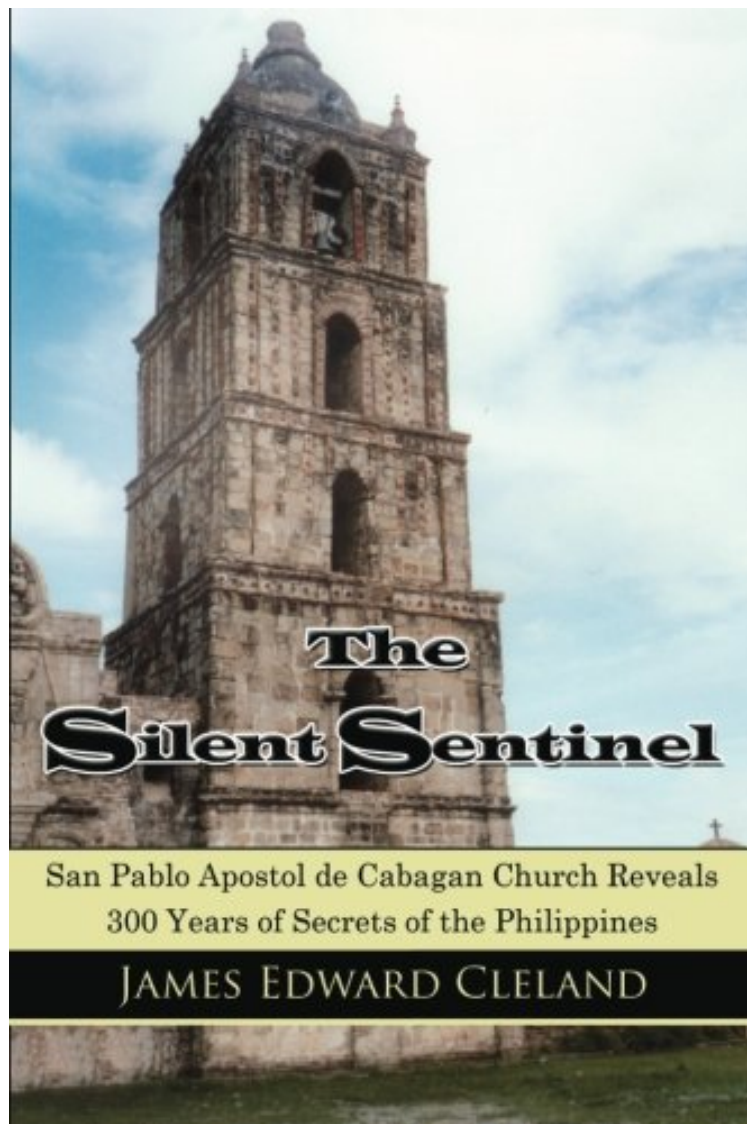


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## The Silent Sentinel: San Pablo Apostol de Cabagan Church Reveals 300 Years of Secrets of the Philippines

*James Edward Cleland*

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**James Edward Cleland : The Silent Sentinel: San Pablo Apostol de Cabagan Church Reveals 300 Years of Secrets of the Philippines** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Silent Sentinel: San Pablo Apostol de Cabagan Church Reveals 300 Years of Secrets of the Philippines:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Informative Read on the History of the PhilippinesBy Stephanie

Thornton Being a history teacher of both European and American history, I know relatively little about the history of the Philippines, save when the island nation was being used by one of the great world powers. The Silent Sentinel takes a unique approach to uncovering the history of the northern province of Isabela, using the Church of San Pablo to bear witness to the Spanish colonization exploitation of the country, all the way through to the Japanese American combat during World War II. Lesser-known events like the Tobacco Monopoly and the impact of the Dominicans are also researched and discussed throughout the book. The Church was built for the Filipino people by Filipino hands, and now records the history of its nation in its very stones. While this is an academic work that includes much discussion on the architecture of the church, I found the chapters on the Spanish creation of the San Pablo and its Baroque influence to be most interesting, and those on the impact of World War II on the Filipino people even more intriguing. Typically one reads about events like the Bataan Death March from the point of view of the Americans, or possibly the Japanese, so this was a fresh perspective as seen by the Filipinos. San Pablo Church is incredibly significant, despite some of its adobe structure having been destroyed, and the fact that it is being rebuilt is a testament to the need to preserve its legacy. I found this to be an extremely informative read for anyone interested in Baroque architecture, the history of the Philippines, or history in general.

San Pablo Church has been the sentinel protecting the people of the Cagayan Valley throughout all of the tumultuous and sanguinary history of the Philippines. As one of the oldest churches in the entire Philippines archipelago it has faithfully served its people for close to three hundred years going back to the days of the Spanish friars. Now it lies in a near ruinous state watching silently as other more-celebrated Philippine churches undergo highly-publicized renovations. Despite crushing poverty the people of the Cagayan Valley have begun the monumental process of rebuilding their church—certainly the largest from the Spanish colonial days and one of the most significant in terms of the establishment of Catholicism in all of Asia. This reconstruction has been guided by a handful of dedicated priests, concerned parishioners, and friends from all provinces of the Philippines as well as all corners of the world. James E. Cleland has set out to justify a complete renovation of this landmark church which currently enjoys no assistance from any governmental or private agency. Parallels are drawn with successful American restoration efforts. The Silent Sentinel reveals a three-hundred year history of this historic adobe-and-stone church: the forced migrations of its people, droughts, earthquakes, epidemics, and vicious typhoons, fighting between the people and the Spanish, a violent war for independence, the Second World War with the painful occupation of the Imperial Japanese Army. It has lived to see the early days of freedom as the Philippines became a sovereign nation. This book, as well, alerts the reader to the remarkable story of the design of San Pablo Church— the unique architectural innovations used by the Spanish friars and their Filipino craftsmen—which justifies a complete and faithful renovation in and of itself.

About the Author James Edward Cleland entered Loyola University Chicago and in June, 1977 received the Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine Arts with a concentration in Studio Art. His senior project was a Proposed Plan For Expansion and Renovation of Loyola University Fine Arts Facilities. With assistance from Loyola Academy's Sister Institution Program, Mr. Cleland was able to complete coursework leading to the Master of Arts degree in the Graduate School of Loyola University Chicago in January, 1993. Teaching has been the occupation of Mr. Cleland since 1981, while architectural history has been an avocational interest—ever since he scaled the eighty-story Standard Oil Building in Chicago (then uncompleted) as a student accompanied by his father and architect Edward Durrell Stone. As Assistant Principal of Notre Dame de Chicago Academy, a Roman Catholic elementary school located in Chicago near the West Side Medical Center Complex, Mr. Cleland saw firsthand a major architectural restoration. This restoration was for the historic church of Notre Dame de Chicago, a French Catholic church destroyed by lightning a few years previously. It was wonderfully restored by William L. Lavika. Notre Dame de Chicago Church is a masterpiece of Romanesque architecture. Mr. Cleland completes his twenty-sixth year of teaching as this book is completed. While currently teaching at Loyola Academy, a Jesuit College-Preparatory school in north suburban Chicago, Mr. Cleland moderates the American Institute of Architecture Students chapter at Loyola Academy. Mr. Cleland gives tours of Chicago area masterpieces to area high school students and maintains membership in the Society of Architectural Historians. He is married to wife, Natividad, whose childhood parish was St. Paul the Apostle in San Pablo, Philippines. He has two sons, Scott and Craig. The family resides in Lincolnwood, Illinois.