

28 December

Br CHARLES McCANN

31 May 1903 – 28 December 1972



Charlie was a Glaswegian and his father was a scrap merchant whom he worked with for a while. He was also, briefly, a soldier. He joined the Society in 1924 (aged 21) and did various household jobs in the UK before sailing to Africa in 1930. His best years there were at Monte Cassino, Macheke, where this picture was taken. (He is on the right. Br McGuigan on the left). He worked hard to set up the farm and looked forward to a bright future for it. He took endless care of the animals. He was a strong man, full of good humour though his patience would sometimes desert him.

He sustained a 'back injury' – we are not told how or what – but it was judged best he return to England after just seven years at

Monte Cassino and two further ones at Driefontein. In England he seems to have moved around - Heythrop, Craighead, Manresa – and everywhere he went he found things to do. When he arrived one day at 6.00 at St Ignatius, Stamford Hill in 1943, he began to wash down the paint work on the stairway at 8.30 p.m. His desire to 'get on with it' brushed aside all opposition. The school's Golden Jubilee was approaching but it was war time and supplies were hard to come by. He somehow got some ducklings, reared them and provided the community with roast duck for the occasion.

One of his fellow brothers wondered why he was not allowed to return to Africa which he so much wanted to do. He did not seem to be that ill. But he was suffering though he made light of it. He kept looking around for what he could do. When Br Atkinson's sister had an operation and was recovering at Southwell House, he was kind to her in a way she never forgot. His enthusiasm for life never waned even while his strength did and he died in Lanark, Scotland, aged 69.