

Forensic Case of Passerby Girl Hit by Crate Falling from a Truck

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Abstract

Traumatic lesions in childhood have been addressed especially as regards “the battered child syndrome.” In this paper, the trauma was oddly accidental. Therefore, it deserves documentation.

Keywords: Child; Passerby; Vehicle; Accident; Intestine; Rupture; Death

Introduction

The battered child syndrome became in the 1940s a talking point through the insightful paper of Caffey [1]. On the other side, there is accidental injury such as the ordinary vehicular type [2]. Therefore, an unusual case is worthy of documentation in connection with a passerby child.

Case Report

EC, a 7-year-old girl, was alleged to have been hit by a falling crate being conveyed by a truck at Nsukka. She died not long after and this became a Police Case. At autopsy, by the Police Doctor, there were multiple areas of ruptured intestine with much oozing of the contents.

On referral, the author received two pieces of bowel measuring 5cm and 7cm long as well as 11cm piece of fatty tissue, all being coated with purulent exudates. On microscopy, despite postmortem autolysis, the principal finding was clear, particularly in the omentum which abounded in pyogenic exudates. Peritonitis was diagnosed.

Discussion

Despite the poor history above, the author received the specimen at the Regional Pathology Laboratory situated at Enugu in South Eastern Nigeria. In this community [3], the Igbo Ethnic Group

is domiciled. In contrast, some enlightened publications have since been published from this center [4-7]. Unfortunately, the present case was so disheartening that I commented at the time thus: “Why was there no surgical operative procedure?” Perhaps, it is well to conclude that this could not have happened in recent years.

References

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