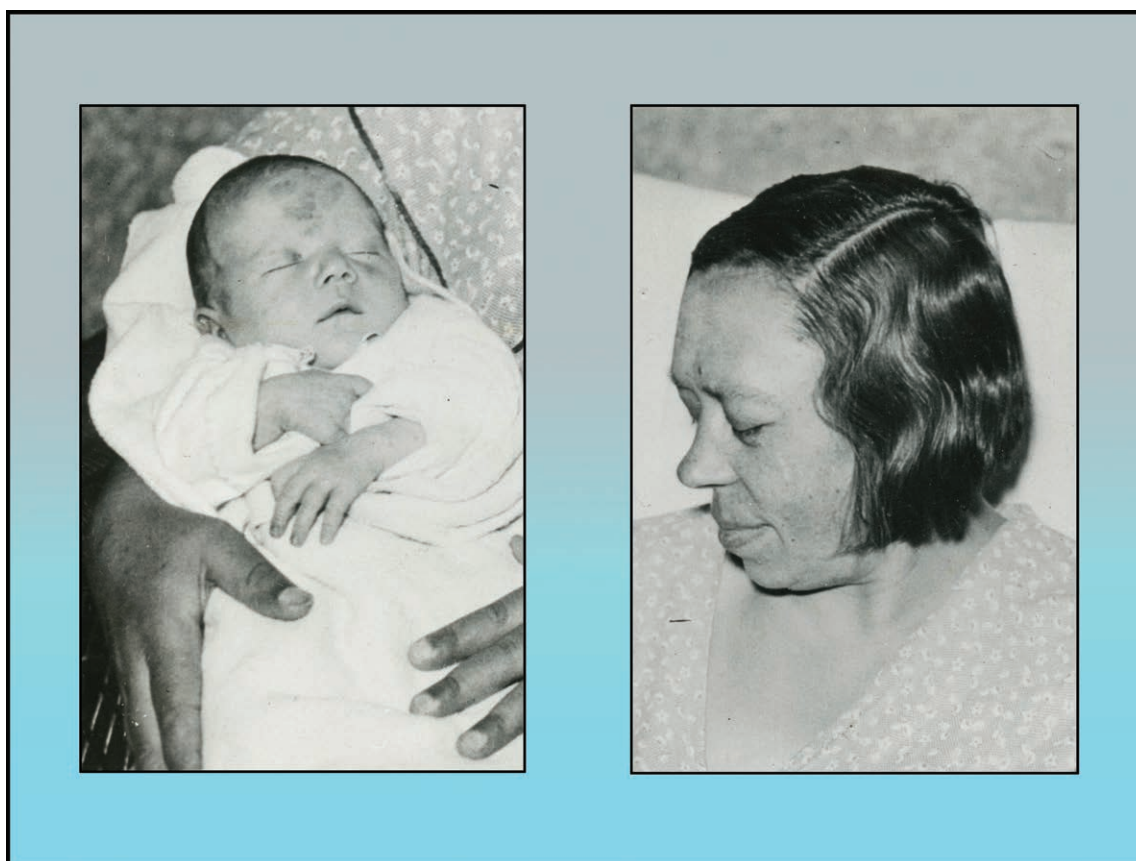


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Anesthetic Powers?: Whiskey for Neonatal Surgery in 1934 Kansas City



On Friday, May 11, 1934, in Kansas City, Missouri, Mrs. Clara Powers (*right*) reluctantly permitted emergency surgery on her dehydrated baby boy. Sixteen-day-old Harold William Powers (*left*) had a palpable mass obstructing the passage of fluids through his stomach. After placing a small bag of sugar in the baby's mouth, an intern "dropped whisky on the sugar [bag] until the child fell into a stupor." The surgeon's local anesthetic supplemented the intern's whiskey one, and a successful pyloromyotomy was performed. The Monday after the surgery, news headlines nationwide read mistakenly, "Whisky and Sugar Given Baby as Anesthetic for Operation." (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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