

Madame Clementine Louise Rumph- The Iron Cross Nurse



Every graveyard has a story to tell, and Melling Churchyard is no exception. Tucked in a corner, just a few yards from Ivy Cottage where she lived is the grave of Clementine Louise Rumph. She died in 1898 aged 73.

She was the fourth daughter of Franz Karl Rumph, a staff Captain in the Prussian Army. She was born in Frankfurt, and her father was well known in court circles.

Clementine developed a lifelong friendship with the Crown Princess. Clementine was still a teenager when her father died, and she came to England for

her education and she also did missionary work amongst the poor.

When the Franco-Prussian War broke out in 1870 Clementine returned to Prussia, and the Crown Princess asked her to volunteer as a nurse at the front, largely to care for the Crown Prince.

She carried out her nursing duties under the most appalling conditions and on New Years Day 1871 the Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany presented her with the Iron Cross for her services. After the war she returned to England and after several years with the family of Canon Knowllys she answered an advert for the position of companion to the sister of the Reverend Rimington, vicar of Melling. In 1837 she began a new life in Melling. Although she never married she was passionately fond of children, and the children of the district got to hear of the 'strange speaking lady' who told such wonderful stories.



Clementine Louise Rumph photographed in Melling

She began to write *The Childrens Corner* in *The Lancaster guardian*. In 1893 her duties as companion ceased, on the death of Miss Rimington, and she went to live in Ivy Cottage. She continued to write under the pseudonym of Aunt Daisy. She became known as the "Daisy Chain Lady" a title she was to cherish until her dying day in 1898. A plaque in her memory, and telling her story, is next to the font inside the church.

GEK