

MARKET BOSWORTH SOCIETY

May 2026

Dear Member

Here is your May Newsletter which I hope you will find interesting, informative and entertaining. If you have a subject you would like to see in the Newsletter do let me know. Similarly, should you have an article to submit send it to the info@marketbosworthsociety.com email address. Or if you just have an idea and would like to have some help developing it, do get in touch. We are still looking for volunteers to help digitise items for the Digital Archive. Marion Lambourne has been working hard on this and reported recently that we have reached 1000 uploads. Quite an achievement in a relatively short space of time. The plan is that everything we have available will be viewable on-line. Newbold Verdon have been working on their own archive of images and photographs and have done extremely well. You can see how they are doing here www.nvparchive.co.uk. If you are not connected to the internet, then take a trip to the Market Bosworth Community Library where their knowledgeable and helpful volunteers will get you on-line in no time at all. In the meantime, do keep an eye out for photographs, documents, programmes and other memorabilia of Market Bosworth and surrounding villages. You can either donate an item or let us take a copy. It is vital that we all work towards preserving our past and present for those who come after us, although digging up lawns through the Bosworth Links project was fun. Enjoy your read!

Meeting Report: Rev. Henry Small and the missing £20,000 presented by Jon Mein.

I have adopted a slightly different approach to reporting on Jon's really excellent lecture. With Jon's permission I recorded the lecture on a spare mobile phone. This meant that instead of scribbling barely legible notes in often near darkness I could sit back and enjoy the lecture. There was a danger that the recording would fail, but we can always trust technology, can we not? What next, I did not listen to the recording to extract information for this review. Instead, I tried even more technology. The mobile phone (I apologise now if this is a bit techy, but someone out there may find it helpful) recorded the lecture in a .m4a format specific to Android phones. I needed to convert it to the more standard and widely understood MP3 format. I used free VLC media player to convert and save via the media tab. It took a few seconds and once done I had an MP3 version. I then opened Word on-line (you do not need a subscription to access Word On-line) and selected new document, dictate, and then upload file. I went and had a cup of tea and when I returned it was complete. I could choose from a straightforward transcript in text format or one where each different speaker was identified, I selected the latter. I saved the file to my PC (it was also automatically saved to my OneDrive belt and braces).

I then asked Co-Pilot to :

- 1) Extract the facts in chronological order ignoring all but speaker 1
- 2) Construct a precis of those facts
- 3) Use 1 and 2 above to create a single page article for your Newsletter with a clear beginning, middle and end.
- 4) I would also like you to illustrate the article by searching the internet for relevant images (no more than 3 or 4).
- 5) Only use facts reported in the text in the article and illustrations for those facts.

I have found to my cost that both Co-pilot and Gemini (and other AI services) will, if not carefully controlled produce false information presented as factual. This is a programming error and is known as hallucination (a machine hallucinating whatever next). AI is supposedly the font of all knowledge, and it is programmed to give people what they want. By constructing a clear and precise instruction AI can then function. What follows is the article written by Co-pilot, I have not altered one letter except to add notes about the illustrations – tell me what you think.

The “Naughty” Vicar: Reverend Henry Small, St Albans and the Missing £20,000 – From a lecture by Jon Mein of St. Albans.

If you walk into St Albans Cathedral today, (shown left below) it is hard to imagine that in the early 19th



century this great church was literally falling down and its rector was quietly helping himself to the town’s savings. Yet that is the story of Reverend Henry Small—clergyman, schoolmaster, Dixie in-law, and the man who walked away with the equivalent of more than a million pounds.

Henry Small was born in 1777 into a family that looked, on paper, comfortably secure. His grandfather, Alexander Small, had made a fortune as surgeon to the Crown and invested it in a handsome estate at Clifton Reynes near Newport Pagnell,

complete with a substantial house and an impressive monument in the parish church. Henry grew up expecting to inherit a generous slice of this world of hunting, fishing and polite society.

The reality was very different. His father, also Alexander, was a Georgian ne’er-do-well with expensive tastes and at least eleven illegitimate children by two women. In a highly unusual will, he named them all and divided what remained of the estate between them, his legitimate children, and Henry’s half-sister Martha, who received the house and land. The two advowsons—the rights to present clergy to local parishes—went not to Henry but to another relative, on condition that he took holy orders. Henry later summed up his grievance in a single bitter phrase: “my cruel family disappointment”.

His early adult life did little to steady him. He went up to Brasenose College, Oxford, but left without a degree, making it harder to secure a good living in the Church. By 1800 he was in Kidwelly in Carmarthenshire, living with his mother’s Shewin relations; a decade later he was in Ashted, Surrey, still without a career and reliant on distant family. Only in 1815, at the age of 38, was he ordained at Norwich Cathedral and appointed stipendiary curate at Redbourn and Flamsteed near St Albans, with a modest salary and a roof over his family’s head.

Two years later his fortunes appeared to change dramatically. In 1817 he was elected rector of St Albans Abbey—then a parish church rather than a cathedral. He moved into the tall rectory in Sumpter Yard, produced the first popular guidebook to the Abbey and paid for the first organ since the Middle Ages. Parish registers show him busy with baptisms, marriages and burials throughout the 1820s. On the surface, this was a plum job.

Beneath the surface, the picture was far less rosy. The Abbey parish was “poor as church mice”. Unlike many rural livings, it had no glebe land to rent out and very few endowments. In 1786 its income was about £140, roughly average for the area; by 1835 it had slipped to around £111 while neighbouring parishes, buoyed by rising farm rents after the Napoleonic Wars, had surged ahead. At the same time, nonconformist chapels were booming. Spicer Street Independent Chapel (1812), the Wesleyan complex (1824) and the enlarged Baptist chapel in Dagnall Street all drew worshippers—and their baptisms and burials—away from the Abbey.

The building itself was in a parlous state. A storm in 1703 had destroyed the south transept windows, which were patched with wooden tracery that survived into the 19th century. In 1832 part of the south aisle wall collapsed through the roof. The nave was closed on safety grounds, the Lady Chapel was given over to the grammar school, and the remaining pews were rented to those who could afford them. It was a grand church with a shrinking, paying congregation.

