

FATHER AUGUSTINE RAMSPOTT. SDB.

The death occurred in hospital on Monday, 11th January 1971, of Fr. Augustine Ramspott. He was 89 years old – one of the oldest and best-loved members of the Anglo-Irish Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco. His diamond jubilee in the priesthood was celebrated two years ago.

Fr. Ramspott was born in Clapham, London, on the 5th December 1881. He was baptised in the Church of St. Mary's Clapham, belonging to, and staffed by the Redemptorist Fathers. As a boy he had read about the life of Don Bosco and about the Salesians arriving in Battersea and he decided to apply to join the Congregation. He was accepted and he made his novitiate at Burwash, Sussex from 1899–90 and he was professed as a Salesian in 1890. He also made his perpetual profession at Burwash in 1904. In that house where many years of his fruitful apostolate were destined to be spent, he did his philosophical course and, after a period teaching in the school at Battersea, he began his theological studies. He went to Foglizzo, Italy for a year to complete his studies and prepare for the priesthood. He was ordained a priest at Ivrea in 1908.

Following his ordination, he returned to Battersea for two years as a member of the teaching staff. He then went once more to Burwash as assistant to the Novice Master in 1910. In 1912 he was asked to join the Salesian Community at East Hill, Wandsworth. The Salesians were then in charge of the Church and Parish of St. Mary Magdalen. There was also a school attached to the parish. Fr. Ramspott remained there for eight years. From 1920–21 he carried out similar duties at Chertsey and he then went once more to Burwash, where he remained for the next forty years.

A man of great holiness of life, he was also a man of cheerful optimism and many talents. His services as Parish priest, organist school secretary and bursar were in constant demand during those many years at Burwash. There, as in the province, he was a father– figure, loved by all. During the years when the Salesian School was at Burwash, he was ever a tower of strength and was idolised by parents, boys and parishioners. In the confessional too he did outstandingly good work.

In 1961 he was asked to go to Beckford, which was then the house of novitiate and also for philosophical studies. There in his declining years he was a source of edification and joy to all.

Concelebrated Requiem Mass was offered at Beckford on Friday, the 15th January and was followed by interment in the cemetery in the grounds. May his good soul rest in peace.