

POST CODE: B63 2HY ADDRESS: Two Gates Lane, Cradley GPS Location: N. 52.4751702 W. -2.0947117 GEOCACHE: GC3P6Y9  
 British Grid: SO 94116 84166 Memorial Location: Inside main chapel hall



## Clifford WILLETTS (OBE) [Memorial Plaque]

Clifford Willetts was born on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 1896 and was the son of chainmakers Thomas and Caroline Willetts who lived in Why Not Street, Cradley. He was educated at Netherend School, Mogul Lane and left aged 13 with a basic education to become an errand boy before specialising in making shackles, rings and chain for over 50 years.

He became Superintendent of Two gates Ragged School from 1924 and married Martha Bashford in 1925 moving to Gingerbread Row.

After speaking in public during the 1927 council elections, Cliff was offered a Parliamentary Constituency. However, he committed himself to volunteering at Two Gates Ragged School and politically to Cradley. Cliff was always sympathetic to those who came from poor circumstances and he won the local election by one vote to become the first Labour councillor on the Halesowen Urban District Council in 1936.

Martha died suddenly in December 1941 and in 1945 Cliff remarried to May Davis, (nee Newey).

When Caslon School was opened in 1953 Cliff was appointed Chairman of the Board of Governors and in 1962 the council appointed him as a Freeman of the Borough.

Late in 1979 Cliff received notice he was to be awarded the Order of Officer of the British Empire (OBE). Unfortunately he became terminally ill and his medal arrived by post just weeks before his death in January 1981.

Cliff was part of the Two Gates community and always mindful that people should know what had gone before in their locality, he would say, *"Schoolteachers can teach history, only a local person can teach heritage."* He was a prolific writer and well known for his autobiography 'When I was a Boy'. His final wish was that his ashes be scattered on Ankerdine Hill overlooking the picturesque parish of Lower Broadheath, Bromsgrove. Inside Two Gates Ragged School is a wall plaque with a memorial inscription to Cliff.

To the Glory of God and in remembrance of  
**CLIFFORD WILLETTS (1896 - 1981)**  
 Officer of the Order of the British Empire  
 Decided his life to serving this chapel and the community  
 Superintendent of Two Gates Ragged School