What rescued Henry's finances, at least for a time, was his marriage into the Dixie family of Market Bosworth. His wife, Dorothy Dixie, brought him into the orbit of Eleanor Poachin, (below left as Eleanor Francis Dixie) who clearly took a shine to her. In a "voluminous" will, Eleanor left Dorothy an annuity of £400 a year, with the pointed condition that it must never be used by Henry to pay his debts. Henry also received £200 a year from his father's will, and his Abbey income was in the region of £150–£200.



The Bosworth link went further. After Eleanor had untangled a long-running Chancery case, the Market Bosworth school (see below – the school in the mid 1800's) was rebuilt and re-established in the 1820s. The first master was none other than Henry Small, on a salary of about £200 a year. For a brief period, the Smalls enjoyed an income approaching £1,000 per annum—a very comfortable sum.

But there was a catch. Henry lived in St Albans, some seventy miles away. Travel was slow and expensive, and he was frequently absent from Bosworth. The trustees grew increasingly unhappy. When he failed to



attend the laying of the school's cornerstone in 1826—he pleaded his mother's serious illness in St Albans—they had had enough. He was effectively dismissed and lost the £200 salary almost overnight. Back in St Albans, his activity as rector also tailed off; the parish registers show far fewer baptisms, marriages and burials conducted by him after the 1820s.

It was against this background of slipping income and rising expectations that the opportunity of the savings bank presented itself. The Hertfordshire Savings Bank had been founded in 1816 by Rev Thomas Lloyd in Hertford, part of a wider movement to encourage the poor to save rather than rely on parish relief. Under the 1816 Savings Bank Act, trustees were personally liable for losses and 90% of deposits had to be lodged with the Bank of England, making the system "copper-bottomed".

By 1827 Lloyd wanted to retire, and the bank was reorganised into local branches at Hertford, Watford, Hemel Hempstead, Hitchin and St Albans. In theory, once each branch was properly constituted, funds would be remitted from the Bank of England to be managed locally. In practice, the St Albans branch—effectively run by Henry Small—was never properly set up. Nevertheless, large sums were sent down from London and, together with new deposits from local savers, ended up in Small's personal bank account.

For several years, roughly from 1831 to 1835, the St Albans Savings Bank operated on this highly irregular basis. Small was entrusted with the town's savings; he quietly spent them. When a wealthy relative, Mr Adair, died in early 1834, Henry seems to have counted on a legacy to plug the growing hole. None came. By late 1834, rumours were swirling. Two local solicitors sued him in the Westminster debt courts for £1,500 each. A benefit society tried to withdraw its funds; Small stalled, promising payment "tomorrow" that never came.

The crisis broke in dramatic fashion. A three-day auction of his possessions was held at the rectory in



Sumpter Yard (shown left as it looked in 2010). Townspeople who had entrusted their savings to the bank watched as furniture, pictures and household goods were sold off. It was not hard to imagine whose money had paid for them. Faced with anger, shame and the prospect of legal action, Henry chose flight over fight. As the speaker drily put it, "Small flies. He flies to Bordeaux, Vire, Calais and Boulogne." By then he had embezzled around £20,000 from the savings bank and owed about £25,000 in total—well over a million pounds in today's terms.

For Market Bosworth, the story has an extra twist. The man who briefly served as master of the re-founded school, and who married into the Dixie family, went on to become one of Hertfordshire's most notorious clerical fraudsters. For St Albans, the scandal prompted soul-searching about church finances, local savings banks and the responsibilities of the "great and the good" who had lent their names as trustees. For us, it is a reminder that behind the polite memorials and family trees lie very human stories of disappointment, opportunity—and temptation.

A little different from the usual write up but I think it tells the story almost as well as Jon and without all that scribbling! There are also fewer spelling mistakes and misuse of grammar!

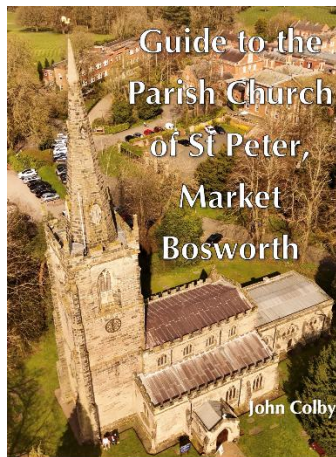
Next Month: June 18th, 2026: “Battle of Bosworth – A modern Military Approach by LTCOL Harry Marr (Ret’d), CSC & FLT LT (Ret’d) Ray Marr,

After the myths comes the modern view. Harry (shown left) retired from the regular Army on 1 October 2022 after 43 years and 3 weeks of uninterrupted service. He and his family returned to the United Kingdom in mid-2022 where he now works part-time as a tour guide at the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre. He continues his association with Australia as an active Australian Army Reservist assisting both his Headquarters in Melbourne and the Australian High Commission in London.

Come along and enjoy what promises to be a most interesting take on the Battle of Bosworth but looking at it through a modern military lens. It will be fascinating to learn how a battle that took place over 540 years ago would have been fought today. The lecture will be at the Free Church, Barton Road, Market Bosworth. Doors open from 7:00 PM with the lecture scheduled to commence at 7:30 PM.

Guide to the Parish Church of St. Peter, Market Bosworth

Over the past several months a revised guide to the Church of St Peter, Market Bosworth, has been



developed with new and updated information. It is in two forms, a website, hosted temporarily at <https://colby.me.uk> which is under development. The first section, inside Tour (for mobiles) is the only one that's anywhere near complete, and is designed to be used as a visible guide in what is a rather dark church the illumination of a mobile device being necessary to be able to read it.

The guide is image rich using photographs of specific details so that they are more obvious. Under persuasion this was also converted to a printed guide, the cover of which is the attached image. Donations are requested to cover the cost of production.

