

# The Blind Girl of Branston

a Memoir of Rebecca King

by Rev. Thornley Smith

Rebecca was born 14 July 1844 in Branston Fen daughter of a farm labourer. She was blind at birth. Rebecca was cared for by the children of the village and developed an acute sense of hearing and touch; she delighted in the sounds of nature around her.

At the age of 5 she went to the Wesleyan Chapel Sunday School where Mr Gynies the superintendent took a great interest in her. She had a retentive mind and could remember hymns, verses and scripture after hearing them but once.

Her father died when she was six years old so the Lyric Melvilles, bankers of Branston Hall, sent her to the Midland Institute for the Blind in Nottingham where she remained for several years.

She was a good pupil and learned to sew, knit and make brushes, she also became very accomplished at Braille.

When she returned home to Branston she was a regular member of the Chapel and one evening after hearing a sermon by Mr John Smith she decided to dedicate herself to God.

At the Institution she got together with like-minded students and formed a Bible-study group.

On leaving college for good she returned to carry on her worship at the Chapel. She was very frail in health and at the age of 20 she became ill and passed away, much mourned by her fellow worshippers of the village.

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