the party had numerous wasp stings, with Martiniano, our interpreter, counting as many as 16 on his body. The bush trail was very narrow. Finally, we crossed the Sac Be again and our guide took us over it for half a league, cutting a trail as we went. Needless to say, this was hard work for him and for us, too, since we had to walk over a very rough road. We finally arrived at Sacal, which was only about $1\frac{1}{2}$ leagues from Ekal.

Left Sacal at 10:45 a. m. and passed through Chebalam at 11:45 a. m. Traveling at a steady pace, we reached Tzeal by 12:25 noon. From there, Pamba was 1 kilometer, Nyat was 1 kilometer, Bohom was 3.5 kilometers, and Chan Kom was 7 kilometers distant. Saw the Maya ruins at Tzeal and proceeded on our way at 2:10 p. m.

At 3:14 p. m. we passed a road on our left which led to Dzonotaban. Three mecates (60 meters) further on the Chan Kom road, we came to two crossroads at the edge of the town of Bohom. We left Bohom at 3:50 p. m. and arrived at Chan Kom at 4:55 p. m., resting there until 5:20 p. m., when we started off for Chichen, which we reached at 8:15 p. m.

This diary was inserted to give the reader an idea of travel along the Yucatan trails. The towns which were previously described, as well as those which follow, were reached by train, automobile, cart, horseback, or on foot (see pl. 28, *d* and *e*).

HOLCA

In 1938 this little town, located at kilometer 82 on the Merida-Chichen Itza highway, was fast increasing in population. The village is chiefly Maya, and all of the 200 adult male inhabitants are milperos. The cenote on the plaza is called Holca, and another, located within the boundaries of the town, is called Chinan. The town has no Spanish church; therefore, it may have been first settled after the Independence of Mexico in 1810. School is held in the town's only public building, and here about 100 school children are taught by 2 teachers. The original population came chiefly from the towns of Tibolon, Cacalchen, and Hoctun.

Twelve years ago, a large migration, starting from Yaxcaba and Libre Union, settled in Holca. An interesting point is to be noticed in the recent dating of a billiard hall in Holca; the date inscribed by the builder is 9-15-937 (representing September 15, 1937), thus leaving off the number 1 signifying thousand. This type of abbreviation, made by the modern builder, may also have occurred in ancient times, rendering the reading of some of the dated glyphs difficult.

The town has two mills for grinding corn, but the owners agreed to operate on alternate weeks, thus solving the problem of competition.

IZAMAL

Izamal is one of Yucatan's large cities, having a population of 5,550 inhabitants. The town was built on the ruins of an ancient Maya site called after "Zamna" or "Izamna," one of the Itza rulers who founded many towns in Yucatan.

The Spanish church and convent in Izamal were built, in 1549, on a raised platform, constructed originally by the ancient Maya. This is true also for the present public market place. St. Anthony of Padua is the patron saint of Izamal. Several mounds and pyramids within the limits of the present town speak for the size of the ancient Maya city. Izamal is also noted for being the home of the famous historian, Diego de Landa, the first bishop of Yucatan.

In modern times, an American doctor, George F. Gaumer, settled in Izamal and founded a laboratory from which he dispensed many medicines made from local plants. His son, Dr. George J. Gaumer, carried on the medical practice after the death of his father.

MAMA

This town of 1,800 persons is famous chiefly because it was the home of the mestizo. The town has a square plaza, a cuartel, and a schoolhouse which takes care of 172 children. It is an old town, having about 100 Spanish wells, the water levels of which are at 25 meters. We visited the town on February 26, 1935, and on that date some milperos were already burning their milpas. There are several persons who are "deaf and dumb" in this town and one woman has four such deaf children. The chief occupation of the people is farming, although some hammocks and some pottery are made here. The church was built in 1612, and the patron saint is the Virgin Mary.