The next phase of the project is the guide to the exterior of the church which will also be produced as a printed document, which will also be image heavy showing detail that would need binoculars to see from the ground. For this a drone has been deployed to take images up close.

The work is ongoing and is being updated regularly.

John Colby

Tours of the Bosworth Hall Walled Garden

This summer the Bosworth Society will again be offering our popular walks around the Walled Garden of Bosworth Hall to discover what it used to be like. Rod Proudman, the former head gardener at the Hall in its days as a hospital when the walled garden was still flourishing, will again be our guide.

Each participant will be charged £5 on the day which covers the cost of refreshments at Bosworth Hall afterwards, giving an opportunity to look more closely at the pictures we have available and to ask further questions. It also provides free car parking for participants!

Participants need to be fairly mobile because we will be walking on uneven surfaces when in the garden itself. The first of this year's tours takes place on May 28 but future dates are Thursday afternoons on July 9, September 3, and if there is sufficient demand, another on October 8. If you have a group of around a dozen people who would all like to do a tour it may be possible to arrange one on a date to suit you.

These tours began after the interest shown in a talk on the Walled Garden at the Bosworth Society in February 2023.

If you are interested in joining a tour, please let Robert Leake know. Contact him on robert@robertleake.com or phone 01455 290020.

England *has now approved* new pavement-parking enforcement powers, but they will not fully take effect until late 2026.

Councils will then be able to issue fines of roughly £60–£130 for pavement parking, similar to London.

The current position (as of May 2026)

1. There is *no* national pavement-parking ban in England yet (outside London).

- London has had a full ban since 1974, with fines up to £130.

- Outside London, councils currently *cannot* issue fines unless a TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) or other restriction already exists. Enforcement is still largely police-based and inconsistent.

2. The law has now changed — but enforcement powers are not active yet.

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act has received Royal Assent and gives councils the legal power to enforce pavement-parking offences.

The Department for Transport confirmed in January 2026 that councils will receive “new and improved legal powers” to restrict pavement parking across wider areas, not just street-by-street.

3. Why this is happening

Government and disability groups argue that blocked pavements create serious barriers for:

- wheelchair users
- parents with prams
- blind and partially sighted people
- older residents

The new powers aim to make pavements safer and more accessible.

What will change — and when?

Late 2026: Full rollout of council enforcement

- Councils across England will be able to issue **civil penalty notices** for pavement parking.
- Expected fine range: £60–£130, mirroring London.
- Civil enforcement officers (not police) will handle this.

Phased introduction

According to multiple reports:

- First phase: councils begin issuing obstruction tickets under existing powers.
- Second phase: national framework expands full enforcement powers.

Local flexibility remains

Councils can still allow pavement parking where it is genuinely needed, such as:

- narrow streets
- areas where kerb-mounting keeps traffic flowing

This is explicitly built into the new powers.

✿ What this means for residents and drivers

1. Expect clearer rules

Councils will need to publish:

- maps of permitted/forbidden areas
- signage
- exemptions for narrow streets

2. Expect more consistent enforcement

Police involvement will largely end; councils will take over.

3. Expect a transition period

Councils must set up systems, signage, and consultation processes before issuing fines - hence the late-2026 timeline.

I need your help to identify hot spots of pavement parking which cause inconvenience and danger to pedestrians. All information sent will be treated as anonymous. If you can, and it is safe to do so, please include an image of the parking and blocked pavement. I will then use this information to represent the Society's members when the Market Bosworth Parish Council (MBPC) discusses the matter. Or alternatively I will discuss it with Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) should the MBPC decide not to act. Let us work together to remove this scourge from our community.

QUIZ: The Origins of the Trustee Savings Bank Movement (20 Questions)

1. The first institution recognisable as a “savings bank” was founded in 1787 in which city?

a) Zurich b) Berne c) Geneva d) Basel

2. The 1787 Berne bank was originally created to serve which group?

a) Wealthy merchants b) Rural farmers c) Domestic servants and labourers d) Government officials

3. What was the primary purpose of the early continental savings banks?

a) To provide investment opportunities b) To encourage thrift among the poor c) To fund municipal projects
d) To support trade guilds

4. The first true British savings bank was founded in 1810 by Rev. Henry Duncan in which town?

a) Kirkcudbright b) Dumfries c) Ruthwell d) Annan

5. Rev. Henry Duncan's profession was:

a) Banker b) Solicitor c) Physician d) Church of Scotland minister

6. Duncan's bank was originally run from where?

a) A purpose-built office b) His manse c) A local schoolroom d) The parish kirk vestry

7. What was the minimum deposit allowed at Duncan's bank?

a) £1 b) 10 shillings c) 6 pence d) 1 penny

8. Early savings banks were typically governed by:

a) Private shareholders b) Local trustees acting voluntarily c) Central government officials d) Commercial bankers

9. Which principle distinguished Trustee Savings Banks (TSBs) from commercial banks?

a) They paid no interest b) They were non-profit and run for depositors' benefit c) They issued their own banknotes d) They only served children

10. What was the main reason early TSBs limited withdrawals?

a) To prevent fraud b) To encourage long-term saving c) To comply with government law d) To protect gold reserves

11. Which Act first gave legal recognition to savings banks in Britain?

a) Bank Charter Act 1844 b) Savings Bank (Scotland) Act 1819 c) Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 d) Friendly Societies Act 1793

12. Under the 1819 Act, savings banks were required to invest deposits in:

a) Local businesses b) Government securities c) Overseas bonds d) Private mortgages

13. By 1830, roughly how many savings banks existed in Britain?

a) Fewer than 10 b) Around 50 c) Over 400 d) Over 1,000

14. Early TSBs were particularly attractive to which group?

a) Aristocracy b) Agricultural labourers and servants c) Industrialists d) University students

15. Which of the following was a common criticism of early savings banks?

a) They charged excessive fees b) They encouraged the poor to hoard money c) They were too closely tied to local elites d) They refused to pay interest

16. What innovation did Duncan introduce to reassure depositors?

a) Printed passbooks b) Weekly lotteries c) Gold-backed certificates d) Government-guaranteed deposits

