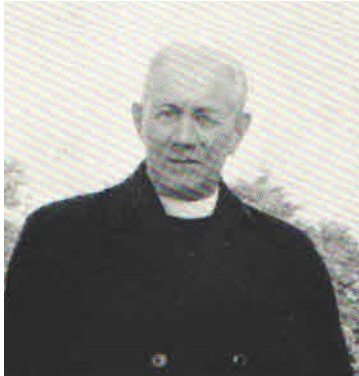


4 April

Fr FRANCIS NAIRNE

23 November 1888 – 4 April 1957



Francis Nairne seems to have been a man of contradictions even in his youth. One said ‘he had no interest in sport’ while another ‘he was an exceptional cricketer.’ As an adult, he was ‘gifted intellectually but incapable of sustained effort in study.’ Born in Manchester, he entered the noviciate in 1905 and was ordained sixteen years later. He was sent to study Canon Law in Rome but gave it up after a year.

From 1927 to 1948 he was at St Aidan’s with a two-year gap in the middle. The school had a crisis in 1934 when the number of boys diminished and it was felt he was not needed. But two years later they asked for him to return when things started to improve. He developed the studies and was a good organiser.

He mixed much with the people of the town and the university and developed a number of interests. One was the ‘Blind Library’ to provide Braille books which developed until it became ‘Union-wide.’

But he was obstinate and always stuck to his opinion! Once, Bishop McSherry was dedicating an altar at the school and Nairne had a fierce ‘altercation’ with him so much so that he, Nairne, collapsed on the altar! But, it seems, if you got to know him, you could understand him and he could be quite ‘lovable.’

He returned to England in 1948 and was semi-retired at Bournemouth and died in Blackpool nine years later.