

Harold (Harry) Bloomer
Two Gates Ladies 'Bright Hour'



Phoebe Bloomer

My grandmother on my father's side was Mrs Phoebe Bloomer. She was born in Wollescote on 8th July 1895 and was the daughter of Amos and Rosehannah Perrins. Amos was one of the founders of Bethel Chapel, Hill Street, Wollescote and the family lived nearby in Balds Lane, the house having its own nail and cog making business in the rear yard. From a young age

grandma and her siblings were encouraged to read and to write scriptures, and were taught how to speak in public.

Looking at local maps it's easy to see that Bethel Chapel lies close to the ancient trading route which passes from Wollescote over Oldnall Road to Two Gates Ragged School.

Grandma married Walter Bloomer whose family held several properties on Two Gates Lane opposite to Perry's Shop. Walter was a Methodist Choir Master and they lived at various locations at The Lye, Quarry Bank and Brierley Hill before finally moving to Spring Street, Cradley.

Walter's grandfather was Abel Bloomer who for 50 years was Teacher and Superintendent of High Town Ragged School, Cradley. Abel died in 1918 and is buried at Cradley Free Church Burial Ground.



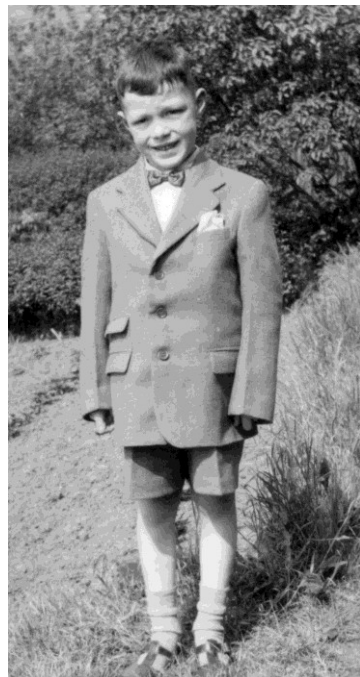
Abel Bloomer

Gran's younger brother was Wesley Perrins who was a very close friend of Clifford Willetts (former TGRS Superintendent). Clifford and Wesley are regularly seen together on old photographs taken in connection with Two Gates Ragged School, and at family, social and political events.

Having moved to Spring Street grandma became a regular member of Two Gates Ragged School taking an active part in the provision of education. She was elected as President of the Bright Hour formed by ladies at the chapel who met on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. Her sister Ethel from Brook Holloway, Wollescote also attended Bright Hour. My cousin Judith Pearson holds various note books that grandma kept to prepare the presentations she gave at ladies meetings. One of the notes is entitled 'Red Letter Day' and tells a story of a letter which my father, Harold (Wesley) Bloomer, sent home whilst stationed in Burma during the Second World War. Her red letter day was the empathy she felt with her son so many miles away.

When she died her daughter Edith Norris received a letter from Lillian Billingham dated June 20th, 1981 and written on behalf of Two Gates Ragged School 'Bright Hour'. The letter expressed the sorrow that Lillian felt at grandma's passing after a long illness and praising the good work she had done for the ladies' class as their President.

When I was a very young boy, and until the age of 11 years, I remember attending Two Gates Sunday School and how proud my mother was to dress me up each year in a new suit with short trousers to sing on stage at Two Gates anniversaries. As my mother also attended St Katherine's Church as well I had to attend that Sunday school and sing in their choir.



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When I was very young I didn't always behave as expected in chapel and regularly tested the patience of Clifford Willetts (Superintendent) with my mischievous antics, but he and his fellow teachers stuck to the task of teaching me to understand the good works mentioned in the Bible, things that I am still grateful for and which I believe help form part of who I am today.