

Family History Research Group

Newsletters 46-50

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Family History Research Group

Newsletter Forty-Six



MORE ABOUT THE ELUSIVE ELLEN THORNTON

Janice

Ellen Thornton is the great granny I found at Nook Farm Mawdesley on the night of the 1861 census. I had difficulty finding her because it records that she was 22 when I knew that she was only 17.

One of our readers contacted me with some really good thoughts on why her age was incorrect.

“Perhaps your ancestor was planning to marry. By overstating her age she could avoid the need for parental consent. False details were commonly given.

Alternatively, her employer could have made an error or just guessed her age; she would not have made the return herself. The enumerator could have also made a transcription error when he copied the entries into his book.”

The suggestions are all things I had considered and when many years ago I first found Ellen in Mawdesley I had widened my search. I removed details of where she might be and who she might have been living with. I also widened the time span she might have been born in. I had to use this technique and many more to track down Ellen and the family she went on to produce.

She didn't stay in Mawdesley and on the 12th Jan 1863 married Thomas Cornthwaite at St. Wilfred's Halton, a village on the north banks of the River Lune. I had problems finding the marriage when I just relied on using records that had been transcribed rather than looking at the original church register.

CHURCH REGISTER SHOWING THE MARRIAGE OF THOMAS AND ELLEN

Page 65.

1863. Marriage solemnized at St. Wilfrid's in the Parish of Halton in the County of Lancashire

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
129	Jan 12 1863	Thomas Cornthwaite	24	Single	Handman	Quernmore	Thomas Cornthwaite	Handman
		Ann Thornton	18	Spinster		Halton	Robert Thornton	Handman

Married in the Parish of Halton according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England by me, Thos. Mackreth.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Thos. Cornthwaite and Ann Thornton in the Presence of us, Bryan Cornthwaite and Elizabeth Dowbiggin.

Ellen admitted to being a minor and claimed that her place of residence was Halton. Thomas was residing in Quernmore.

I initially tried to find the information about the marriage without using Find My Past (a subscription website). If I had only used Lancashire OPC which is completely free and is usually a brilliant resource I would have been left very confused.

[Lancashire OnLine Parish Clerk Project - Search \(lan-opc.org.uk\)](http://lan-opc.org.uk)

Marriage: 12 Jan 1863 St Wilfrid, Halton, Lancashire, England
 Thomas Cornthwaite - full age, Husbandman, Bachelor, Quernmore
 Ann Thornton - minor, Spinster, Halton
 Groom's Father: Thomas Cornthwaite, Husbandman
 Bride's Father: Robert Thornton, Husbandman
 Witness: Bryan Cornthwaite; Elizabeth Dowbiggin
 Married by: Thos. Mackreth.
 Register: Marriages 1837 - 1900, Page 65, Entry 129
 Source: LDS Film 1526205

Ellen did have a younger sister Ann but my great grandfather did not marry both siblings on the same day! This is a transcription error and shows the danger of using a source which has been transcribed.

Five months later she gave birth to their first son John; his birth was registered at Lancaster.

Ellen, her husband and children were then all tricky to find and popped up in all sorts of unexpected places. The births of Thomas Walter (Wally) and Jane were registered in Skipton. Helpfully the baptism register of Holy Trinity Skipton records

that Wally was born at Stirton, a hamlet about a mile north of the town. Jane, born in Q.4 1868, was baptised at St Mary's Lancaster in July 1869. Perhaps this indicates that the family had moved back to North Lancashire by then.

Locating all the family on the 1871 census was not easy! Ellen was at Sweetings, a farm in the parish of Cockerham and working as a servant. Four year old Wally was at the home of his Cornthwaite grandparents at Halton. I eventually found John and Jane at a household at Forton and listed as lodgers. There was an entry mistake on the census, someone had changed the ages of the children round so John had become three and Jane seven. Places of birth for both children was entered as Forton (not right). I eventually found out that they were at the home of a distant Cornthwaite cousin and her son and he as head of household, filled in the form. Thomas the father of the children was lodging in Bolton-le-Sands and listed as a malt maker.

