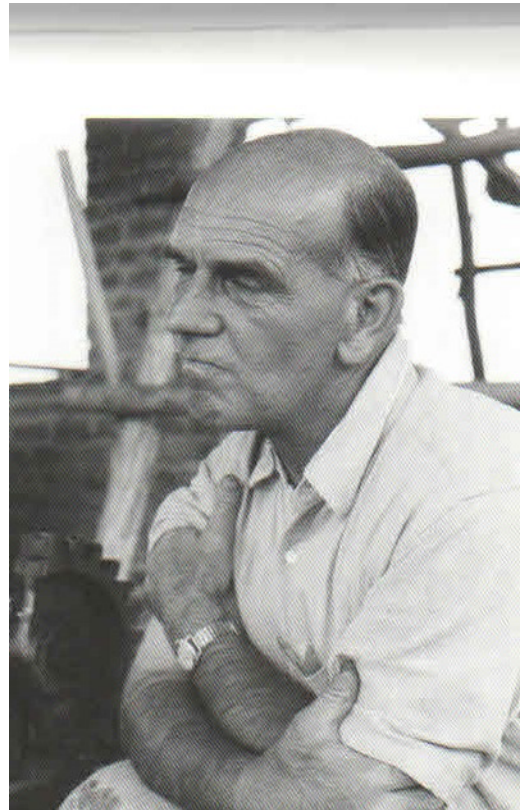


7 July

Br FRANCIS WADDELOVE

6 April 1915 – 7 July 2007

Waddy, as he was known, gave a rare interview to *The Shield* in June 1964 in which he spoke his mind with characteristic directness. ‘For 27 years I have been on the missions and I have been highly critical and dissatisfied with what we have been doing. I have always tried to get among the people and have spent an awful lot of effort in learning their language, and I have always felt that we have not done anything really substantial outside of the schools. We have failed to produce a deep and lasting effect upon the home life of the Africans and have failed to produce, to any extent, really reliable Catholic families.’



Waddy didn't just grumble. He set up Credit Unions that would enable people to build their own lives. ‘It is through education that begins with economics, a thing people are most interested in.’ Credit Unions depend on mutual trust and Waddy saw it as a big jump to lead people to co-operation. But without this there would be no development. He was at Chishawasha at the time and had already been at Monte Cassino, Driefontein and Mhondoro. He knew what he wanted and was helped by Fr. Paul Crane, an English Jesuit, who encouraged Waddy to meet Paddy Bailey from Trinidad. Bailey was having great success in promoting the Credit Union movement in the United States. Crane persuaded Bailey to visit Rhodesia and meet Waddy who adapted Bailey's material to his needs. His overriding aim was to build the community and particularly the women. He knew the administration of funds would call upon people's integrity. If the movement were a success, many purposes would be served as the people would improve their own lives and grow in confidence in their own ability.

Savings would be the first step and it became officially known as the Savings Development Movement (SDM). Attitudes of jealousy and mistrust were already evident in the early years among members as was a failure to follow simple

procedures. But on the whole the picture was positive and the movement grew. But expansion brought problems. Waddy wanted it to remain small until it was well proven. But the pressures to grow were great. Misuse of funds and jealousy have already been mentioned.

Although these clubs started in the Catholic Church, they soon spread to the Salvation Army in the Mazowe area and to the Methodists who proved more reliable than the Catholics in the administration of the movement. The Savings Clubs were never associated with any one church. There was often good cooperation with the government extension officers – a notable case being in Mutare where the officer, Mr. Sithole, worked with 42 clubs for over 30 years.

Waddy was born in Leigh, Lancashire, in 1915 and joined the Society in 1933. He was shaped in a 'no nonsense' mould and was known for his frank assessment of situations and people, superiors included! The movement started by Br Waddelove waxed and waned over the years but today it has its headquarters in Hatfield, Harare, and has a website suggesting a flourishing movement where women's dignity and rights are promoted. Waddy would be pleased. He spent 50 years trying to make it so. He died in 2007 at the age of 92 years, 70 of which were spent in Zimbabwe.