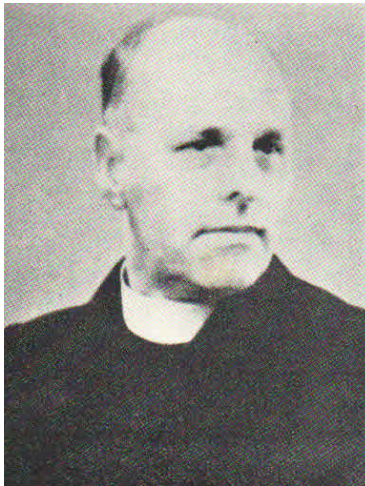


9 January

Fr BEVIS COLLINGS

9 April 1903 – 9 January 1960



Bevis came from an Anglican family but became Catholic while still a boy. He joined the Society in 1921 and, in 1937, became one of the early staff of the new Seminary in Chishawasha.

In 1943 he became superior of Chishawasha where he redesigned the ‘depressing’ community house and made it more attractive. He was always interested and skilled in building wherever he went and had a ‘bent’ for designing. He was also a musician and compiled a (mainly) Shona hymn book and developed the choir. He even tried his hand at broadcasting on the radio.

And his interest extended to drama even to producing an opera!

In 1944, he moved to Makumbe, again as superior and there he found he had a huge amount of office work to do for the out-schools as well as the central mission. He was known for his meticulous accuracy in his accountancy.

The diocesan *Shield* magazine (1960, Vol 2, p 11) enigmatically pointed to his ‘difficulty in adapting to the African mentality’. Perhaps what is being hinted at is a trait sometimes present among missionaries: a man gifted with a variety of talents which give him a sense of his own ability and usefulness but who is unable to be patient when his expectations of others are often disappointed.

He developed blood circulatory problems in his legs and was sent to England for treatment where he stayed for a year. On his return he worked out procedures that minimised his standing and walking, even using a scooter to get round the mission, but the condition overcame him and he was found dead in his room one afternoon having suffered a cerebral thrombosis. He was 57.