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SALESIAN MISSIONARY COLLEGE
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Dear Confreres,
On the 31st of May 1977

Brother Lorenzo Biello, SDB

died here at Shrigley at the age of 86. The following is the tribute paid to him in the Newsletter of the Oxford Province by Fr.W.Ainsworth:

Someone said recently that all the 'characters' amongst us have gone; while one would not fully subscribe to that, it is true they are gradually leaving us. Certainly, Brother Laurence was a character and few of us there are who have no remembrance of his formidable lordship of his kitchen kingdom in many Houses for some forty years.

His family came from Belbo, near Cuneo, in Italy and he was born there in 1891. When he was 19 he went to the Salesian House of Penango to work as a gardener and here he became an Aspirant; he went to the Novitiate of San Benigno the following year and began his career there as a cook. He made his first profession in Ivrea in 1913. The war intervened and young Biello had to serve his country in the ranks; something of the soldier seemed to have survived in his trim figure, to say nothing of his ideas of discipline, which could be somewhat fierce as many a Novice could remember; it was all no doubt good for our souls.

After hostilities ended, Brother Lorenzo went back to his community and made his second vows at Valsalice in March 1919. Father Simonetti seems then to have recruited a cook for his Novitiate at Burwash and it was here that Brother Laurence made his Perpetual Vows in 1922.

For the next forty years or so, he fed us all in many houses; the list is a formidable one; Burwash, Cowley, up to Shrigley, across to Ireland to go to Warrenstown and to Pallas-kenry, back to Blaisdon and then more Novitiate at Beckford, to Bolton for a spell and then Beckford again, up to Aberdour and finally at Burwash Novices again had to peel potatoes, wash floors and scour (and re-scour and scour again!) pots and pans to satisfy his demanding eye. He ran his kitchen with an almost fanatical search for cleanliness and an equally fanatical devotion to the rubrics of the balanced diet,

the right vitamins, the essential proteins, not unmixed, one gathered, with a pinch of country-man's folklore on what was good for you and what wasn't, and what one should eat at certain seasons and what avoid. He served us well and no Salesians ever suffered from malnutrition, even if, in the early days at Burwash, some of our more delicately brought up young Novices found the going somewhat rough. They survived and most of them lived to a ripe old age.

However, when came the scriptural three score years and ten, Brother Laurence went to Shrigley, this time as infirmarian, there to put into practice many of his dieting ideas. For the next sixteen years he did his work faithfully and cheerfully, ever a good son of Don Bosco.

Brother Laurence carried his years well indeed and it was only in the last few months that he began markedly to falter, to go off his food and to show signs of an end to his eighty-six years. He died at Shrigley on May 31st and was buried there three days later; Father Higgins presided over the concelebrated Requiem, assisted by some twenty-four priests and Brothers from every House; Father John Corcoran spoke well of Brother Laurence in his panegyric; the Brother himself, with his love of all things musical, must have delighted in the boys' choir, who fitted in their requiems one or two of his old favourites. May he rest in peace, this good Salesian, worthy son of Don Bosco.

The Shrigley Community feel that confreres of other provinces would wish to read this obituary of a fine Salesian. We commend Bro. Lorenzo to your prayers and also this house,

Fr.P.Dooley SDB
Rector.

For the Necrology. Brother Lorenzo Biello SDB, born Cuneo March 16th 1891, died at Shrigley May 31st 1977 in the 64th year of his profession. Aged 86 years.