



Mr. & Mrs. Thomas King, 1914 . (Photo by F Bestall, Stonehouse, Glos).

Longevity

Three remarkable instances of longevity are furnished from Castle Eaton and Purton, two placid little villages near Swindon.

In full possession of all their faculties, Mr Thomas King, aged 98 and his wife, Mrs Elizabeth King (affectionately known as "Aunt Jane") aged 96, live contentedly on their old age pensions in Castle Eaton.

They have as neighbours Mr Thomas Davies, who lives at Purton, and who is now one year past the century. This week, too, the death occurred at Purton of Mr Robert Golding at the age of 97.

Mr Thomas King is a finely built man over six feet in height, and despite his years he still carries himself erectly. He was born in the year before the Battle of Waterloo, and he has lived under five Sovereigns. The accession of Queen Victoria is one of the recollections of his boyhood days.

Mr and Mrs King married 73 years ago, when the husband was earning 7s a week, and even when he had six children to maintain he was still getting the same modest wage. They have had altogether a family of fourteen children, and they have over 100 descendants – children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The aged couple attribute their great age to hard work and hard living. They now reside in a little cottage rent free, through the kindness of the Lord of the Manor, Colonel David Archer.

Cheltenham Chronicle Saturday 9 November 1912

Mr and Mrs Jesse King, of Stroud Green, near Standish, Gloucestershire celebrated their golden wedding on Saturday. They have six sons and three daughters, 28 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Mr King is 68 years of age and his wife 69. They were married on October 19th 1863 at the church of St Mary de Lode, Gloucester. Mr King's parents are still living at Castle Eaton.

Gloucester Journal Saturday 25 October 1913

Mr and Mrs Thomas King of Castle Eaton.

Born on the 13th October 1814, the old gentleman, if he lives till October next, will be 100 years old. He still enjoys his pipe of tobacco and remarked, while the photograph was being taken, that he should soon have to think about planting a quarter of potatoes the Vicar had sent him. His spouse was born one year later, and will be 99 on September 19th 1914. She believes in plenty of fresh air, and is often to be seen in the garden with a spade. Married on October 11th 1836, they have lived together for over 77 years. They have brought up 11 children, and their descendants have numbered 125, of whom 108 are still living. They have two sons who are in receipt of the old age pension; one is 76 years and the other is 72 years of age. In spite of their great age they are in the best of health, and both hope to complete their century. Mr King has worked on a farm all his life, starting at the age of eight years at one shilling a week.

Western Gazette Friday 29 May 1914