MANI

This town of 1,800 persons is famous chiefly because it was the home of the old Maya chief, Tutulxiu. Here it was that the first Franciscan missionaries established their monastery. The church was built in 1549, and the Archangel St. Michael is the patron saint. At one time during that first century after the Conquest, 4 of the

Catholic priests were to be burned by the Indians, but a Maya boy, who had been taught by the priests, warned them to escape for their lives, which the priests refused to do. They sought aid, however, from Montejo's troops, who arrived just in time to release the priests and capture the leading Indians, who were in turn taken to Merida ("T-ho") and sentenced to death. The 4 priests, however, pleaded for the lives of the Indians, and their request was granted. Because of this, the church won many converts. On the plaza of Mani, Bishop Landa ordered the burning of all available Maya books and idols—a tremendous loss to our knowledge of the ancient Maya civilization.

There is a beautiful cenote in the town called Cabal Chen. The church is large and in perfect condition. The town appears to be chiefly mestizo in population, the principal occupation being farming. As is true for other towns in the region, the natives estimate the corn yield as 1 carga per mecate (approximately 20 bushels per acre; 1 carga equals 94.8 pounds) for the first-year milpa, and 9 almudes ($\frac{3}{4}$ carga) for a second-year milpa.

MERIDA

Merida, a city of 95,000 inhabitants, is located 36 kilometers south of Progreso, which is the port of entry for Yucatan. Merida was founded in 1542, by Francisco de Montego, Jr., on an ancient Maya site called "Ich-can-zi-ho," which is often abbreviated merely to "T-ho." Most of the stones remaining from this ancient city have been used to build the present city of Merida; however, one can still see some of the remains of a Maya pyramid behind the modern market place. One of the outstanding characteristics of Merida is its cleanliness. The streets are kept unusually clean for a large city, and the people are well-kept and tidy. The main plaza, surrounded by a magnificent cathedral and other public buildings, is always thronged with both Indians and mestizos. The city's limited central water system is not widely used, and the town resorts to the use of American-made windmills, of which there are more than 7,000, all privately owned.

Merida has one large, central market place and several smaller ones. The city is modern in that it has two good hotels, daily airplane service to Mexico City and weekly service to the United States, two daily newspapers, a historical museum, a public library, and an air-conditioned theater. Good roads lead from Merida to Progreso, to Uxmal, the beautiful Maya city about 70 kilometers south of Merida, and also to Chichen Itza, some 125 kilometers to the southeast. Merida is in the center of the henequen industry, and within its limits are several factories and storehouses which deal in Yucatan's chief export.

MOTUL

Also built on Maya ruins, called Mutul, Motul is located on the railroad 46 kilometers from Merida. Motul was the home of Felipe Carrillo Puerto, a former governor of Yucatan. While governor, Felipe Carrillo developed one of the town's beautiful cenotes into a bathing park, which was equipped with electric lights and a concrete causeway to the water. After his death, a monument was erected to his memory, but the park soon fell into decay through lack of appreciation. The Motul church was built in 1567, and the patron saint of the church and town is St. John the Baptist.

OXKUTZCAB

This town, located on the railroad to Peto, is 80 kilometers from Merida and has a population of 3,500, most of whom are mestizos. In this region there is deeper soil than in the rest of Yucatan, owing to the erosion from the range of hills just south of the town. Because of this deep soil, many vegetables, as well as tobacco, cotton, melons, squash, and chile are grown. It is said that, in these fertile fields, corn can be grown for as many as 10 successive seasons. This is indeed remarkable when it is remembered that in the rest of Yucatan, corn is generally grown in the same field for only 2 seasons. Estimates were given showing a yield of 3 cargas per mecate for the first-year bush and $2\frac{1}{2}$ cargas per mecate for second-year bush. Delicious citrus fruit is also grown in the yards of the townspeople.

The derivation of the town's name, Oxkutzcab, may refer to some of the agricultural products raised in this area, thus: "Ox"—ramon, the leaves of which are fed to horses and cattle; "kutz"—tobacco; and "cab"—honey. These three agricultural products are cultivated on a large scale in the present vicinity of Oxkutzcab. The town contains a beautiful old Spanish church built in 1581, and St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint.

