

## GUEST LECTURES

### GAISFORD MEMORIAL LECTURE (from 1988)

Professor W F Gaisford, professor emeritus of child health and paediatrics at the University of Manchester, was the first professor of Child Health in Manchester. Died on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 1988.

Wilfrid Fletcher Gaisford was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1902 in Somerset, Education at Bristol Grammar School and St Bartholomew's Hospital, he graduated MB, BS in 1926. He held house appointments at his teaching hospital and then worked at East London Children's Hospital and at St Louis Children's Hospital in the United States; in Liverpool he was deputy medical superintendent at Alder Hey Hospital and honorary physician to the Babies' Hospital. In 1935 he was appointed senior physician and paediatrician to Dudley Road Hospital, Birmingham, and in 1941 he moved to Warwick as consultant paediatrician to the county. Although reluctant to leave Warwickshire, in 1947 he was persuaded to apply for the new chair of child health in Manchester. An inspiring teacher, he stimulated a high proportion of students to follow a paediatric career, and by his efforts a separate paediatric examination was established in the final MB, so that the specialty gained equality with the established subjects.

His main interest was the clinical care of children. He was honorary physician to Royal Manchester Children's Hospital and St Mary's Hospital for Women and Children as well as being honorary paediatrician to the united Manchester hospitals. A kindly physician with a great sense of fun, he readily gained the trust of children, and he insisted, often against opposition, that children should be treated in an environment designed for their needs and looked after by those suitably trained. He advised on the expansion of paediatric hospital services throughout the north west region and to maintain contact between paediatricians helped found the Manchester Paediatric Club.

His research interests were many. With Mary Evans he conducted the first clinical trials of sulphapyridine in pneumonia at Dudley Road Hospital, where as a tribute a prize and lecture in their names have been established. A great interest in prophylactic immunization and particular neonatal BCG vaccination results in many papers. With Professor Colin Campbell he started a children's tumour register in Manchester, from which a major oncological service developed. He was joint editor of *Paediatrics for the Practitioner* and contributed to the *Encyclopedia of Medical Practice*.

Awarded the Military Medal of Merit first class by the Czechoslovak government in 1945, he was president of the British Paediatric Association in 1964-5, a honorary fellow of the American Paediatric Association, an extraordinary member of the Swiss Paediatric Association, and an honorary member of the Canadian, Swedish and Finnish association.

Wilfrid Gaisford had been a distinguished rugby player. At full back he had played for Barts, Somerset, the Barbarians, and the British Lions. In Manchester he took a keen interest in study rugby and as president of the Medical Club gave regular and enthusiastic support from the touch line. He married Mary Guppy in 1933. They had a son and four daughters, including twins. Sadly one of the twins died in 1980. His pleasure in gardening was rivaled only by his love of the sea: he never travelled with greater happiness than in a small ship on a rough sea. He retired to Cornwall in 1967, but osteoarthritis progressively limited his activities.

(Taken from the British Medical Journal Vol 296, No 6632 (May 7, 1988))

- 1958 Professor M Lamy  
Pycnodysostosis – the malady of Toulouse-Lautrec
- 1970 Dr C R Scriver  
Treatment in medical genetics
- 1973 Dr R Miller  
The aetiology of childhood cancer
- 1974 Professor W H Hitzig  
Susceptibility to infection in childhood
- 1975 Professor B Hagberg  
Cerebral palsy in Sweden – the changing panorama 1954-1970
- 1976 Dr Pamela Horn  
Child workers in the Victorian countryside
- 1979 Professor V Dubowitz  
Muscle disorders in childhood
- 1982 Professor P Phelan  
Current dilemmas in cystic fibrosis
- 1985 Dr J Somerville  
Cardiac problems in adolescence associated with long term survival
- 1988 Professor R G Hendrickse  
Of Mice, Moulds and Man
- 2007 Professor Jonathan Hill  
Developmental perspectives on life threatening and chronic paediatric disorders.
- 2010 Professor Jill Clayton-Smith  
Fetal anticonvulsant exposure