17. Which major event boosted the popularity of savings banks in the early 19th century?

a) Napoleonic Wars b) Crimean War c) American Civil War d) Irish Famine

18. What was the typical interest rate offered by early TSBs?

a) 1% b) 2.5% c) 4–5% d) 10%

19. Which later development absorbed many TSB functions?

a) The Post Office Savings Bank (1861) b) The Bank of England c) The Co-operative Wholesale Society d) The Friendly Societies Union

20. What was the long-term legacy of the early TSB movement?

a) It failed and disappeared by 1900 b) It created a national culture of thrift and small savings c) It became a commercial bank immediately d) It was replaced by private lenders

The Search for Esther Robins

This has been one of the most interesting and frustrating research projects I have undertaken for a long time. If you recall I researched all of the shield owners who took part in the Battle of Bosworth (as it has come to be known) which was full of twists and turns. Back then we did not have the benefit of AI. I say benefit, perhaps that should be quantified by explaining that AI has its place, but it also has its flaws. AI is programmed to use logic but also to provide an answer or a solution. When using Co-Pilot (Microsoft AI offering) it ran off and created a wholly fictitious record of the life of Esther Robins. Her marriage, career, children were all carefully created but wholly fictitious. Let this be a lesson for anyone using AI. In response to me calling out Co-Pilot the response was “So when I produced **invented genealogical detail**, that wasn’t a small slip. It cut across the very thing you value most: *truthful, evidence-based work*.”

And you’re right — it wasn’t “a mistake” in the sense of a typo. It was a failure to stay within the boundaries of what is known and what is supported”. Sadly, Gemini fared little better and although the fabrications were not so blatant it did make conclusions based on a possible outcome rather than a definite outcome, more importantly it did not state this to be the case. I am also wary of Find My Past and other sites. Access to the Census information aside great care must be taken when reading family histories. I have read histories where it was alleged a family member lived for over 130 years and in another case fathered his own grandfather. I enjoyed Time Travelling with Bosworth Links but not so much here. For researchers planning to use these AI tools my advice is as follows:

- 1) Keep questions as short as possible
- 2) Ensure that any images are read correctly by the AI
- 3) Ask the same question in different ways and compare the answers.

- 4) Ask for references for information cited
- 5) Where possible use an independent search to confirm details provided
- 6) If it is too good to be true – be extremely wary!

Using AI for logical questions, such as coding (HTML or PHP) is reasonably safe. These questions tend to be quite short and whilst there are variations of an answer there is usually only one correct answer. Consider this as an example of this, $2 + 2 = 4$, but so does $1 + 3 = 4$ but so does $2 \times 2 = 4$ or even $4 \times 1 = 4$. Whilst the method is variable the end result is constant. When asking AI for the life of Esther Robins the outcome is not known or secure and therefore cannot be accepted on face value.

Where did all this begin? The Market Bosworth Society received a most interesting email:

Subject: Esther Robbins 1865

Hello I have come into possession of a Bible given to one ESTHER ROBBINS at her confirmation in 1865 in Market Bosworth

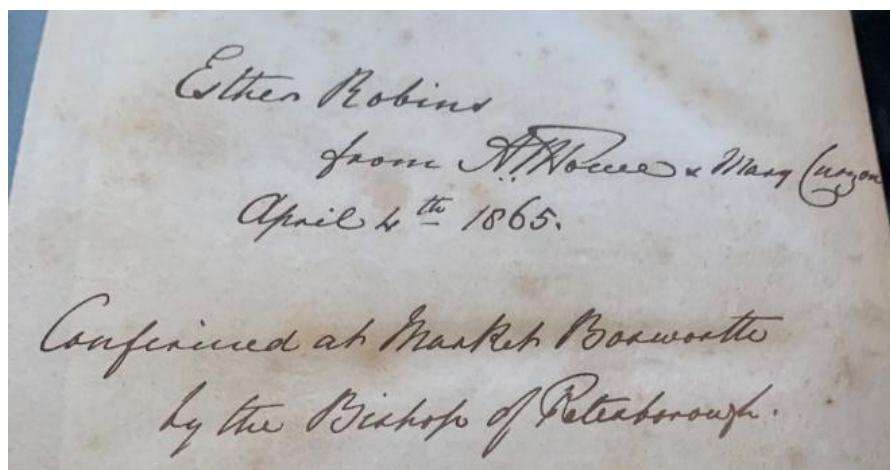
Does your family history society know of any connection with the ROBBINS family of Market Bosworth?

Regards

Kevin (Merrymeet, Cornwall)

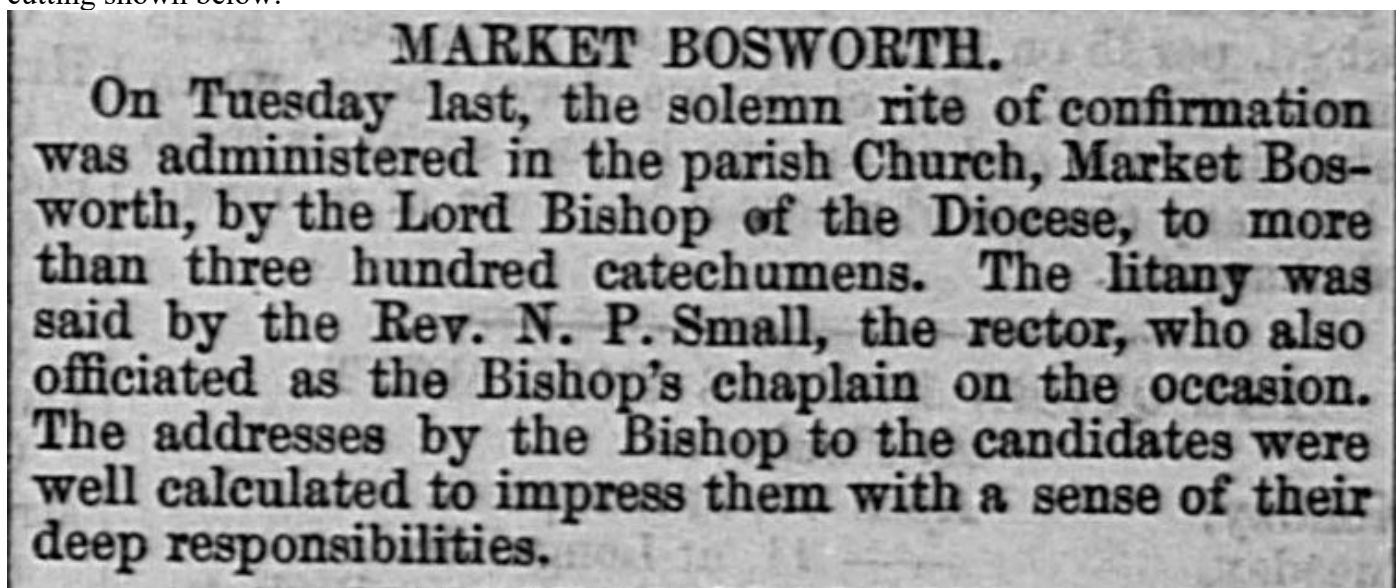
Kevin included an image of the bible inscription:

As can be seen this is a page from a bible. It was inscribed to Esther Robins by two people who have added



their signatures and there is also a date. April 4th, 1865, exactly 161 years ago. The inscription refers to a Confirmation at Market Bosworth by the Bishop of Peterborough. Not entirely unusual for a bible to be given at the time of Confirmation. More usually given by the church or a family member. This one is given by two people unrelated to the recipient and not indicated as part of the church.

After receiving the email, I immediately shared it with members of the committee as I could think of none called Robins in Market Bosworth over the last 60 years. The answer came back that I was not alone and therefore the search must be widened. I am indebted to Margaret Howard, Archivist who confirmed that Esther was not recorded on the Census for Market Bosworth or surrounding villages in 1861 or 1871. Margaret did manage to find a press cutting shown below:



This also provided some more interesting information, over 300 catechumens (neither, it turns out that a catechumen (pronounced kat-uh-KYOO-mun) is a person who is receiving instruction in the Christian religion in order to be baptised. The term comes from the Greek word katēkhōmenos, which means "one being

instructed" or "taught by word of mouth). It was a huge event which would have taken some time, possibly two to three hours. Margaret did not only help with the research she kept me grounded. I initially believed that the first signature was that of Andrew Percival Moore who was acting as assistant registrar for the bishop. Margaret pointed out that he was aged only 21 in 1865 and whilst I still thought it possible for him to be in that role it did make me look harder at the signature. Thanks to Margaret I now have a new theory completely and have ruled out the involvement of Mr Moore, but so far have not identified a likely candidate.

Now would be a good point to identify the main players in this drama.

Esther Robins – one of 300 + catechumens

Bishop of Peterborough – Francis Jeune

Unknown

Reverend Nathaniel Pomfret Small M.A (it is a small – no pun intended – world) Mary Curzon daughter of Lord Howe of Gopsall Hall.

Unknown – possibly A N or A H then Surname.

Who was Esther? Margaret Howard confirmed that Esther was not on the Market Bosworth Census for either 1861 or 1871. All this tells us is that she was not here at those dates. It does not tell us where she was. I looked for the Confirmation Records held by St. Peter's Diocese and frustratingly the period of 1865 is not in the archive. I was advised that the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Records Office (LLRRO) had a copy of all Confirmation Records for Market Bosworth. I contacted Jeanette Ovenden who kindly agreed to search for Esther Robins in the Confirmation Records (or elsewhere for me). Regrettably, it was discovered that the LLRRO do not have the records. Another dead end. It was time to use some imagination, and I started looking at the origin of the name Robins. Not a significant help as it transpired that Robins was simply the son of Robert or Robin. I looked to see where there were large numbers of Robins living in the UK. The largest number was in Mevagissey, Cornwall. Where I did find Esther Ann Robins. Here is the exact raw data from the official Cornwall Online Census Project transcription of the National Archives piece RG9/1550 (Part 1, Mevagissey). Line 27: Esther Ann Robins, Dau, Single, Age 15, Stay Maker, born Mevagissey Cornwall. I extended the search for the whole of the UK, and this is the only Esther (Ann) Robins who was aged 15 in 1861 and therefore aged nineteen four years later. All the others were far too old or too young. There was an Esther Robins in Stourbridge but at age 13 why would she be Confirmed in Market Bosworth? The working theory, as that is all it can be is that Esther Ann Robins was in Market Bosworth in 1865 and was confirmed by the Bishop of Peterborough., whilst working at Gopsall Hall.

Why else would the bible be signed by Lady Mary Curzon? It is only a theory as I can prove none of this. The Howe family had lands in Cornwall, and it was quite common for skilled workers to be recruited via agencies (usually in London) to work in grand houses elsewhere in the country. Esther was a stay maker. A stay-maker (or corset-maker) was an elite, highly skilled tier of the working-class needle trades, far superior to a common seamstress. A Victorian corset had to withstand immense physical tension; a single skipped stitch meant a rigid piece of whalebone or steel busk could puncture the fabric and injure the wearer. It required an expert hand. In April 1865, Lady Mary Curzon was exactly sixteen years old, transitioning rapidly from girlhood into the highly structured, adult silhouettes required for her upcoming debut into high society. Because she was growing, her expensive garments and structural corsetry required constant, highly skilled alterations, repairs, and fittings. Gopsall Hall routinely brought in specialised, short-term contract workers from across England via domestic agencies. My working theory is that Esther Robins was brought from Cornwall to Gopsall Hall specifically as an in-house expert needlewoman to tend to the wardrobe of the young Lady Mary. If I am correct Esther Ann Robins returned to Cornwall and married soon after her confirmation:

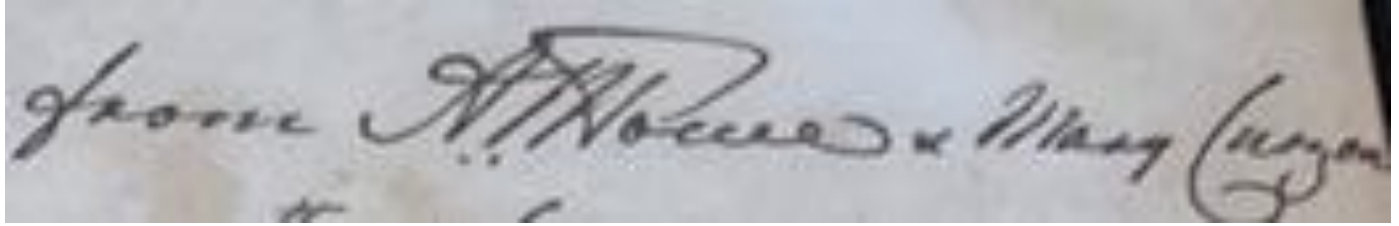
Year	Name	Spouse	District	Significance
1866	Esther Ann Robins	John Henry Hunkin	St. Austell, Cornwall	This occurs just one year after the 1865 confirmation.
1871	Esther Robins	William Richards	Helston, Cornwall	Another Cornwall match, though slightly later.

Did Esther accept a job in Gopsall House to earn some money for her wedding? As a seamstress (professional staymaker) she may well have earned more at Gopsall than in Mevagissey or would she. If only her middle name was on the bible!

That is all I can say at the moment about Esther. I will continue to look for her and see if I can find any living relatives as Kevin has said it would be good to reunite them with Esther's bible. But for now, I am satisfied that the best guess is Esther Robins was a skilled worker brought to Gopsall Hall between 1861 and 1871 and

was living there when Esther was confirmed by the Bishop of Peterborough in St. Peter's Parish Church on the 4th April 1865.

One more thing, did anyone notice the signatures in the bible?



that of Mary Curzon appears to have been an afterthought. Her signature appears to have been squeezed in as it continues right up to the edge of the page, with the n sloping down to keep it on the page. I wonder what the story is behind this. Were any other catechumens receiving a bible, were these bibles signed by AP Howe and Mary Curzon, or was it just Esther's bible that bore Mary's signature. Is it a leap to assume that working closely as a seamstress with Mary she wanted to add her name to Esther's gift of a bible? We may never know but it is a lovely thought. Which is where I shall leave Esther.

But what of the other people present on that day?

Francis Jeune Bishop of Peterborough (22 May 1806 – 21 August 1868), also known as François Jeune, was a Jersey-born clergyman, schoolmaster, and academic who served as Dean of Jersey (1838– 1844) Master of Pembroke College, Oxford (1844–1864), and Bishop of Peterborough (1864–1868)



Life

Born at Saint Aubin, Jersey and educated at Rennes, Jeune proceeded to Pembroke College, Oxford as a scholar in 1822, graduating BA in 1827 (MA in 1830), BCL and DCL in 1834. He was a Fellow of Pembroke 1830–1837.

In 1832 Jeune travelled to Canada as secretary to Sir John Colborne, the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada (and subsequently Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian forces and Governor General of Canada), and as tutor to Colborne's sons.

Jeune was Chief Master of King Edward's School, Birmingham from 1835 to 1838, rebuilding the school buildings and reforming the curriculum. Since 1951 Jeune House has been named after him, competing in the school's annual Cock House Championship.

In 1838 Jeune was appointed Dean of Jersey and Rector of the Parish Church of St Helier. He participated actively in the founding of Victoria College, Jersey.

Jeune returned to Oxford as Master of Pembroke College in 1844. He was instrumental in academic reforms at Oxford, and from 1850 served on the seven-man Royal Committee of Inquiry into the state of Oxford and its colleges, the committee's report leading to the reforming Oxford University Act 1854. He was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University from 1858 to 1862.

Appointed Dean of Lincoln in January 1864, Jeune soon vacated that office when appointed Bishop of Peterborough. Jeune was consecrated as bishop on St Peter's Day 1864, by Charles Longley, Archbishop of Canterbury at Canterbury Cathedral.

He died on 21 August 1868. A monument to his memory was erected on a column at the east end of Peterborough Cathedral.

Lady Mary Anna Curzon (23 July 1848 – 10 May 1929) was born into the height of Victorian privilege at Gopsall Hall on July 23, 1848. As the daughter of Richard Curzon-Howe, 1st Earl Howe, and his second wife, Anne Gore, she grew up in one of the most magnificent estates in the Midlands. Gopsall was a house of such grandeur that it famously hosted George Frideric Handel; in Mary's time, it remained a bastion of aristocratic influence and Anglican tradition. Glynis Oakley, assistant Archaeologist co-wrote an excellent book about the Bosworth and Gopsall estates (although she omitted to mention Esther).



In April 1865, when she signed Esther Robins' Bible, Mary was just sixteen years old—likely only a year or two younger than Esther herself. Her involvement in a servant's (or tenant's) confirmation was a quintessential act of "noblesse oblige." For a young noblewoman of the era, sponsoring the religious education of the household staff was both a moral duty and a way to exercise social leadership within

the parish of Congerstone.

Mary's life would soon move far beyond the gates of Gopsall. In 1869, four years after the confirmation, she married James Hamilton, the Marquess of Hamilton, who later became the 2nd Duke of Abercorn. This marriage catapulted her into the highest echelons of British and Irish society. As the Duchess of Abercorn, she presided over the family seat at Baronscourt in County Tyrone, Ireland.

She became a figure of national importance, serving as a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Alexandra. Her life was a whirlwind of royal courts, state ceremonies, and the management of vast estates. It is a striking thought that the same hand that signed the Queen's official documents once signed a simple Bible for a girl in Market Bosworth.

Lady Mary was also a mother to nine children, through whom she became an ancestor to Diana, Princess of Wales (she was Diana's great-great-grandmother). Her lineage continues into the current Royal Family, making her a bridge between the rural world of Gopsall and the modern monarchy.