PENCUYUT

Pencuyut was thought by the author to be the town most predominantly Indian in population in the thickly settled area of south-central Yucatan. Although it is true that there are many mestizos in the town, and that names like Castillo and Carrillo abound, there are, nevertheless, many Indians in residence. About 1 kilometer from the plaza an interesting marker was found, indicating a point of boundary, dated February 28, 1557, thus verifying the printed record that Pencuyut was a town even at that early date (see pl. 28, f). The name of the cenote in the town plaza is Chi-chi, and it is estimated that the water level at Pencuyut is 18 meters from the surface.

In a census taken by the author in 1936, there were 246 men, 223 women, and 94 children living in this town. The men are chiefly agriculturists, raising corn, beans, and squash. Pencuyut is located 8 kilometers from the railroad to which all products are taken by pack mule, since the road is so rocky that carts cannot pass over it.

The Spanish church here was never finished, though recently it was roofed with tin. A convent, which had six rooms, lies in ruins. The patron saint here is St. Barnaby, and the church falls under the jurisdiction of Tekaz.

PROGRESO

The town site of Progreso is old, and only in the last 50 years has it taken on the appearance of a modern city. In 1892 the present lighthouse was built, and Progreso became the chief port of entry for the State, an honor which was held formerly by the small port of Sisal. Progreso now contains the State customhouse and all Government offices connected with exports and immigration. Since 1900 the town has grown rapidly and is now the second largest town in the State, having a population of 11,400 inhabitants. It is built chiefly along the sand dunes of the beautiful north coast. As a study in contrasts, it should be noted that only a short distance inland are the low areas with malaria-infested swamps. Progreso is known by many as Progreso de Castro, because of the efforts of one Juan Miguel Castro, the founder of Progreso, to make Progreso a town such as it is. The church of Progreso was built in 1872, and St. Joseph and the Virgin Mary are the patron saints.

TEABO

This is a large mestizo town of perhaps 3,000 individuals, 600 of whom are estimated to be milperos, with about 100 businessmen in the town. There is a large Spanish church which was built in 1609, and the patron saint is the Apostle Peter. In addition to the church, there is a convent which is now in ruins. The plaza is level and green, and on one side is a large, well-kept town hall. In the vicinity there are several henequen haciendas and cattle farms, but many of the men and women weave hats, and some hammock making is done to add to their living.

TEKIT

Tekit is a mestizo town with an estimated population of 800 men—perhaps 4,000 people. It is located far from the nearest railroad, and the roads in this region are entirely unimproved, making cart passage exceedingly slow and rough. There is a large church with the customary cypress trees in front of it, and the patron saint of the town is St. Anthony of Padua. Formerly, the church was under the jurisdiction of Mama; now both Tekit and Mama are under the

jurisdiction of Acanceh. Tekit has a park with modern seats and benches. There is a town hall, which contains the village clock.

In the village there are no cenotes; the nearest one, about 1 kilometer distant from the plaza, is called Chac Tela. The community is chiefly agricultural, although numerous cattle are raised. In early colonial times, this area was almost entirely cattle country.

TICUL

In ancient times this city was called merely "Cul" which, translated from the Maya, means "settled" or "stationed." It is located at the base of the Puc, on which hills are the ruins of the ancient cities of Kaba, Labna, Sayil, and Uxmal. Since Ticul is located in a fertile region, this may have been an agricultural city associated with the large ancient towns which are now in ruins.

The present city of Ticul is the third largest city in Yucatan, having a population of 7,520 inhabitants. It is located on the railroad connecting Merida with Peto. The chief industry of Ticul is pottery making, although basket and hat making also supply labor for many of the inhabitants. Near Ticul are many tobacco fields, so that many cigarettes and cigars are produced in this vicinity. Shoes are also manufactured here. Ticul has a park called Octavio Rosado, and although the town has no cenotes, it is located not far from a beautiful cave called "Yotholim." There is a large Spanish church located in Ticul which was constructed in 1591. A Catholic convent belonging to the church can be seen also. The patron saint is St. Anthony of Padua, as is true also for Tekit.

