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**Albert Edward Moss**

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| Born: | 3/10/1863 | Hugglescote Leicestershire |  |  |  | Died | 12/12/1945 | Hadleigh | Essex |

**Moss** arrived in Wellington early in 1889 bringing with him letters of introduction to Mr Hughes, a patent attorney based at Lambton Quay. He then moved south to Christchurch and took a position as a clerk with the National Mortgage and Agency Company. Moss is first recorded playing for the Lancaster Park club 15 against the club’s top eleven in February 1889. Moss was still a member of the 15 team in September 1889 but by October 10 he had been promoted and was playing for the top team against the Ashburton club. Moss performed well by taking six wickets in the first innings and four in the second. On 6 November 1889 Moss took six for 8 runs against the Midland club. These performances must have been noted by the sole selector AM Ollivier, as the Press newspaper on10 December 1889 reports that Moss is one of 28 cricketers selected to practice for the approaching inter provincial match against Wellington. They were to practice on Tuesday and Thursday at Hagley Park beginning at 4.30pm. Moss played in the early part of the following season, 1890/91, for the Lancaster Park first eleven but by March 1891 it was said that he had suffered from a long and sever attack of brain fever and was unable to play cricket. On 28 March 1891 he travelled to Wellington and umpired the Canterbury match against Wellington. Moss was elected to the committee at the club’s AGM on 9 September 1890

On Christmas day 1889 Moss played for his club against the Wellington Wanders taking five for 44. Three days later he made his first class debut against Wellington and created a world record by taking all ten wickets in their first innings, a feat which has never been equaled. Reese records that **“the seven chances created were all snapped up but at least three other chances were missed off his bowling”.** Moss bowled three batsmen, had three catches taken by wicket keeper Marshall, two catches by fieldsman and one was a caught and bowled by himself.In a much understated way the Press recorded that Moss had bowled well. It was believed that he was the fastest bowler seen in New Zealand up to that time. Wellington were dismissed for 71, 67 runs behind. Canterbury made 111 in their second innings and with Wellington dismissed for 139, Moss took the first two wickets, Canterbury won by 39 runs. That year was to be his only season of first class cricket. The ball used to take the ten wickets was mounted by the Lancaster Park club and given to him at the end of the season.

Moss’s father was a boot maker in England and died from tuberculosis. Moss became a grammar school teacher and immigrated to New Zealand to avoid a similar fate. In 1891 Moss was living in Chester St and on June 9 1891 he married Mary Emma Hall from Audlem Cheshire. Albert and Mary had known each other as children and had attended the same school for a time. They had been engaged in England two years previously and shortly after she had arrived on the Tainui on May 7 1891, the marriage took place. Moss had secured a position as a clerk in the employ of Messrs Friedlander Bros in Ashburton and the day following the wedding they moved south. But fame and fortune had led to heavy drinking and careless use of his money.

The Ashburton Guardian reported that **“shortly after 9am on July 7 a neighbour, William Brooking, heard screams coming from Mr Moss’s house and the sound of the feet of two people on the ground as if in a struggle. Going out to the street he saw Mrs Moss come out of her house to the footpath. She was covered in blood from wounds to her head, neck and hands. She called to Brooking that her husband was lying in the house, dead, having killed himself. When the house was entered Moss was found lying face down in a great pool of blood with his throat cut from ear to ear, the deed having been presumably been done by a razor close by…………. At the hospital Mrs Moss was found to have two deep scalp wounds on the left side of her face, two cuts across the neck on the left side, her right thumb was lacerated and the tendons of two of the left hand fingers were severed. The injuries inflected by Moss on himself were more severe and the deep gash extended right across the throat, deeper in the front than on the sides, and the larynx had almost been severed from the trachea. The initial prognosis was that he would not recover from his wounds but Mrs Moss was less critical.**

It would seem that Moss had no money and while going to the hospital in the express he asked for a pencil and paper and wrote on the name board that he had been swindled. He said **“he had lost all his money, 185 pound, had been swindled, how is my wife”.** It appears that Moss had been in financial difficulties and a bailiff was in charge of his belongings and seeking satisfaction of a claim by a Christchurch creditor. In desperation Moss made use of two cheques from his employer to get rid of the bailiff. The cheques were soon missed and stopped at the bank. The whole circumstances preyed on Moss’s mind and rather than face the disgrace of the situation he committed the terrible acts.

At the initial trial held on 30 July 1891 in Ashburton the local paper reported that Mrs Moss said **“on Saturday a cup of cocoa given to her early in the morning by Moss had made her violently ill about half an hour after taking it. He had gone to work but came back to see her several times but she remained in bed all day……………her husband seemed troubled and was still the same on Sunday but on the Monday her husband went to work and she felt better and got up out of bed. But on the Tuesday morning her husband, having spent a bad night, got up at 7.30 and went to light the fire. He returned with a razor and rubbed the razor up and down her face and asked her in a joking way whether he should shave her………..**

**They had breakfast together but Moss became quite excitable and that was when he attacked her…………but she struggled and managed to get away and as she looked back she saw him trying to cut his own throat”**. Fred Wilding was the lawyer defending him at this trial.

Moss was committed to the Supreme Court in Christchurch on 10 August 1891 where he was tried for wounding his wife with intent to kill. A new lawyer Mr Stringer appeared for him. Evidence was given by a number of people and the jury retired at 4pm. After three hours the judge summoned them and asked if there was a prospect of a decision. The Foreman replied there was not but the judge decided to give them until 8.30pm. On their return the Foreman said they could not reach a decision but he believed in another half hour they would be able to say if there was any probability of agreeing. They returned at 9.20pm with the foreman saying there was no probability of the jurors agreeing. The Judge decided to adjourn the case until 10am the next morning and the jury were locked up all night. The next morning they were still unable to reach a verdict so a second jury was empanelled and a new trial proceeded. When they retired at 12.30pm they only needed 45 minutes to reach the decision. He was found not guilty on the grounds of insanity and remanded to Lyttelton prison.

Following the incident there were a number of letters to the local paper commenting that **“Mary had only arrived in the colony and after a brief happiness she finds herself maimed in body, all her hopes crushed and absolutely without means and among strangers. A trust will be formed and we ask the public to contribute a trifle to this most deserving fund”.** By the end of August 73 pounds had been received.

In its final comment on the incident the Ashburton Guardian said that **“Moss was well educated, an attractive singer, and generally becoming well liked in Ashburton as he had been in Christchurch”.**

In 1896 Moss was released on the condition that he did not contact his wife and was deported to Rio de Janeiro. But unsuccessful there, he went to South Africa and began working for the railways. He decided to end his life but showed up at the Salvation Army, became converted and in 1910 at the age of 46 he became a probationary lieutenant.

At the outbreak of WW1 Mary was on a walking holiday of the North Island and saw a paper, stooped down, picked it up and read of an article in the **“War Cry”** of the good work being done by Albert Moss. She sent the mounted ball back to Albert in South Africa and he received it in 1915. Moss wrote back and said if she would become an officer they could be married again. They were remarried in 1918 but three years later and after 20 years in South Africa he requested a 6 month furlough in England because of Mary’s poor health.

He worked in London and in 1945, just prior to his death, he arranged for the ball to be returned to the Canterbury Cricket Association. It remained in the Association’s possession until the Salvation Army asked to borrow it for a seminar. It still remains in their possession despite the Chairman of the CCA at the time, Dave Elder believing he had made a verbal agreement that the ball would be returned to the Cricket Association at the conclusion of the seminar. It was displayed at the 125th anniversary celebrations in 2002 but returned to the Salvation Army at the conclusion of the event.



**George Watson**

Born 1855 Bombay Died 23/11/1884 Christchurch

**Watson** came with his parents to Christchurch from Tasmania in 1876, his father was the Rev Thomas Watson BA, a senior chaplain of the Bombay Residency. Watson made his first appearance in club cricket with the Midland club in 1877 and although having little success he was selected to tour Victoria with the Canterbury team in 1879. He scored 102 runs in ten innings, his highest score was 29 against the Melbourne club. But in the summer of 1880/81 his batting began to show marked improvement which made him one of the most valuable batsmen in the province and he was selected to play against Otago in February 1881. Watson opened the batting and when joined by Redmayne Canterbury had lost two wickets for 55. The two of them put on 156 for the third wicket before Redmayne was dismissed for 61. When Watson was removed with the team’s score at 300, his 175 included 17 fours, 13 threes and 18 two’s. It was the first century scored in a first class match in New Zealand and remains the highest ever achieved by a New Zealand player on debut. His bat is lodged with the Christ’s College archives. Canterbury’s final score of 381 set a new team record beating the previous record of 354 set in January 1875. Otago were dismissed for 77 and 72 which gave Canterbury a large victory by an innings and 232 runs. This result remains the largest victory ever achieved by Canterbury against all teams. In Otago’s first innings all the batsmen were bowled and remains the only occasion this has been achieved by Canterbury, William Frith took eight for 18 and Edwin Fuller two for 51.

The Star said **“Watson gave no palpable chance and his cricket was as good as the most captious critic could wish”.** The Press said **“it was common for players who have been in a long time to become rash and play carelessly but it was not so with him, he played the game right through, and the hit from which he was caught was a very fine one and deserved a better fate. It was an excellent catch made at cover point by William Crawshaw just before it hit the ground.**

Two seasons later his half century enabled Canterbury to reach 180 leaving Auckland to score 149 for victory. They failed by 27 runs with William Frith bowling well to take the last four wickets. Watson’s last match was an exciting game against Tasmania. He batted at three, scored 82 and was the ninth wicket to fall with the score at 169. Behind by 23, Canterbury dismissed the opposition for 125 and in an exciting conclusion they reached their target with nine wickets down. The last pair of Fowke and Chapman had to score the eight runs for victory. Watson ended his career with an unusually high batting average for that period of cricket.

Watson was captain of the Midland club for many matches. Reese said that **“he was an unusual left hand batsman in that he was a steady player and lacked those brilliant shots to leg associated with left handers”.** Watson played for Midland against an Addington 15 on Saturday 15 November 1884 and after dismissing the opposition for 136, Midland were 27 for one with Watson 4 not out at the close. However during the week Watson became **“dangerously ill with an internal disorder which seized him suddenly”**. Arriving at the ground the following Saturday, the cricketers were relieved to hear that the crisis of his illness was over. But unhappily a reaction set in and Watson died early on the Sunday morning.

A special general meeting of the Midland cricket club was held on December 1st 1884 to **“fill the place of their late captain and secretary and to take what steps were deemed fitting to show respect for his memory”.** It was decided to erect a memorial stone over his gravestone at the Barbados cemetery. In addition it was decided to set up a monetary testimonial as one member pointed out that Mr Watson’s family were left in somewhat straightened circumstances. His brother Clement wrote to the club thanking them for their kind sympathy and their offer of a suitable memorial stone over his grave. He said that Mrs Watson would like the memorial stone to be in the form of a cross.

When Watson first arrived in Christchurch he taught at the Normal school before moving to Christchurch Boys High School for one year in 1880. He then taught at Christ’s College until his death. The Star said of him that **“he was considered unassuming in manner, thoroughly earnest in what he undertook and highly respected for his high and liberal minded principles by all who came in contact with him.** **Mr Watson will always be remembered for a brilliant bat, a hard worker and altogether an enthusiastic cricketer; he had few equals in Christchurch. Many of the rising members of the club owe their knowledge of the game to him for he was always ready to give his advice to both senior and junior members, and in a way that won him their goodwill**”.

Watson married Sarah Smith on June 19 1879. His older brother, Clement was the headmaster at the Willis St school in Wellington and a younger brother, Francis, played one first class game for the West Coast North Island against Wellington in December 1879.