

30 September

Br OSWALD TAYLOR

13 January 1887 – 20 September 1949



Born in Wigan in Lancashire, Ozzy, as he was known, went to Stonyhurst. When he joined the Society in 1905, he wanted to be a brother even though he could have managed the studies. It was quickly noted that he had a low opinion of his talents and Fr Bodkin, the rector, was attentive to him and constantly encouraging. He tried to find the right place for Ozzy in the Society. When he

was sustained by friends, he was fine but when he was alone, his self-depreciation returned.

But he fitted into the schools to which he was sent: Stonyhurst, Beaumont and St Aidan's (1926-29). He seems to have been infirmarian wherever he was. He understood the boys and even their escapades. One who knew him well said of him, 'There is a sense in which he never grew up.' He would return to Stonyhurst whenever he could as if he did not want to lose touch with the one place where he was once happy and secure.

He loved 'animals, children and simple folk'. He could not stand bombast or pretence. He was 'benevolent, humorous, wistful and self-effacing.' He had a strange habit of thinking out loud. A stranger came to Beaumont and came out of his room in the morning and demanded hot water. Ozzy shouted at him 'scoundrel' to the guest's confusion, but then did all he could to help him.

Fire duty during the war was the worst thing to ask him to do as he was away from the community and on his own. It hastened a breakdown

He developed a terrible obsession that he was a useless burden to others. Br James Higgins who lived with him was deeply caring but could not be with him always. In the end he had a severe breakdown which made Higgins and others deeply distressed. He was taken to Holloway Sanatorium near Virginia Water, Surrey, England, (see picture) which, in the days before more enlightened ways of treating the mentally sick, had barred rooms with beds with straps attached to restrain the patient. Fortunately his suffering did not last long and he died within a month