1881 is the year I succeeded in rounding up all the family quite easily. Both the boys were at farms north of Lancaster and working as farm servants. The parents and daughters Jane aged twelve, Henrietta nine and Mary Ellen seven were all at a property in Bolton-le-Sands old village. Interestingly, nephew Henry Christopher aged five and was staying with them. He was the son of the Bryan Cornthwaite who witnessed Thomas and Ellen's marriage. Revisiting the records of this child has reminded me of a bit of a mystery. Henry's parents had been innkeepers in Kendal and their deaths were registered in Q.4 1878; they were only in their thirties and the child was two when they died.

I will pause in the telling of the Cornthwaite saga for now. I have just realised that by looking at what the nephew did in later life, I might solve an Ellen Cornthwaite mystery that has bothered me for many years. I need to do more research and possibly purchase a death certificate. I have come to the concluded that doing Family History is a bit like solving a giant jigsaw puzzle and a bit more knowledge can make some pieces fit together and show that others are in the wrong place.

How did you get on interpreting the photo I included in last week's newsletter? Thanks to all those who have sent in their thoughts, they have been both useful and entertaining.

SOME MORE CLUES

The original photo measures 7 by 5 inches and is on thick card, there is nothing on the reverse.



This is my relative and as you can see he is sporting a moustache as is another member of the crew. What does this indicate to you?

Everyone else is clean shaven and one of our members suggested that it looks as if they have all used the same barber.



My relative is wearing white trousers and top as are many of the other members of the crew so why would that be?

Is there any significance in the headwear some of them are sporting?



*This is a photo of the same relative; the words at the bottom say "us and our cabin".
What do you think this photo is all about?*

Knowing a little (initially dangerous – I jumped to conclusions) and after carrying out a lot of research I know that the latest possible year my photos could have been taken was 1905. The crew photo must have been taken by 1901 and both could have been taken a lot earlier.

Again, do let me know what you think, I really do need some help with the cabin picture!

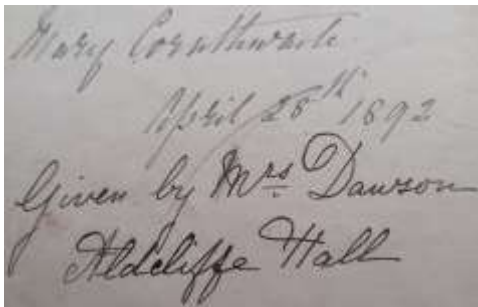
Family History Research Group

Newsletter Forty-Seven



ELLEN'S FAMILY ON THE NIGHT OF THE 1891 CENSUS

Janice



I tried many ways to find Mary Cornthwaite but all failed until I remembered I had a Bible with an inscription inside. I looked for the name of Mrs. Dawson's husband and a search found him in at Aldcliffe Hall in 1891. My seventeen-year-old granny was employed as a kitchen maid.

Without the inscription it is unlikely that I would ever have tracked her down, Ancestry had entered her surname as Coullhworte. Aldcliffe Hall was on the *road heading south from Lancaster to Conder Green.*

Mary Ellen Brearey (nee Cornthwaite)



Jane Walmsley (nee Cornthwaite)

Twenty-one-year-old Jane was at 9 Peacock Row Little Harwood, she was with her husband Sam Walmsley, a quarryman who had grown up there. I have no idea where the couple met; perhaps

Jane had been working in service in the area. The cottages were built in 1823 for Cunliffe Delph quarrymen and their families, the cottages were demolished in 1947 to make room for a road and housing developments.



In 1881 Ellen's son John was at Williamslands, a farm at Torrisholme; he was working as a farm servant. He married Janet Askew the daughter of his employer in 1888. In Q.1 1890 both his parents-in-laws passed away and the farm taken over by the eldest son Thomas. On census night 1891 John and Janet were at Green House Farm Torrisholme. John's sister Hetty and her one-year-old daughter Maggie also stayed the night. Hetty had married Edward Askew two years earlier when she was seventeen. Edward was Janet's brother so Maggie became her brother's sister-in-law! Hetty's other brother Wally witnessed the marriage, he must have been granted leave to be there.

