

# *This is A Few Forgotten Women Story*



*This story was written, in April 2024, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women staff and female patients associated with the Fleming Memorial Children's Hospital, Jesmond, Northumberland.*

## **Euphemia Cook's Story**

Euphemia Jessie Cook was born on 20 April 1867<sup>1</sup> and <sup>12</sup> in Haddington, East Lothian to James Wright and his wife Margaret nee Logan who had married the previous year. She was their first child. The family of 5 were living in Haddington on the 1871 census<sup>2</sup> – James 26, wife Margaret 28, Euphemia 3, John 2 and William 0. By 1881, three more children had been born – Helen in 1873, James in 1877 and Margaret 1879. The family were now living at 3 Fergusons Building in Canongate, Edinburgh<sup>3</sup>. Euphemia was 13.

On 11 September 1890, Euphemia Jessie Wright married John Cook at 59 Cockburn Street in Edinburgh<sup>4</sup>. John was a bachelor aged 22, a Private in the Seaforth Highlanders stationed at Beggars Bush Barracks in Dublin. He had been born in Rescobie, Forfar on 28 March 1868 to John Cook and his wife

Christina nee Gentle<sup>5</sup>. Euphemia was a spinster aged 23, employed as a domestic servant. Her address was the United Industrial School in Blackfriars Street, Edinburgh. Her parents were James Wright, Coachsmith, deceased and Margaret Wright nee Logan.

Euphemia had found employment at the Fleming Memorial Children's Hospital prior to 5 April 1891. Mrs Euphemia Cook, aged 25, was employed as a cook<sup>6</sup>. It is unknown how long she remained in this occupation but a daughter Helen Logan Cook was born in Dover in 1898<sup>7</sup>. Euphemia and Helen were living at 9 Mall Park, Musselburgh when the 1901 census was taken<sup>8</sup>. She was the wife of a soldier. John, aged 43, was an Army pensioner by 1 April 1911, employed as a shift attendant by HMO Works. The family of five were living at 8 Wooler Street in Walworth<sup>9</sup>. Daughter Christina Gentle Cook had been born in Arderser, Inverness in 1903<sup>10</sup>, while Grace Mary was born in Southwark, London in 1908<sup>7</sup>. Two other children had been born and died prior to 1911<sup>9</sup>.

The family had moved again by June 1921 as they were living in 97 Balham Park Road, Battersea<sup>11</sup>. John, aged 53, was employed by the government as a King's Messenger. Euphemia, aged 54, was a housewife. Their four children were living at home. Helen (23) undertook domestic duties, Christina (18) was employed as a librarian, Grace (12) was a student as was their brother John Alfred (10).

Tragedy struck the family on Christmas Eve 1926 when John was killed on Wandsworth Common, knocked down by a car<sup>12</sup>. John was 58, a King's Messenger of 97 Balham Park Road, Balham. The report of the coroners' verdict in the Northern Whig of 29 December 1926 exonerated the driver and

expressed the view that the adoption of 4 wheeled brakes on all vehicles would reduce the number of street fatalities.

Euphemia, a widow, was living on her own at 1 Liverpool Lawn, Dover when the 1939 register was compiled<sup>13</sup>. She died on 31 August 1946 aged 79<sup>14</sup> and <sup>15</sup>. Euphemia had been living at 130 Folkstone Road in Dover. She was buried in Morden Cemetery. Her obituary named her son John and two married daughters – Mrs Greenwood who was living in the USA and Mrs Sutherland. Helen Logan Cook had married Gordon Sutherland in Croydon in 1928<sup>7</sup>. She died in Dover in January 1986 with a date of birth of 12 February 1898<sup>16</sup>. Christina Gentle Cook had emigrated to Pleasantville, New Jersey in 1925<sup>17</sup>, going to her aunt Jane Greenwood. She married George Greenwood in 1936<sup>18</sup> and was a widow by 1940.

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