TINUM

The town of Tinum is located on the Valladolid branch of the railroad, 165 kilometers from Merida, and only 16 kilometers from Valladolid. Formerly Tinum belonged to the political jurisdiction of Valladolid, but now it has become an independent municipality.

The colonial church and convent of Tinum are in ruins. Church services, however, are held for the present-day parishioners in one section of the convent. St. Anthony is the patron saint. There is a large cuartel, or town hall, part of which is used as a school, which in 1931 had 3 teachers. Tinum is located in an agricultural community, and many cattle are raised in this section. Some people derive their income from cutting firewood for the trains and ties for the tracks, but there is also a considerable amount of huano palm cultivation—the palm being used chiefly in basket and hat making. The town boasts 350 men. From the author's 1931 diary, the following is quoted:

In Tinum we stayed in the town's guest house, which was an ordinary Indian house so far as size and shape are concerned, except that it had a con-

crete floor and plastered walls. The rounded walls had panels on which were painted various scenes. One was that of a legendary "Uay-pop" (see pl. 28, c), who as a peddler lives only for 7 years. He steals all the strange things he sells, by going at midnight into houses in foreign countries, where he makes himself as small as an ant so that he may enter. He takes what he desires, sometimes even babies, and returns by 2 o'clock. He flies by means of wings.

The walls (3 feet thick) of the old and beautiful abandoned Spanish monastery were crumbling. In them were small depressions, where we saw the remains of human skeletons. There were several beautifully carved stone bowls which had been used for Holy Water. Part of the church is still used, but priests come very seldom to this small town. There were many other Spanish ruins in the town, and in another ruined church there were many human skeletons.

TIXHUALAHTUN

The word Tixhualahtun means "there stones stood up"; the word "ualah" is the past tense of the verb "to stand." This place may have been one where natives placed stones on top of one another to commemorate a passing event. It must be added, however, that no one in the present town is aware of the existence of any such pile of stones.

Tixhualahtun is a town of approximately 100 men, with a school of about 30 pupils, who are taught by 1 teacher; in 1938, the teacher was José Dolores Duarte. The town is located about 5 kilometers southeast of Valladolid. Since the unimproved road is exceedingly rough and rocky, it seems incredible that any automobile could pass over it.

Twelve leagues to the east are the ruins of the Maya city of Coba, but there are no ruins in Tixhualahtun itself. Not even miscellaneous Maya cut stones are to be found in the church walls. The Spanish church is in ruins, with only the sacristy being used today for worship. Two church bells are to be found near the church—one is dated 1678 and was dedicated to the church in 1720. In the room now used for worship is a black Christ. The saint's day for Tixhualahtun is El Santo Cristo de la Exaltación, and the feast day is September 14.

The plaza is triangular in shape, the base lying toward the south where the church is situated. The two other sides of the isosceles triangle merge into a point on the north, forming the road to Valladolid.

TIZIMIN

The Maya formerly called this place "Tzimin," which referred to a large quadruped, perhaps an antelope; but with the coming of the Spaniards, the word was pronounced "Tizimin."

This town, located at the end of a branch line of the railroad which runs from Dzitas, is important as a lumbering center for Yucatan, and several sawmills are located here. Lumber and heavy timbers of mahogany and cedar are exported to various parts of Yucatan and Mexico. The soil in this region is excellent and the milperos are said to gather from 2 to 3 cargass of maize from each mecate, though, because of the richness of the soil, they are obliged to weed these fields two or three times a season. The Tizimin region is also noted for its production of beans; it produces more beans than any other region in Yucatan. Yucca, from which starch and tapioca are obtained, is also grown abundantly in this area, as well as plantains, bananas, and oranges.

Snakes abound, and it is told that, upon one occasion, collectors gathered as many as 30 rattlesnakes from a 4-mecate field. In the bush, there are tigers, monkeys, and parrots. When the author visited the town in 1933, one family kept a large Yucatan tiger in a cage behind the house.

