son’s disease appeared. As in previously reported cases, he underwent a series of investigations before the correct diagnosis was reached. This is an unusual presentation of a common disease and should be considered in all cases of unexplained dysphagia.


12 February 1809
Charles Darwin (1809–82) was born in Shrewsbury, UK, son of a successful local doctor and grandson of Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgwood. He was a medical student at Edinburgh but for two years only (1825–27) and then moved to Christ’s College, Cambridge (1828) to study for the church but instead became a naturalist on HMS Beagle (1831–36). He married his cousin Emma Wedgwood (1839) and lived as a country gentleman at Downe, Kent. This is now a research institute of the Royal College of Surgeons. His epoch-making theory of evolution by natural selection was published as “The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection” in November 1859. He is buried in Westminster Abbey, London, UK.