

May 13

Br FRANCIS OSTROWSKI 1 October 1853 – 16 May 1913



Br Troski (top right in the photo), as he was called by the people at Dunbrody, was born in Galicia. (There are two Galicias or maybe even three: one in NW Spain, one in Turkey and this one which was sometimes partly in Poland and partly in Ukraine). ‘Troski’ entered the Society of Jesus in 1875 and soon volunteered for the Zambezi Mission. He went first to Quilimane but the humid climate on the Mozambique coast was too much for him and he had to be changed.

He went to Dunbrody in 1884 and stayed 17 years. His obituarist celebrates ‘his holiness, his simplicity and his patience’ in terms that the modern reader may find takes away from his normal humanity, but it was the way of writing at the time. He was gardener, refectorian and infirmarian both at Dunbrody and later at Chishawasha. The local people at Dunbrody, ‘always very observant’, soon perceived his worth. He planted an orchard and a vineyard there and loved the trees which he planted, tended and sometimes grafted.

If the wind or the locusts came and destroyed his painstaking work, he was extraordinary in the way he accepted it.

At Chishawasha, he suffered from malaria repeatedly and eventually this seems to have caused his death at the age of 60.

OSTROWSKI Br. Francisco – He arrived in Quelimane after having passed through Lisbon, at the end of January 1884. He is listed among the Jesuits who lived in the Lower Zambezi Catalogue of 1885 as having been at Colégio do Bom Jesus de Quelimane (Cf. APSI, Data de Zambesi Mis., Caderno mns. do P. Platzer, 211/05).