The town boasts some 5,000 inhabitants and is the municipal center for 21 localities. There are cenotes in the region but the water is rather stagnant, so the villagers secure their water supply from wells which average about 12 feet in depth.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the town is its religious significance, for the church and old convent located here were built in 1563 and contain images of its three patron saints, the three oriental kings, Melchor, Gaspar, and Baltazar. The people of Yucatan hold these saints in great reverence and pilgrimages are made to Tizimin each year, especially on the feast days, December 30 to January 9. At this time, the church is crowded with these pilgrims who bring gifts of flowers, candles, and amulets, which are always offered in triplicate, one for each saint. The people believe that these saints can perform great miracles, and, during the religious celebrations, the church hums with prayers and chants offered by the hundreds of pilgrims. The fact that Tizimin is located in eastern Yucatan may have some significance in the choice of the three kings from the East as patron saints.

UAYMA

The town of Uayma is under the jurisdiction of Valladolid. Its large church, built in 1581, lay in ruins in 1932, the roof having caved in and the heavy side walls having cracked the front wall of the church (see pl. 27, *f*). Trees and wild vegetation are overgrowing the church property, and there are also the remains of a Spanish convent. This church (region) is at present under the jurisdiction of the Sisal church of Valladolid. The patron saint of Uayma

is Santo Domingo. Near the church is a cave from which the clay for the famous Uayma pottery is obtained.

The town is located on the railroad, 8 kilometers from Valladolid, and many inhabitants of the town earn their living by selling firewood to the railroad for the wood-burning engines. The pottery, in which gray and red clay are used in equal proportions, is distinctive and can readily be distinguished from that of other Yucatan towns. The potters from Uayma use a wheel which is 6 inches in diameter and is propelled by foot and toe action. Uayma may be classified as an Indian town. It has a population of 300 men.

VALLADOLID

In Yucatan, Valladolid is referred to as the "Sultanness of the East" by the mestizos, and by the Indians as "Saci," which was the name of an ancient Maya city located where Valladolid now stands. The present city was founded soon after the conquest by Francisco de Montego, the nephew of the Conqueror of Yucatan.

The population of Valladolid is now about 5,600, mostly mestizos. Primarily an agricultural community, its chief crop is corn, since only a small amount of henequen is raised. From this town each year a number of expeditions leave for various chicle camps in Quintana Roo. Valladolid was one of the colonial towns taken by the rebellious Indians in 1847, and much of the town was destroyed at that time. Valladolid has 6 large colonial churches. The largest, located on the plaza, is consecrated to the Holy Redeemer. The second is Candelaria, in or near which a commercial fiesta is celebrated each year. A third church, called Sisal, was built in 1553, and it has a large convent, 2 stories high, which contains numerous rooms, many of which are in good condition even today. Under the church floor, there is an opening into the Sisal cenote. The church of Santana also has a cenote nearby, which is used today as a swimming pool, with an admission charge of 5 centavos collected from each swimmer. The cenote is called Ximha. On one of the side walls there is yellow clay, which boys rub on their bodies in place of soap. The 2 other churches are San Juan and Santa Lucia.

XOCENPICH

This agricultural town is located 9 kilometers from Dzitas on the road to Chichen Itza. It had a population of 378 persons in 1935, most of whom were Indian.

The Spanish church located in the center of the town is dated 1815. The side walls and front were completed, but the concrete roof was never finished and only a thatch roof covered the structure. The poles supporting this roof are still standing inside the present church

walls. The building fell into decay and was reconditioned in 1916, at which time the present schoolhouse was built. The church was in use until about 1923, when it was abandoned. In 1937 the Protestant element in the town built as a church for themselves a neat stone structure, whereas the Catholics, who are their bitter religious and political enemies, do not have a place of worship. The town has a school of about 30 children and 1 schoolmaster. There is a cuartel made of stone and a large level plaza, which is covered with green grass. The present plaza of Xocenpich, however, is not the original one, which was located east of the present cuartel. The Spanish church is located in the center of the old plaza.

The town has 2 stores, one owned by Gonzalo Chan and the other by Cesareo Chi. There are no cenotes within the limits, but 14 Spanish wells supply the town with water. The cenote of Anik is $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers to the northwest; another, Chich, is about the same distance to the southwest; and still another, called Tzoc, is $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers to the southeast. The town has no particular industry, since most of its inhabitants are milperos.

