THE STORY OF THE PERSONAL SADNESS OF A KINDLY RECTOR.

It was in 1850 that William Mortimer Heath became Rector of Lytchett Matravers.



Rev. William Mortimer Heath. 1823 - 1917.



Emma Meyrick 1824 – 1862. She married William M. Heath- Sept.1851.

As the new Rector, William found the village and the church sadly neglected. He set about making changes to the fabric of the church and making life easier for the poor of the parish. In 1853 he organised soup for the poor and needy of the village, this would have been made in the Rectory a kitchen by the housekeeper and the two

servants employed by the Rector. He saw to it that the poor of the village received blankets, and cloth for clothes and that children between the age of 5 and 14 received boots and shoes.

The Rectory had stables and a tithe barn. Rev. Heath had these converted into a “Parish Room” which was then used as a Sunday School. Each year the children who attended received useful presents tailored to their independent needs. The Rev. Heath also ensured fuel was delivered to needy homes in harsh winters.

Meanwhile his wife, Emma, provided “married women’s packs” for use of local women during childbirth. It is no wonder that the Rev. Heath was so highly thought of by his parishioners, he was indeed a kind and generous man. He also had the ability to appeal to the local landed gentry for donations to help him in his mission to care for his parishioners.

Unfortunately, he had great sadness in his personal life. Although he and his wife were blessed with three sons and two daughters in the first eight years of their marriage, sadly Emma died of Tuberculosis, aged 38 in October, 1862.

The Rev. Heath's eldest daughter Florence was aged 25 when she married Arthur Augustus Carre at St. Mary's Church, Lytchett Matravers. She and her husband ran a small Boarding School in Brighton and Arthur later became a Clergyman. Florence remained very close to her father and she, with her children, regularly stayed at the Rectory in Lytchett Matravers.

Arthur and Florence Carre had nine children in all. One son, Edwin, died when he was only 3 months old. Of the eight remaining (three daughters and five sons) 1 son died aged 22 while at university and tragically three sons died during WW 1.

In May, 1914, Florence's son, Maurice Tennant Carre emigrated to Australia. There he joined the Australian Military in Sydney, New South Wales. In September 1915 he as one of many Australian troops to die in Gallipoli, Turkey and was buried there.



CARRE, Pte. Maurice Tennant, 1113. 1st Bn. Australian Inf. Killed in action 2nd Sept., 1915. Age 31. Son of the Rev. Arthur A. and Florence Carre, of 11, Grosvenor Rd., East Grinstead, Sussex, England. Native of Ryde, Isle of Wight. I. E. 13.

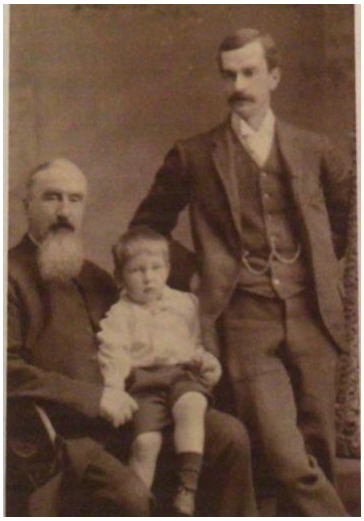
Nearly a year later, on 16th October, 1916, the War took Maurice's youngest brother Edward Melvyn Carre. He was a Lieutenant in the Royal Flying Corps and died aged 22.



CARRE, Lt. Edward Mervyn. 8th Bn. Lincolnshire Regt., attd. Royal Flying Corps. Killed in action whilst flying 16th Oct., 1916. Age 22. Son of Florence Carré, of 8, Rodney Place, Clifton, Bristol, and the late Rev. Arthur A.Carré (Rector of Smarden, Kent). I. H. 6.

A month earlier, in September, 1916 another of Rev. Heath's grandsons had died in that disastrous War.

2nd Lieutenant Roger Meyrick Heath (the only son of Meyrick William Heath) died at the battle of Delville Wood on his first day in the trenches, he was aged 27.



To the left in 1891 Little Roger Meyrick sitting on his grandfather's lap. (His father Meyrick William, standing). To the right in 1916 2nd Lieutenant Roger Meyrick Heath



The kindly Rector died aged 94 on New Years Day 1917.

He was saved the heart break of hearing of the death of another grandson, Lieutenant Gilbert Trenchard Carre who died on the 20th November, 1917, in the Battle of Cabrai in France.



Name	Gilbert Trenchard Carre
Death Date	20 Nov 1917
Rank	Lieutenant (T)
Regiment	Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment
Battalion	9th Battalion
Type of Casualty	Killed in action
Comments	Att 6Th B

By the end of WW1 the only son of Florence Carre remaining was Gilbert's twin brother Meyrick. He had been a Captain in the Royal Army Service Corps during the War. He later became a Lecturer in Philosophy at Bristol University.

The Rev. William Mortimer Heath dedicated 67 years of his life to the village of Lytchett Matravers and his death was sadly mourned by his parishioners. He would have comforted so many during the years of WW1 and shared with them the sadness of losing young men in the prime of their lives, he understood so well their grief.

Written by Hilary Hayes, Sept. 2024.