

# Mary Mann (Raybold)

## ‘Some of my memories of Two Gates’

I was born August at 102 Two Gates, I lived there until



I was five in 1950, then my Mom and Dad purchased a shop and house opposite Two Gates Ragged School (No's 64 & 66). In the house next door to the shop lived a lady name Mrs Bate. One of my

memorises is of Mrs Bate standing at the top of her entry watching us (myself, Moryth Genner and Unice Hingley) play ball against the chapel wall. She was a lovely old lady.

I also remember running up the Two Gates on Sunday to walk down to the chapel with Mr Willetts.

It used to be a race to get there first to hold his hand. Another nice memory was Anniversary's, always new dresses and matching ribbon. I think practice was Tuesday nights with Mr Bate playing the organ and Mr Cox conducting us. Two of my Sunday school teachers were Brenda Dunn and my friend Ann Taylor's sister, Gillian.



Going to London with the Sunday school was very exciting. I think I went three times by train. Once we were looking at Big Ben and Mr Willetts looked at his watch and said, "It's slow again". It was always Lyons

Corner House for our meal, we all thought it was great.

Then came the winter and pantomime season at Birmingham. I can't remember now how many coaches went! It was quite a lot. Two acts I saw were 'Lenny the Lion' and 'The Three Monarchs'. They were very good.

In 1956 the Queen came to Halesowen and shortly after Mr Willets took us by bus to the Council House in Halesowen to look round and see the Queen's signature in the visitor's book. When I was about eight or nine a lady came to the chapel to speak to us, she had been to China and traced the footsteps of the great missionary Gladys Aylward, who was portrayed by Ingrid Bergman in the film (Inn of The Sixth Happiness) Mr Willetts asked me if I would present her with a bouquet of flowers and of course I said "Yes". This is a memory I will never forget. I do not know the Ladies name.

Another of my memories is of a man name Arthur Moyle MP who was an acquaintance of Mr Willetts. Now when Mr Moyle came to Cradley to see Mr Willetts he came to our house to meet my Mom and Dad (as my dad was well known for growing chrysanthemums). They became good friends over the years and each time he came he



would take some flowers back home to London for his wife. He said he had never seen flowers like them not even at Chelsea. Mom and Dad had letters of thanks from the House of Commons; I still have these in my possession.

I got married to David my husband in 1963 and left Two Gates for Stourbridge in 1965, I had a very happy childhood growing up in Two Gates. We always like to return to see our friends and everyone at Two Gates Ragged School.

M. Mann

P.S. I forgot to mention my very special prize from the Sunday school for attendance. It was a black leather bound bible with a zip around the edge. It was from 1955 when I was ten. It still looks as good today as it did then.