Henrietta Askew (nee Cornthwaite)



I found Wally on the 1891 census at the barracks of the Light Infantry at Chatham docks along with three hundred and forty-nine other Royal Marines.

Thomas Walter Cornthwaite

In 1891 my great grandfather Thomas was lodging with the Lupton family in Preston. Both he and Stephen, the head of household were listed as maltsters. The Lupton's had lived in Warton near Carnforth for several years, I suspect they were friends, associates or neighbours of my family (FAN's is a really useful research technique). Ancestry had made a miss-transcription and entered Thomas's name as Canthwaite so I found him tricky to find. His home in 1901 and 1911 was Malt Kiln cottage at Slyne-With-Hest. It is also where I found Hetty on these two census returns. She continued to live there after the death of her father and it is also where my mum was born.



Malt Kiln Cottage Slyne-With-Hest

Where my great grandmother Ellen spent census night 1891 is intriguing!

Administrative County of <i>Lancashire</i>		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										Page 4			
Civil Parish of <i>Latham</i>		Municipal Borough		Municipal Ward		Urban Sanitary District		Town or Village or Hamlet		Rural Sanitary District		Parliamentary Borough or Division		Ecclesiastical Parish or Chapelry	
No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES		No. of HOUSES	
No. of HOUSES	ROAD, STREET, ALLEY, &c. and No. of HOUSES	No. of HOUSES	No. of HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of each Person	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Where Born	Where Born	Where Born	Where Born	Where Born	Where Born	Where Born
1	<i>21. Wharfedale</i>	1	1	<i>Thos. Harrison Head</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>(Lawyer)</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>	<i>Stockport, Leeds</i>
				<i>Eliza Harrison Wife</i>	<i>She</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>67</i>		<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>
				<i>Robert Harrison Son</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>22</i>		<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>
				<i>Eliza Harrison Son</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>22</i>		<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>
				<i>James Harrison Son</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Lawyer</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>	<i>Westmoreland, Kendal</i>
				<i>Edward Upker Head</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>Lawyer</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>	<i>Lancashire, York</i>
				<i>Ellen Cornthwaite Sister</i>	<i>She</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>44</i>		<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>	<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>	<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>	<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>	<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>	<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>	<i>Lancashire, Colton</i>
				<i>May Elizabeth Upker Sister</i>	<i>She</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>Lawyer's Daughter</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>	<i>Lancashire, Thipic, Kellat</i>
				<i>The end of the 2nd part of Latham, Telle District No 8. A.</i>											

This is the last record I have been able to find for both Edward and Ellen. I have found a death for an Ellen Cornthwaite in 1898 in Liverpool but as yet have found no reason why she would have been there.

Hetty went on to have two more children and registered Edward as the father. She also still claimed to be married in the 1901 and 1911 census. Where her husband went and what became of him is a mystery, perhaps the 1921 census will give some answers.

I used the Archi Maps website I told you about a few weeks ago and managed to find the location of all the places I have mentioned.

Family History Research Group

Newsletter Forty-Eight



FAMILY ITEMS WITH A STORY

Joy Lofthouse

My Mother died recently and as I was sorting through my sideboard trying to fit in the bits and bobs I'd brought from her flat, including her napkin ring, I wondered if silver serviette/napkin rings might be of possible interest to the group. I'm sure many of you will have some tucked away in cupboards or maybe you use them regularly. We use our serviette rings daily.

The big question is.... are they serviette rings or napkin rings? What do you call them?

Mine are definitely serviette rings and have been since I was a child. This was given to me as a Christening present and it's the same one I use today.



CJE Christina Joy Edwards.

I had a discussion with Mum not so very long ago and asked her why hers had changed to a napkin ring, she didn't know. It was certainly a serviette ring when I was young, my theory (which I didn't share with her) is this! She had a good friend that she 'picked up' phrases from and she called them napkin rings. I thought serviette sounded 'posher' than napkin but when I looked it up at the time, I found the following article which is all about napkins not serviettes!

