

# Archives of Disease in Childhood

## Editorial Committee

*Editors:* Roy Meadow and Bernard Valman

*Associate Editor:* Malcolm Chiswick

D P Addy  
E D Alberman  
J M H Buckler  
A G M Campbell  
J O Forfar  
M J R Healy  
A S Hunter

J V Leonard  
J S Lilleyman  
S P Lock  
A S McNeish  
E R Moxon  
M E Pembrey

R O Robinson  
G W Rylance  
M Silverman  
L Spitz  
M J Tarlow  
J S Wigglesworth

Technical Editor: Jeremy Weightman

---

### Notes to Contributors

Papers for publication should be sent to the Editors, *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR and should be prepared in accordance with the 'Instructions to authors' published in the January and June issues of the journal. Copies of these instructions may be obtained from the editorial office on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

### Notice to Advertisers

Applications for advertising space and rates should be made to the Advertisement Manager, *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR.

### Notice to Subscribers

*Archives of Disease in Childhood* is published monthly. The annual subscription rates are £73.00 inland and £84.00 overseas (including the USA). Orders should be sent to the Subscription Manager, *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Orders can also be placed with any leading subscription agent or

bookseller. (For the convenience of readers in the USA subscription orders with or without payment may also be sent to *British Medical Journal*, Box 560B, Kennebunkport, Maine 04046. All enquiries however must be addressed to the Publisher in London).

All enquiries regarding air mail rates and single copies already published should be addressed to the Publisher in London.

COPYRIGHT © 1986 by *Archives of Disease in Childhood*. This publication is copyright under the Berne Convention and the International Copyright Convention. All rights reserved. Apart from any relaxations permitted under national copyright laws, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission of the copyright owners. Permission is not required to copy abstracts of papers or of articles on condition that a full reference to the source is shown. Multiple copying of the contents without permission is always illegal.

## The Inquest

I took my oath I would inquire,  
Without affection, hate, or wrath,  
Into the death of Ada Wright—  
So help me God! I took that oath.

When I went out to see the corpse,  
The four months' babe that died so young,  
I judged it was seven pounds in weight,  
And little more than one foot long.

One eye, that had a yellow lid,  
Was shut—so was the mouth, that smiled;  
The left eye open, shining bright—  
It seemed a knowing little child.

For as I looked at that one eye,  
It seemed to laugh, and say with glee:  
'What caused my death you'll never know—  
Perhaps my mother murdered me.'

When I went into court again,  
To hear the mother's evidence—  
It was a love-child, she explained.  
And smiled, for our intelligence.

'Now, Gentlemen of the Jury,' said  
The coroner—'this women's child  
By misadventure met its death.'  
'Aye, aye,' said we. The mother smiled.

And I could see that child's one eye  
Which seemed to laugh, and say with glee:  
'What caused my death you'll never know—  
Perhaps my mother murdered me.'

### **W H Davies 1871–1940**

After a childhood in Wales W H Davies moved to England and then in 1922 to America. There he led a vagrant life, which he continued on his return to England. Although a substantial poet, many will remember him best as author of 'Autobiography of a Supertramp'. 'The Inquest' is published in the *Complete Poems of W H Davies* and is reproduced by kind permission of the Executors of the W H Davies estate, Jonathan Cape Ltd, and Wesleyan University Press.

EDITOR