During the revolution of 1919-24, the town provided a haven for the political refugees from Piste. Throughout the eight seasons (1931-38) that the author has carried on his anthropological work in Xocenpich, it has been a seat of political unrest; the two political factions in the town feel extremely bitter toward each other.

SUMMARY

From the descriptions of these 30 towns the reader will learn that they resemble each other in pattern yet differ in many respects. Thus, the region of Tizimin supports a heavy growth of trees, and lumber is the most important product. In this region of high trees, jaguars, snakes, and birds are the dominant fauna. When the bush is cleared beans are commonly grown in this area, in contrast to the more arid parts of northwestern Yucatan where henequen dominates. In regions where clay is to be found, such as in Uayma and Ticul, the industry of pottery making is the chief means of support. The towns along the railroads are supported largely by industries connected with the railroad, such as cutting wood for the wood-burning trains and wood ties for the tracks. Many of the towns described are built on the ruins of ancient Maya cities, as, for example, Merida, Valladolid, Motul, and Izamal. Mention is made of the historic towns of Mani and Chumayel, famous for their associations during the Spanish colonial times. Some of the less important Indian towns are described so that the reader may become acquainted with the mode of life in the agricultural communities.

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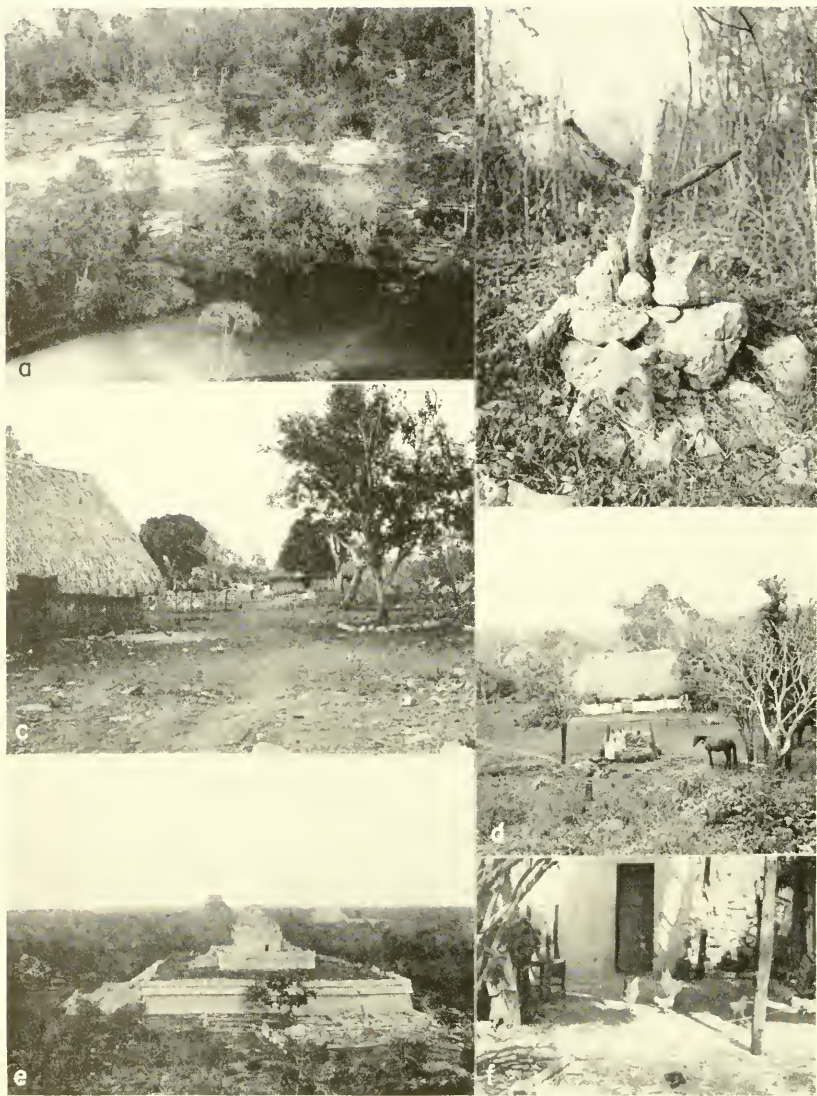
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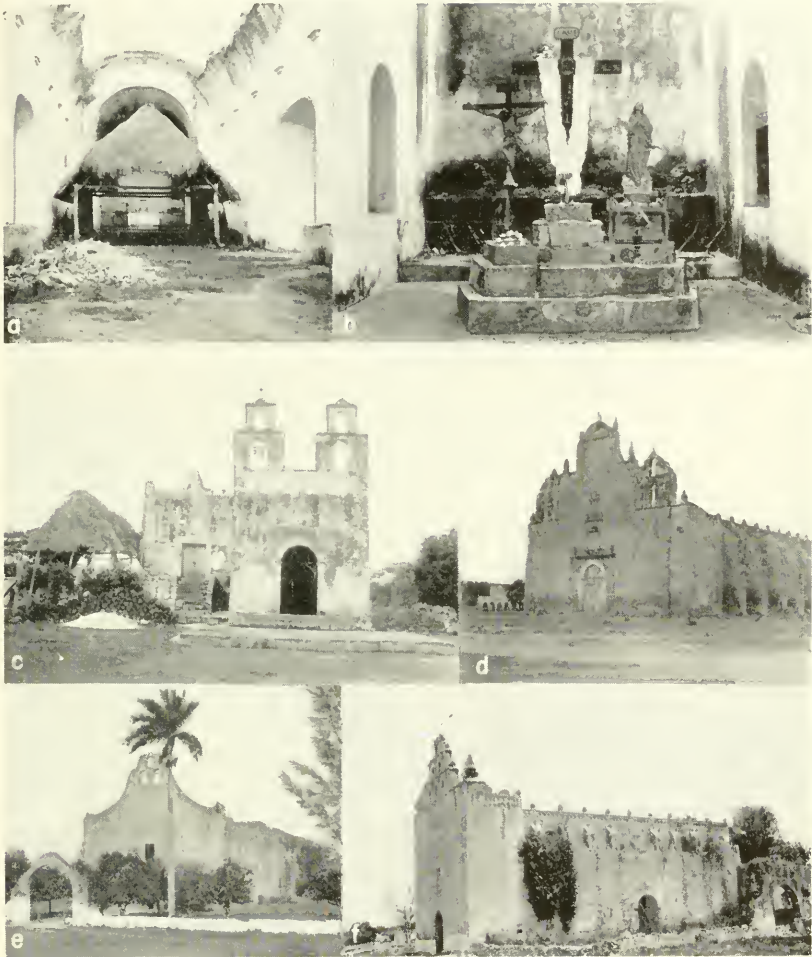
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MAP OF THE STATE OF YUCATAN.



TYPICAL SCENES IN YUCATAN.

a, A typical cenote, at Poxil, near Pisté. *b*, Cross on a road, marking the boundary of a small town. *c*, A yard scene in Pisté. *d*, Plaza at San José; note the women at the well and the open-sided schoolhouse in the rear. *e*, A general view at Chichén Itzá. *f*, A typical Maya doorstep in Chan Kom.



SPANISH COLONIAL CHURCHES.

a, A thatch structure built within the ruins of the church at Chikindzonot. *b*, Interior of Piste church. *c*, Typical Spanish church at Piste. *d*, Church at Tekax. *e*, Chichimila. *f*, Church at Uayma.



SCENES OF NATIVE LIFE IN YUCATAN.

a, Interior scene in a typical bush house. *b*, Exterior of a newly constructed bush house in Pisté. *c*, Uay-pop, a mythical creature drawn on a wall panel in a Maya bush house. *d*, A six-mule cart; these are used chiefly in transporting maize. However, passengers are also transported on them. *e*, Volan, a carriage swung by leather straps for the comfort of the passengers who travel over the rocky roads. *f*, A boundary marker at Pencuyut, dated 1587.