



Lyneham

Reverend William Collins Cotton: His Attempts To Maintain The Vicarage, The Church And Churchyard

This narrative was found in the baptism register of 1813-1839

The Revd. William Collins Cotton commenced his parochial labours at Lyneham in the spring of 1826, and took up his residence at the house appropriate for the use of the minister in July 1826. Here he expended a considerable sum in improving and otherwise rendering the premises more in character with a clergymans abode than hereto-fore, by exemplifying that neatness, order and cleanliness which (next to Godliness) the minister of a parish should enforce among his people.

His next desire and endeavour were to add a little to the previous appearance of the church and churchyard as thereby honouring God and including his flock to reverence his house of worship. Finding the Holy Table without a covering his wife Louisa Collins Cotton prepared a pall of needlework and presented it to the parish and otherwise respectively decorated the altar piece.

In the Spring of 1830 the said Minister of the Parish built the new pews in the same church, one under the archway adjoining the vault sacred to the memory of the Heneage Family, which he has at his decease hereby dedicated to his successors in the sacred office of Minister of Lyneham for the use of the clergymans family, the other when built, he exchanged with Mr. John Pullen for a pew which he has also hereby dedicated for the use of the resident clergymans servant; at the time he raised and repaired the pulpit which was in a dangerous state, erected some benches for the Sunday School children, and established a verger at one pound per annum to main discipline during Divine Service.

The churchyard not having any good footpath through, and being particularly requisite at funerals, he, in conjunction with some help from the parish, had the present gravel walk prepared, and the stones round the great porch raised, levelled and secured, repaired the boundaries of the churchyard, and has a wall at the East side built in exchange for a few yards of ground in which (as it fully appeared) no one had been buried.

The observations on the other side are not registered with any ostentatious feeling, but in the hope that succeeding ministers will be induced to bestow a portion of their emoluments towards the decent and reputable appearance of their own residence and particularly of the place where God's name is recorded.