Napkin rings are an ***invention*** of the European bourgeoisie, first appearing in France about 1800 and soon spreading to all countries in the western world. Most 19th century ***napkin rings*** were ***made*** of silver or silver plate, but others were ***made*** in bone, wood, pearl embroidery, porcelain, glass, and other materials.

The ***napkin ring***, occasionally ***called a serviette ring***, was originally used to identify the ***napkins*** of a household between weekly wash days. The standard ***napkin ring*** is a simple ***ring*** made from skewers.

The word ***napkin*** comes from the French word *nappe* which is a cloth for covering a table. ... ***In*** Australia and New Zealand, "***serviette***" generally refers to the paper variety and "***napkin***" refers to the cloth variety. The same ***distinction*** is used in Canada although "***paper napkin***" may be used interchangeably with "***serviette***".

When we got married I had my new initials on the other side of my ring, and found Ian a ring too.



CJL Christina Joy Lofthouse

Lofthouse

reflection

IJL Ian James

(there is a lot of



on the photo)

Likewise, our daughters were bought rings as Christening presents by an Uncle and Aunt. They used them regularly whilst at home but interestingly they are still

in my sideboard drawer and they use them when they are staying here. Hopefully, it will not be too long before that can happen again.

LJL Louise Jayne Lofthouse

SEL Sarah Ellen Lofthouse



This is an interesting read - [The History and Use of Silver Napkin Rings - Dart Silver Ltd](#)



The story goes that my paternal Grandmother (Harriet Edwards nee Seddon 1875 -1954) used to buy silver from the market during WW1, I'm not sure if this is true.

I also have a set of 6 rings in the initial E and wonder if these have that origin.

She also bought many things in 2's as she had two children, my Aunt, Hilda Gladys (1914-2001) and my Dad, Thomas Douglas (1918-1963). Two serviette rings, two houses, semi-detached, in old Skelmersdale one left to each child of course.

I always gave my Mum the ring that had belonged to my Dad when she stayed with us.



This one, which I kept when I cleared my Aunt's house it is inscribed Hilda Gladys Edwards 15th Nov 1914.



So what else do I have in my collection?

A plain silver one.



A small, thin pretty one, my favourite.



And this one, which I have no idea about (pictures show opposite sides of the same ring). It is a large ring, so I guess it was for a gentleman. I wondered if it had any Masonic link.



So, what rings do you have hidden in your cupboards or in daily use?

Are they serviette rings or napkin rings?

Mine are definitely **serviette rings** and always will be?

I always give friends staying overnight fabric serviettes in serviette rings for the duration of their stay.

Folding serviettes/napkins, fabric or paper is another story.

Family History Research Group

Newsletter Forty-Nine



MILITARY CAREER OF THOMAS WALTER CORNTHWAITE

Janice

Great Uncle Wally must have decided that the life of a farm servant was not for him and soon after his seventeenth birthday travelled down to Preston where he joined the Royal Marines. He was sent down to Kent where he underwent eight months training at Walmer, a recruitment depot of the Light Infantry.

This studio photo was taken in the 1880's and is of a Private in the Royal Marines Light Infantry. He is wearing a blue Glengarry bearing a brass globe & laurel badge and there are black silk ribbons attached to the back of it. The tunic is scarlet and the collar and cuffs are blue. Epaulettes also bear the globe & laurel badges embroidered in white. There is white piping at the base of the collar, down the front opening, all round the epaulettes and stitched into crow's feet above the pointed cuffs. A dress Home Service helmet with a RMLI plate is on the pedestal. He is also wearing a whitened buff leather belt and the blue trousers have a quarter-inch scarlet welt.



Wally would have been issued with an identical uniform but this wouldn't have been worn while onboard ship or while on active service.

At Walmer his character was considered to be excellent.

On 20/3/1884 he joined his division at Chatham barracks and on the 16/9/84 he embarked on the maiden voyage of HMS Agamemnon as she set sail to join the China Station. The ship was an iron clad twin turreted battleship powered by both steam and sail. Building of the vessel had taken much longer than planned and been very costly. Modifications made to an older design in the hope of improving fuel consumption made steering dodgy and the authorities knew that this vessel wasn't fit for purpose when she set off.



A photo taken of the Agamemnon in 1879 so she would still have been in the fitting and commissioning process at Chatham Docks.

H.M.S. AGAMEMNON.

With reference to the expenditure on H.M.S. Agamemnon and her alleged defects, *Engineering* says: This vessel, which is an armoured citadel turret ship of the Inflexible type, has recently been ordered to proceed to the Mediterranean. She has been hurriedly prepared for sea service after being nearly nine years in process of construction and undergoing alterations and modifications of various kinds. Her estimated cost has been enormously exceeded, and we recommend any member of Parliament who wishes to learn something really worth knowing of how money is spent upon our ships of war to move for a return of the estimated and actual costs of all the ships recently added to the navy, with the cost, also, of alterations and additions made to the vessels now in progress. This information would show how much of the present wasteful expenditure is caused. The Agamemnon is one of those vessels which has enormously exceeded her original estimates, and has been nearly nine years building instead of the four—the time at first estimated. It may be supposed by some that an approximation to perfection is reached as a result of all this vast expenditure of time and money. This is not the case, however, with the Agamemnon. She is going upon active service with steering power so defective as to make her a terror to her officers and dangerous in some circumstances to herself. Her movements are of a very erratic and uncontrollable character, and she cannot be kept properly in command by the helm. Steering is one of the most important qualities for a fighting ship to possess, and constitutes one of the prime elements of efficiency. The Agamemnon is being sent upon active service with this essential quality disgracefully and dangerously deficient. It is said that if the officers find that they can do nothing with her she is to put into Malta for alterations. How can Malta do what it has been impossible to do here in nine years? or if not impossible, why was it neglected here? The cause of the defective steering is plainly to be seen in the form of the stern, which is so ingeniously contrived that the water is prevented in almost every possible manner from properly acting upon the screws and rudder.

This article appeared in the Herald of Wales on the eighth of November 1884.

From the following article it seems that the crew wasn't very happy about the situation.

THE WESTERN MORNING NEWS MONDAY NOVEMBER 10 1884

10 and 12, Old Town

H.M.S. AGAMEMNON.

SIR,—I hear from excellent authority that great dissatisfaction prevails on board this ship, chiefly arising from the undue severity of discipline exercised. Men for the most trivial offences, which in other vessels would be overlooked, or meet with simply a reprimand, have on board the Agamemnon been punished with imprisonment and other ways. Since her recent commission no less than twelve have been sentenced to different terms of imprisonment, not counting fifteen others who have been confined to cells on board. I dare say there may be fault on both sides, but not sufficient to account for so many men being punished in so short a time.

It is to be hoped for the sake of all on board that the Commander-in-Chief will make some inquiry before this ship leaves for her station, and, if possible, remove the cause of all this dissatisfaction.—Yours truly,
WELL-INFORMED.

THE WESTERN MORNING NEWS THURSDAY NOVEMBER 13 1884

H.M.S. AGAMEMNON.

SIR,—I am glad to find from a paragraph in this day's Naval News, that the Commander-in-Chief intends making a full inquiry as to the cause of the great dissatisfaction which at present prevails on board this vessel. I am given to understand that both Captain Long and all the officers, except one, are very much liked and respected; therefore, if, upon inquiry, it is found that all the undue severity and dissatisfaction is due to this one officer, surely it will be to the interest of the public service—and for the good of all on board—that he should be removed before this vessel proceeds on her station. From all I can learn, this, and this alone, will be the only way to bring about a satisfactory termination of the present unfortunate state of affairs that exists on board.—Yours truly,
WELL-INFORMED.

November 12th, 1884.

[The Commander-in-Chief has made investigations with his accustomed promptitude. Our information does not point to all the blame being due to one officer only, but it may be so.—Ed. W.M. News.]

Great Uncle Wally was one of the fifteen crew placed in the cells where he was confined for fourteen days.

The Agamemnon did dock at Malta where attempts were made to modify her before the outward voyage continued. It doesn't seem that any work carried out made much difference, she grounded several times in the Suez Canal holding up traffic for many days. It also seems that unrest onboard continued, Wally found himself back in the cells for ten days and then later for another fourteen. During the onward journey she shadowed the Russian cruiser Vladimir Monomakh all the way to Japan. It was at a time when Russia was seeking to establish a warm water base in the Pacific both for trade and military purposes. I am not sure where the Agamemnon went to over the next three years but would have needed to dock at Royal Navy establishments to pick up supplies, refuel and get any maintenance work carried out. The China Station, established in 1865 had main bases at Singapore, Hong Kong, and Wei-Hai-Wei with other smaller bases at Penang and Rangoon. The Royal Navy and Royal Marines were responsible for patrolling the seas and navigable waterways in this area. Former farm servant Wally would have visited many amazing places and would have had many stories to tell.

Because of ongoing problems, the Agamemnon was ordered back to the Mediterranean and from Lloyds Shipping List, I know that she visited Greece, Venice, Valletta and Malaga. In late 1887 she arrived at the dock yard at Malta for yet another major attempt to fix her. The crew were paid off in mid-December 1887 and sent back to Chatham where Wally waited for his next assignment.

I would love to know more about what happened on the voyage where it went and just how much trouble the crew got into. Perhaps there is some way to find details of this but I have looked for evidence of a log book and have also searched the National Archive and the Maritime Museum web sites and drawn a blank.

During the following seventeen years, Wally served on many more ships and for the rest of his career both his character and ability were considered to be very good. I have more research to do before I telling more of his story.

Family History Research Group

Newsletter Fifty



ANCIENT POSSESSIONS

John Poole

It was most interesting to read about some of the ancient possessions hoarded by (I assume) older members of the u3a. It prompted me (a fellow antiquarian) to attempt to recall what over 50 years of (happy) marriage has resulted in the accumulation of a vast horde of “stuff” of varying degrees of usefulness!

I am a DIYer with varying degrees of success and over the years this has led to us having a (double) garage full of tools and materials much of which have rarely if ever been used; some even duplicated when the original purchase had long escaped memory. As the years have crept on, the temptation to employ craftsmen has become forever stronger - rather than do things oneself - with a creeping increase in the contents of the garage junk store which is decreasingly likely to be put to use!

Notwithstanding the contents of the garage, my (much) better half is a very keen gardener and, at the last count, had around 2000 plant pots – these are just the empty ones – the ones in use are numerous - but somewhat less in number! The greenhouse door will just about close. The empty plant pots are accommodated in a (separate) garden shed along with a number of garden tools and other bits and pieces of gardening kit - as well as a collection of spiders and other insects - to say nothing of the odd rodent!

So much for what is not inside the house! It is then a toss-up for what is the oldest of our possessions between a Kenwood Chef Food Mixer and a Gnome (Colour) Slide Projector. Although both still work just about perfectly, it is probably safe to say that

the Projector's days are numbered now that slides are no longer in vogue while the Food Mixer is priceless when the grandchildren stay over and want (demand) pancakes for breakfast!

Before we come to my prized possession, a couple of other items might be worth a mention. We inherited a dishwasher (still going strong and invaluable) when we arrived in our present abode some 13 years ago, we brought with us a tumble drier that is also going strong after perhaps 25-30 years of service. But pride of place must go to my Nokia Mobile Phone – it may not have the longevity of any of the other listed possessions but it is a great source of amusement for (adult) children - and their offspring!

However, the reality of life must be the realisation that the only possession that is older than the octogenarian compiler of this nostalgic nonsense is the (lovely) old cottage that we are so lucky to live in!

Janice

I do like including photos in our newsletters so went in search of some of my old stuff.



I found this at the back of a drawer and when I put some batteries in was really surprised to find that it still works. I bought it in the early 1980's and it travelled with me to many brilliant places. It's a shame that I have thrown away most of my audio tapes.

My oldest working electrical gadget is my sewing machine. My parents gave it to me in 1968 so that I could take it to college where I put to good use. In just a Saturday afternoon I could make a simple frock from a remnant of material ready to wear at a dance that evening.



Making something for a student Summer or Christmas Ball took rather longer. These patterns are for some of the dresses I made and wore at them. Happy memories! I am pretty sure that patterns cost rather more than four shillings and nine pence now.