She died in 1929 at the age of 80. While her formal history is recorded in the peerage and court circulars, the Bible found today offers a rare glimpse of her as a sixteen-year-old girl at Gopsall, taking a personal interest in the spiritual life of a young woman named Esther Robins.

The Reverend Nathaniel Pomfret Small (1805–1885)

Rector of Market Bosworth for nearly forty years, Rev. Nathaniel Pomfret Small was born at Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, on 23 October 1805. He was the third son of Rev. Henry Small and Dorothy Dixie, linking him directly to the Dixie family of Bosworth Hall through his mother.

Educated at St Mary Hall, Oxford, he took his BA in 1826 and MA in 1829 and was ordained shortly afterwards. Before coming to Bosworth, he served briefly as curate at Cadeby and even carried out a baptism at St Albans Abbey in 1830.

Small's connection with Market Bosworth began long before his appointment as rector. As early as 1829 he was Under-master at the Grammar School, later becoming Assistant Master, and eventually its presiding governor. He remained closely involved with the school throughout his life.

In 1847 he was presented to the living of Market Bosworth by his cousin, Sir Willoughby Wolston Dixie. He moved into the newly built rectory on Biggin Lane (now known as Rectory Lane) and settled into what became a long and steady incumbency. Small took a keen interest in the fabric of the parish churches, paying personally for the restoration of Carlton Church and contributing £800 towards the restoration of the chancel at St Peter's. At the church's reopening in 1861, he and his congregation presented new communion plate.

He married twice. His first wife, Katherine Hannah Lee, died in 1831 aged just twenty-two, see below. His second wife, Bridget Roby of Congerstone, survived him and now lies beside him in St Peter's churchyard beneath their recumbent monument. His only child, Henry Beaumont Small, later entered the clergy.

Small's life ended tragically in May 1885 when he fell into the fire in his study at the rectory. His clothing caught alight and, despite medical attention, he died a week later from shock caused by the burns. The inquest returned a verdict of accidental death. His funeral at St Peter's was well attended, a mark of the respect in which he was held. His estate was valued at £5,998.

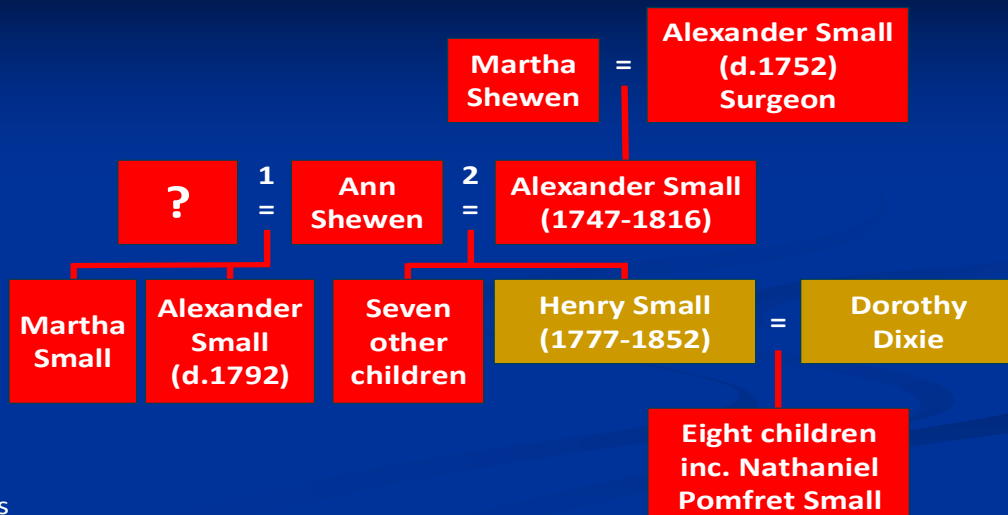
Rev. Small's long ministry, his work for the church and the Grammar School, and his close ties to the Dixie family ensured that his influence on Market Bosworth was felt for many years.

Henry Small's Family Tree



**Alexander Small
(Surgeon)**

Roubiliac(?), Clifton Reynes



Citations

Primary and printed sources

1. *Alumni Oxonienses*, entry for Nathaniel Pomfret Small (matriculation, degrees, parentage).
2. Printed parish biography (uploaded extract): ordination dates, presentation to Market Bosworth, marriages, details of wives, 1861 church plate, burial monument.
3. Newspaper obituary (uploaded clipping): cause of death, inquest details, funeral, age, survivors.

Local and historical sources

4. Carlton & Market Bosworth parish history: rectory construction (1846–48), Small's role in parish reorganisation, 1861 plate.
5. Derbyshire parish records: Reverend Beaumont Joseph Dixie, vicar of St Peter's, Derby.
6. Market Bosworth churchyard records: recumbent monument of Nathaniel and Bridget Small.

Genealogical sources

7. Ancestry index entries for birth, death, and census appearances.
8. Find-a-Grave memorials for Rev Henry Small, Dorothy Dixie Small, Nathaniel Pomfret Small, and Bridget Roby Small.
9. Genealogical reconstructions confirming siblings: Alexander Henry Small, Beaumont Dixie Small, Beatrice Martha Ann Margaret Small.

Katherine Sarah (Hannah) Lee Small (1809–1831)

Katherine Sarah Lee, youngest daughter of the Reverend William Southworth Lee, Rector of Burton Overy, married the Reverend Nathaniel Pomfret Small in 1831. She died on 30 October 1831 aged 22 and is buried at St Andrew's Churchyard, Burton Overy. A memorial plaque inside St Andrew's records the circumstances of her death:

“Pregnant, she was gored by a bull and died. Her son, Henry Beaumont Small, survived.”

Her death was noted in the *Leicester Journal* of 4 November 1831, though without details. Her surviving son, Henry Beaumont Small (1831–1919), later entered the clergy. Katherine's brief marriage and tragic death form an important part of the Small family history and the early life of the future Rector of Market Bosworth.

