

Psychiatry in pictures

EDITED BY ALLAN BEVERIDGE

Do you have an image, preferably accompanied by 100 to 200 words of explanatory text, that you think would be suitable for Psychiatry in Pictures? Submissions are very welcome and should be sent direct to Dr Allan Beveridge, Queen Margaret Hospital, Whitefield Road, Dunfermline, Fife KY12 0SU, UK.



Dementia (artist unknown, c.1840)

Sir Alexander Morison published his *The Physiognomy of Mental Diseases* in 1840. Born and trained in Edinburgh, Morison instituted the first formal lectures on mental disease in Britain in 1823. He also wrote one of the first psychiatric textbooks, *Outlines of Lectures on Mental Diseases*, which appeared in 1825. Morison's interest in physiognomy was inspired by his visits to Paris where the French physician Jean Esquirol had shown him his collection of 200 plaster casts of the faces of the insane and the drawings of patients by Géricault. By 1840 Morison had enough of his own material to produce *The Physiognomy of Mental Diseases*, which contained 108 plates of patients and which attempted to relate particular facial appearances to specific types of insanity. As he wrote: 'The appearance of the face is intimately connected with and dependent upon the state of mind'. Morison had commissioned sketched portraits of patients by a number of young artists of the period. These included the fashionable French painter François Rochard, and Alexander Johnston, who became noted for his historical genre paintings. These sketches were reproduced as lithographs in the book. Morison donated the original drawings to the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, where they can still be viewed. Not all of the drawings were reproduced in the book; this particular example, a striking portrait of a naked man, was not. On the back of the drawing was written the diagnosis, 'Dementia'. With thanks to Iain Milne, Head of Library and Information Services, and John Dallas, Rare Books Librarian, and staff at the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh.