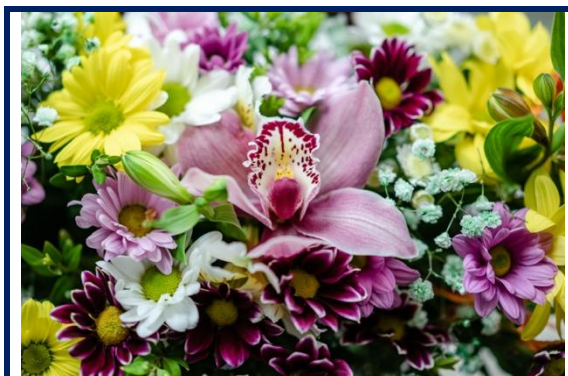




Families:	
Family Name:	Moss Hester and Frederick
Origin:	Nicholas Newman
Dates:	May 2026
Related Surnames:	Cant
Notes:	Fond memories of a couple heavily involved in village life.

Hester and Frederick Moss

The following article covers a couple who played their part in local community life throughout most of the 1970's, along with some background information on their family origins.

Hester Moss (1907 -1977)

Hester was christened Hester Rebecca Cant, and was one of nine children born to Zaccheus Cant (1874 – 1951) and Emilia Henrietta Florence de Guise (1878 – 1970) at Lady's Green between Hargrave and Ousden. The Cant family can be traced back to the early part of the 19th century with several generations living in Wickhambrook. Whereas the de Guise family have a longer history dating back to the Dukes of Lorraine in eastern France in the mid 18th century.

Hester's parents met in London, where her father was employed as a Groom to a Mr Henry Clark a member of the City Police, at his home in Scholars Road, Tottenham. The couple were to marry at their local St Ann's Church, in 1901. On the wedding certificate the father of Zaccheus was listed as John Cant a Bootmaker, whilst Emilia's deceased father Joseph Henry de Guise (1848 – 1878) had been a Clerk and Cashier, born originally in Paris.

Jospeh appears to have emigrated to England in the 1860's marrying Emilie Caroline McBride (1848 – 1908) from Pimlico in 1872. They had three children including daughter Emelia, but he was to die young at the age of 30 years. His widow was to remarry in 1879 to James Frederick Dace (1851 – 1929) and she was to give birth to a further five children.

Following Hester's parents Zaccheus and Emilia's marriage in 1901, he returned with his bride to Wickhambrook, where he gained employment as a farm labourer. They were to have nine children: Robert (1902 – 1957), Alfred (1903 – 1942), Richard (1905 – 1986), Hester Rebecca (1907 – 1977), David (1910 – 1974), Phoebe Ann (1913 – 1986), Victor (1916 – 1986), Zaccheus Thomas (1919 – 1986) and Frederick (1923 – 1998). Alfred was to die as a prisoner of war in Singapore in World War 2.

Eldest daughter Hester's first recorded employment was as a live-in domestic servant working for local farmer Lambert Charles Farrow at The Rookery, Wickhambrook. She met local man Frederick Harold Moss (1907 - 1985) and they subsequently married at St Peter's Church, Ousden in December 1933. He was employed as a farm labourer and they later lived as a married couple at Oak Lodge Cottage, Field Terrace Road, Newmarket. Before returning to this part of Suffolk in the 1950's. They lived and worked for a period in the West Midlands where there two sons were born, and where they both subsequently married.

Frederick Moss (1907 – 1985)

Frederick was christened Frederick Harold Moss. His father Arthur Edward Moss (1868 - 1938) was a farm horse keeper and was born in Snailwell, Cambridgeshire, and Arthur married Eliza Bishop Pettitt (1870 – 1962) originally from Exning, Suffolk, in Newmarket in 1887. The 1911 census finds the family living and working at Plantation Farm, Exning, before moving to Hatchfield Farm, Fordham Road, Newmarket, in the employ of the Earl of Derby. Their children were Arthur Edward (1887 -1924), Eliza (1889), Charles William (1890 - 1931), James William (1893), George (1894), Charles Frederick (1896 - 1961), Fanny Elizabeth (1899), Rose Lilian (1901), and Frederick Harold (1907 - 1985). The youngest was Frederick and he had started farm work by the age of 14, joining his father and elder brothers Arthur and George.

Hester and Frederick in Hargrave

Hester and Frederick moved back to Suffolk, living in Hargrave until 1975 and then at Hope Cottage, Ousden. Frederick worked at Southwood Park until retirement in 1973.

The couple were related by marriage to the Norman Knights formerly of Rickinghall, but then a long-standing resident at Birds End, who married Hester's sister Phoebe in November 1933.

(See also Knights article in the Family Section of this website.)

Hester and Frederick were active members of the Hargrave community, taking part in many social activities at the village hall. Hester contributed as a member of the local W.I., and was a regular church attender, serving on the Parochial Church Council. She also volunteered her time on various resident committees such as that for the village hall and was quick to assist in any local fund-raising events. She was also a talented flower arranger.

Cant and Moss Families as mentioned in local press articles and obituaries:

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 25th November 1933.

OUSDEN WEDDING

KNIGHTS-CANT Very pretty was the wedding at St. Peter's Church, Ousden, between Mr. Norman Knights, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Knights, Lower Farm, Rickinghall, and Miss Phoebe Cant, younger daughter Mr. and Mrs. Cant, Ousden. A photograph appeared in our last issue. The Rev. L. L. Butcher officiated, with Mrs. Butcher presiding at the organ. The bride, who was given away by her father, was attired in a dress of pale blue Indian silk, with long silk net veil, and wreath of orange blossom and pale blue court slices. She wore a string of pearls and carried sheaf lilies and white heather. She was attended three bridesmaids — Miss Hester Cant (sister of the bride). Miss Barbara Knights and Miss Val Knights (sisters of bridegroom). Miss H. Cant was attired in rose pink georgette, with black satin shoes, and wore a spray of pink velvet flowers in her hair. Miss Barbara and Miss Val Knights wore pink satin dresses, with black satin shoes. They both wore circlet of silver leaves in their hair. All three bridesmaids wore pink crystal and silver necklaces, and carried shower bouquets of pink chrysanthemums and fern, the gifts of the bridegroom. Mr. David Gant (brother of the bride) was best man. After the ceremony the guests went to the Village Hall for the reception, for their honeymoon, the bride's travelling attire being a blue and grey ensemble with black suede shoes.

The presents included:

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 23rd December 1933.

OUSDEN.

A PRETTY WEDDING was solemnised at the Parish Church Thursday between Mr. Fred Moss, of Fordham Road, Newmarket, and Miss Hester Cant, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Z. Cant, Ousden. The bride, who was given away by her father, wore pink dress, with hat to match and carried a bouquet of pink carnations and fern. She was attended by Mrs. Norman Knights (sister) and Mrs. A. Cant (sister-in-law). Both wore pale green flowered dresses with pink velvet headdress and carried bouquets of yellow chrysanthemums and fern. Mr. H. Tomlinson, brother the bridegroom, was best man. The rector. Rev. J. L. Butcher officiated, and Mrs. Butcher presided at the organ, the hymns sung being "Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us," and "Now Thank We all our God." After the ceremony a reception was held at the bride's home, twenty-two guests being present. In the afternoon the happy couple left for short honeymoon. They received a number of useful presents.

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 3rd August 1951.

OUSDEN MAN DEAD IN POND

A verdict that a 77-years-old retired agricultural foreman, Zaccheus Cant, Hope Cottage, Dunstall Green Road, Ousden, took his own life while the balance of mind was disturbed, was recorded the Coroner, Mr. T. Wilson, at an inquest held at Ousden Village Hall on Monday. Mr. Cant was found drowned in a small pond the back of his home early on Sunday morning.

The following item was printed in the Haverhill Echo on the 4th August 1951.

Carried Out Threat to Drown Himself

Retired Farm Worker Found in Ousden Pond

The tragic story of how a 77-year old local retired agricultural foreman carried out his threat to "end everything by placing himself in the pond" was described at an inquest on Monday on Zaccheus Cant, of Hope Cottage, Ousden.

The Coroner, Mr. T. Wilson, recorded a verdict that deceased drowned himself while the balance of his mind was disturbed.

The widow, Emilie Henriette Florence Cant, said that her husband had retired from work 25 years ago on account of a dilated heart and blood pressure and since then had had some unsettled periods. He had suffered from depression and had given way to frequent outbursts of temper during which he had threatened to end everything by placing himself in the pond.

"VERY UPSET "

On Saturday, went on Mrs. Cant, she went to the village flower show and being a member of the Committee, stayed until the close at 9.30 p.m., having in the meantime returned home to see how her husband was going on. When she arrived home he was very upset and refused to eat his supper.

The widow said that she went to bed at 10.45 p.m. when he was fast asleep, but never heard him get out of bed during the night. About 7.30 am. a next door neighbour called upon her and gave certain information which caused her to go to the pond where she saw her husband's clothing on the bank.

Fred Cant, son, also spoke of outbursts of temper by the deceased. - He went to the pond and described finding and recovering the body with the assistance of a neighbour, Major Joseph Wardale, who was the person who found the deceased's clothes on the bank of the pond at 7.15 am. The body revealed that death had taken place sometime previous.

The following item was printed in the Newmarket Journal on the 3rd November 1966.

Sewing — her hobby

ALTHOUGH she is nearly 89 and has 10 great grandchildren, Mrs. E. H. F. Cant, of Hope Cottage, Ousden, still finds plenty of time for sewing, a pastime she says she has enjoyed all her life. She has a friend in a London furniture shop who sends her pieces of upholstery patterns from which she makes all sorts of patchwork articles. She has made countless cushions, some of which she gives away to her large family and her friends, and others which she sells for charity. Most of the proceeds go to either the Red Cross or the funds of Ousden Parish Church, the bells of which need repairing at a cost of £140.

During the war years Mrs. Cant made 32 patchwork quilts which were sent "all over the place," but mostly to air raid shelters. She was one of a group of about 20 women who used to meet two afternoons a week to make various articles needed for troops and civilians.

Although the 32 quilts made during these years were part of the war effort, since then Mrs. Cant has continued to make them in large numbers, and says "I am never so happy as when I've got a needle in my hand."

As well as quilts and cushions, Mrs. cant makes patchwork rugs.

They are made in the same way as other things, that is, by joining odd pieces of material together to form a pattern. She can complete one of these rugs in a week, and does not sit at it all the time.

Mrs. Cant has lived in Ousden for 70 years and is the oldest inhabitant of the village. In the first place she moved there as a servant with a trainer's family. Ever since her school days she says she has had a "craze for sewing."

A member of Ousden Church Council, Mrs. Cant is very interested in the welfare of the village, Also she is interested in history both of the village and of her own family, who are from French descent, her maiden name being De Guise.

But of all her interests the main one is sewing. She made clothes for her family while they were children as well as patchwork, she makes her own stuffing for things.

This is by "chopping" up the pieces of material which are too small to be of use for any other purpose.

Mrs. Cant says she can think of no more pleasant way of passing the time.



● MRS. CANT

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 22nd February 1974.

HARGRAVE

Mr. N.H.G. Knights entertained Hargrave W.I. with colour slides of flora and fauna of The King's Forest near Brandon.....

.....Mrs. Hester Moss entertained members with her home-made blackcurrant wine and Christmas cake.....

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 28th February 1975.

HARGRAVE

A silver spoon was presented to Mrs Hester Moss at the February meeting of the Hargrave W I. for gaining most points in the competitions held in 1974. In the absence of the programmed speaker from the Samaritans (owing to foggy weather) members discussed proposed resolutions for the annual meeting. Among topics covered were the screening for breast cancer, equality of men and women, battered wives and juvenile delinquency. Detail of the committee arrangements were made for the spring fayre to be held on March 22. News of past members is always welcome and cards had been received from Mrs. Joyce English (past president), Mrs. Glenda Griffiths. and Mrs. Barbara Rose who is now living in Malta. A posy was presented to Mrs. Peggy Alexander who was welcomed as a new member. The competition for an unusual button was won by Mrs. Doris Newman.

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 24th October 1975.

HARGRAVE

Mrs Helen Mapperley was re-elected president of Hargrave WI at the October meeting. The committee was returned unopposed: Mesdames Fogden, Mapperley. Marsh. Martin, Morley, Newman, Slade and Stanford.....

..... A farewell toast was drunk to Mrs Hester Moss in the excellent home-made wine she had provided for her last meeting prior to leaving the village. The president wished her happiness in her new home.....

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 23rd September 1977.

HARGRAVE

A short service of remembrance and thanksgiving for Mrs Hester Moss was held in the Village Hall. Mrs Sally Fogden led the service and spoke of Hester's generosity to her friends and the energy and enthusiasm with which she served her church and village. Mrs Nene Morley played the piano and readings were by Mrs Helen Mapperley and Mrs Jean Bushell. Mrs. Moss was an active member of Hargrave church and served on the Parochial Church Council for a number of years. She was also an enthusiastic member of the village hall committee and the fund raising sub. committee and had helped at every function since the new committee was formed five years ago. She joined in the Jubilee celebrations and had performed in an Edwardian musical evening at the Jubilee barbecue. She was a very active member of the W I and will be sadly missed. Her support could be depended on at all times.

One of her many duties was to provide birthday bouquets for members throughout the year and even those with birthdays in the middle of winter could be sure of a colourful posy lovingly arranged.

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 3rd May 1985.

Mr F. Moss

Mr Frederick Moss died at his home, Hope Cottage, Ousden quite suddenly recently. Born in Newmarket, he was keen on all sport and played football for Newmarket. He worked for some years on Lord Derby's estates.

He and his wife, Hester, moved to Hargrave where he worked for Mr. Maddever at Southwood Park.

Twelve years ago he retired and they moved to Ousden. Always a quiet and pleasant person he very much missed his wife who died suddenly seven years ago.

The funeral was at Cambridge Crematorium on Wednesday, April 17.

Mourners were: Mrs L. Tomlinson, Mrs E. Youll, Mr and Mrs W. Ross, Mrs C. Corbett, Mrs Wilson, Mrs Holland, Mr and Mrs F. Cant, Mr T. Cant, Mr and Mrs P. Cant, Mrs S. Ellis (rep Mr P. Ellis), Mrs P. Knights, Mr D. Knights (Mrs Knights), Mr and Mrs. D. Thorpe.

Mr G. Cant (Mr and Mrs V. Cant), Mr and Mrs Maddever, Mrs D. Pettitt, Mr H. Smart, Mr P. Bailey, Mrs J. Mitchell (Mr J. Mitchell) and Mrs K. Pettitt, (Mr K. Pettitt).

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 9th January 1987.

Mr T. Cant

Mr Thomas Cant, died very suddenly at his home, Hope Cottage, Ousden on Monday, December 8, Born in Ousden 67 years ago, his death ends a family connection with Ousden of about 150 years.

One of six brothers, five served in the Army and one in the Navy. During the last war he served in the South Staffordshire Regiment and was involved in the Normandy landings. A carpenter by trade, he had worked as senior craftsman on restoration work on several Cambridge colleges.

The funeral was at Cambridge crematorium on Tuesday. December 16. Family mourners were: Mr and Mrs F. Cant, Mrs E. Cant, Mrs J. White, Mrs L. Norfolk, Mr and Mrs R. Cant, Mr and Mrs. D. Thorpe, Mr and Mrs D. Knights, Mr G. Cant, Mr and Mrs J. Knights, Mrs S. Ellis, Mr and Mrs P. Cant. present: Mr and Mrs R. Claydon, Mr J. Smith, Mr and Mrs R. King. Mr R. Nunn. Mr and Mrs K. Penal, Mr J. House.

Nicholas Newman – May 2026