

30 August

Br HENRY CORTEN

7 October 1837 – 30 August 1903



Henry Corten was born in Belgium at Hersselt and waited until 1870 before joining the Society as he was looking after his parents. A farmer and carpenter, Fr Depelchin worked hard to recruit him for the Zambezi Mission in 1883 – a hard task as the mission had little good to report in that year. Br Henry reached Dunbrody in 1885 and soon added wheelwright and blacksmith to his skills. For eighteen years he did the woodwork in the chapel (see picture), built the workshops and dairy as well as the houses for the girls and the boys. Everywhere on the mission his tables, chairs, benches, pumps and troughs were present.

His spirituality was deep and unaffected based on a childlike faith ‘which enabled him to enjoy and live in the unseen.’ He enjoyed shooting for the pot though on one misty morning he mistook the mission’s best horse for a buck and shot it dead.

All in the neighbourhood felt his loss when he died. The superior said ‘Dunbrody was his monument.’

