



Hilda Critchlow

Hilda was born in 1928 and worked for most of her life on the family's dairy farm, Sheldon House Farm, Brund. Hilda was interviewed by Christine Gregory in August 2015.

Part Two. Driving

HC: Well, me mother wasn't very well after John was born, me youngest brother, and he bought a car for to take her out. He said he were going to learn first. He got a license for that period and me sister did. He said he would learn first and then me sister. Well, he started driving in a field with a neighbour the first night. The second night, he weren't going in the field, he were going to Leek where he went on Wednesday. Of course, I must sit in the back with me sister. He went down Buxton Road and up the next street and turned left into the car park, and of course he didn't tell this neighbour he was changing down, he were going where he was going to go on a Wednesday, turns left and hits the wall. I thought, "if I can get out, I'm not going to ride with you anymore". Of course, I sent for a license and they let me have one for twelve months. And I applied again and it were only three months the license that come out then and they were stopping this twelve months, you had to have a test. Ooh, I thought, "I shall never pass a test", but I sent for a license, this three months and of course this three months were up and I hadn't had me test and I went to some neighbours, "what should I do". And he said I should apply for another three months, it'll tell you something, which they did, but anyway I applied somewhere and I had to go to Leek. I was by Eleven Lane Ends, me father says to me, he took me and me mother and me little brother, and he says "I'll tell you to stop when we go so far up the road". He tells me to stop, I kept going, I couldn't stop. He says "you'll pass no b... test, what have you applied for". Anyway, I was sat in car with my father waiting for this gentleman to come out down Broad Street, out of a building this man with a package under his arm, same as they do, and I finished off with passing me test. He gave me this paper and me father comes to car "what have you done". Well, I says "I don't know, he's give me this paper". And I looked at it and he looked at it "well, you've passed". I shouldn't nowadays.

CG: Not very many women then passed their driving test. Not many at all.

HC: No, there were not many folks with a car in them days, in 1947.

HC: When I left school of course, I worked with me father along with the horses 'til one of the neighbours had got two boys, of course they must have a tractor. After the big snow in 1947, they had a tractor. Anyway, the year after me brother being the next one, he hadn't the patience with horses, had a tractor. Of course, it were all tractors then. I did learn with me brother what I farmed with, I found that I could drive a tractor well, but it weren't like the



horse days. Me brother sort of took over and I should do with me father bits of jobs with horses, but as time went on he got doing them with the tractor and no patience with horses.

HC: When the horses went, that was it really, cos I couldn't drive a tractor very well, but when me brothers went to Ashbourne, I had to do a bit and I kept getting more involved and of course I got, well I could drive a tractor well, because me brother when he had this dementia, I had to drive the tractor.

HC: And then you see another thing, I started driving the car, perhaps ruination to me, but I did the errands and I loved driving. But not as I went far, only to Leek or Buxton or Bakewell, something like that. I never went very far, but I went to Manchester odd times. But nowadays I'd struggle, it's not safe for me. Of course, I've had bits of accidents. I was driving until eight years ago and driving sixty years and I had this bad accident, hit Hulme End bridge. It's known as Hilda's bridge now, because I knocked the bridge down. But I had my license taken off me. They found out me trouble was epilepsy and of course they stopped me driving.