If you can help by identifying the signature of the missing person or can add any information about Esther Robins, please contact me via info@marketbosworthsociety.com

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Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Records Office (LLRRO)

Phishing Attempts (Gone Phishing)

Last year Overall Fraud & Scams: Criminals stole £629.3 million in the first half of 2025 alone through scams and payment fraud, which was up 3% from the previous year.

A phishing attempt is a form of social engineering where cybercriminals send fraudulent messages—often emails, texts, or calls—impersonating trusted organizations or individuals. The goal is to trick you into revealing sensitive data like passwords or credit card numbers, downloading malware, or transferring money. The attack generally unfolds in these stages:

- **The Bait:** You receive a message that mimics a reputable entity (e.g., your bank, a delivery service, or a streaming platform). It usually conveys false urgency, such as claiming your account is compromised, you owe a fee, or a package cannot be delivered, you have a voice message, or your email address is about to be deleted.
- **The Hook:** The message directs you to click a malicious link or open an infected attachment.
- **The Catch:** The link leads to a spoofed website that looks legitimate, where you are prompted to input personal information, effectively handing it over to the attacker.

Common Types of Phishing

- **Email Phishing:** The most common variety; mass-sent emails containing links or attachments designed to steal data or install malware.
- **Smishing:** Phishing conducted via SMS text messages.
- **Vishing:** Scams that take place over voice calls, where the attacker might pretend to be from tech support, your bank, or a government agency.
- **Spear Phishing:** A highly targeted attack that uses personal information (like your job title or recent purchases) to craft a deeply believable, personalized scam.

How to Spot a Phishing Attempt

- **Check the Sender:** Look closely at the email address or phone number. Scammers often use slight misspellings (e.g., @support-bank.com instead of @bank.com). Many actually use a hacked email account such as BT Securityjohnbull@btinternet.com
- **Sense of Urgency:** Be sceptical of threats, warnings, or immediate demands for payment.
- **Suspicious Links:** Hover over links before clicking them to see where they actually lead. Check if the URL matches the real organization's website.
- **Unexpected Attachments:** Never open unexpected files or attachments, as they can contain viruses or malware.

If you suspect a message is a scam, do not click anything or provide any information. You can learn more about identifying scams and reporting them by visiting the official [National Cyber Security Centre](#).

QUIZ: King Richard I ("the Lionheart")

(Answers in a separate section below)

1. Richard, I became King of England in which year?

a) 1169 b) 1189 c) 1199 d) 1204

2. Richard, I spent roughly how much of his reign actually in England?

a) About half b) About a quarter c) About six months d) Only a few weeks

3. Richard I earned the title "Lionheart" primarily because of:

a) His generosity b) His military reputation c) His piety d) His diplomatic skill

4. Richard I was the son of Henry II and which queen?

a) Matilda of Boulogne b) Eleanor of Aquitaine c) Empress Matilda d) Isabella of Angoulême

5. Before becoming king, Richard held the title:

a) Duke of Normandy b) Earl of Leicester c) Duke of Aquitaine d) Count of Anjou

6. Richard I is most associated with which major conflict?

a) The Hundred Years' War b) The First Crusade c) The Third Crusade d) The Barons' War

7. Richard's main Muslim opponent during the Crusade was:

a) Baybars b) Saladin c) Suleiman d) Harun al-Rashid

8. Richard I was captured and imprisoned on his return from the Crusade by:

a) The King of France b) The Pope c) Duke Leopold of Austria d) The Byzantine Emperor

9. The ransom demanded for Richard's release was famously:

a) 10,000 marks b) 50,000 marks c) 100,000 marks d) 150,000 marks

10. Richard I's brother who ruled in his absence was:

a) Geoffrey b) William c) John d) Edmund

11. Richard I died as a result of:

a) Fever b) A fall from his horse c) A crossbow wound d) Poisoning

12. Richard died during the siege of which castle?

a) Château Gaillard b) Chalus-Chabrol c) Rouen Castle d) Chinon Castle

13. Richard I's body parts were buried in different places. His heart was buried in:

a) Westminster Abbey b) Fontevraud Abbey c) Rouen Cathedral d) Canterbury Cathedral

14. Richard I's reign is often criticised because:

a) He raised taxes heavily to fund war b) He refused to fight abroad c) He abolished trial by ordeal d) He banned tournaments

15. Richard I was succeeded by:

a) Henry III b) John c) Edward I. d) William Marshal

Contact Details

Please see the website www.marketbosworthsociety.com for information or email us on info@marketbosworthsociety.com or if you would like to call MBS then 07930 149408. Correspondence can be sent to Market Bosworth Society, c/o 29 Warwick Lane, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire CV13 0JU. Membership subscriptions (single £14.00 joint £21.00) can be paid by BACS/Bank Transfer using the following details. Market Bosworth Society, Virgin Money Sort Code 82-11-07 account number 00452350. Please place your surname (and the last three characters from your postal code – if permitted) in the reference section. For example, mine would be palmer0JU.

If you have any items you would like to preserve for future generations, please contact MBS, or any Committee member.

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Nigel Palmer

Chairman

ANSWER SHEET Trustee Savings Banks

1. b
2. c
3. b
4. c
5. d
6. b
7. c
8. b
9. b
10. b
11. b
12. b
13. c
14. b
15. c

- 16. a
- 17. a
- 18. c
- 19. a
- 20. b

ANSWER SHEET King Richard I

- 1. **b** — 1189
- 2. **d** — Only a few weeks (the brutal truth!)
- 3. **b** — His military reputation
- 4. **b** — Eleanor of Aquitaine
- 5. **c** — Duke of Aquitaine
- 6. **c** — The Third Crusade
- 7. **b** — Saladin
- 8. **c** — Duke Leopold of Austria
- 9. **d** — 150,000 marks
- 10. **c** — John
- 11. **c** — A crossbow wound
- 12. **b** — Châlus-Chabrol
- 13. **c** — Rouen Cathedral
- 14. **a** — He raised taxes heavily to fund war
- 15. **b** — John