

## BARTON-UPON-HUMBER AMBULANCE SERVICE.

Having got home from WW2 in one piece more or less, someone in my home town of Barton-on-Humber found out that I was indeed in possession of a drivers licence that when read informed the enquirer that I could indeed drive vehicles on the highways and by ways of the United Kingdom.

Since Barton had no Ambulance the sick who got to the stage when they needed to be in Hospital for treatment needed to be transported to a Hospital that was a mile away over the river Humber. But that meant a train journey to New Holland and a transfer to the Ferry boat. If the tide was low the Ferry could and some times did get stuck and stranded on sand banks until the next tide came in hours later. The next best bet was the Hospital in Scunthorpe about an hour drive away.

The delay for the sick people was aggravated by the fact that since Barton had no Ambulance Service and indeed nowhere to garage an Ambulance made the situation more aggravated since one had to ring Scunthorpe Ambulance Service and request them to come to Barton to pick up the sick person and take them back to Scunthorpe to be housed and treated in the Hospital there.

But not every call got an immediate response since their Ambulances might be out on calls, so the patient in Barton had to hope that God did not press the, "Times up" button on his desk and the patient left us before we could transport them to the Hospital.

Then some bright lad in Barton suggested that if Barton had it's own Ambulance

and garage with a side room for Drivers to sit in and be near a telephone he could be directed by phone to an address where someone was sick and since the Ambulance Driver would call at a mates house and pick him up then they would be at the sick persons house in half the time where they could put the patient on a stretcher and make him /her comfortable in the ambulance and set off for the Hospital.

A couple of months later the Ambulance Center and Garage was built and a new Ambulance was installed and a metal tube bed with springs was near the phone so that the chap who was on duty could sleep until the phone rang then he would phone another mate who would get out of bed and get dressed then wait for the Ambulance to pick him up. A gent arrived at our house one day and wanted to see if I could go to South Ferriby in the ambulance for a test run.

We got settled and the bloke said, "O.K. go to Ferriby then turn around and come back" I set off and turned the corner of Ferriby road then gunned the engine and swept up the hill and sped to Ferriby. The bloke in the side seat by now was in a lather of sweat and had a white pallor on his face as he gripped the dash board and asked in a quavering voice, have you driven long? I told him of driving in the deserts of Lybia where one could get blown up by mines. I thought he was about to be sick so I slowed down a bit. We arrived back at the garage and drove in and the other bloke got his colour back and he sat down and relaxed after a cup of tea.

Since I was one the first to drive the new Barton Ambulance to Goxhill Village to pick up an old lady with leg ulcers and take her to Scunthorpe Hospital I ponder why I there is no mention of my name in any of the Barton records. It is not important from my point of view, but if one wants to keep true records of historical fact I would suggest it be done properly. There was another chap who was in the job with me and if it wasn't Ken Hastings then I don't remember his name. Ken Hastings and I both married ( Mayor) Councillor Ernest Goodhand's Daughters. Ken married Elsie and I married Joyce.

Tom Barker, one of the two first ex drivers for the Barton Ambulance Service. Cheers mates.