

The Royal Society of Medicine

# COMMITTED

Madness in 19th century England

13 May 2019 - 27 July 2019

---

**Exhibition Curator**  
Robert Greenwood

**With additional material by**  
Robert Greenwood

**Graphic Designer**  
Henry Trickey

**Contact us**  
[library@rsm.ac.uk](mailto:library@rsm.ac.uk)  
020 7290 2940

**Exhibition hours**  
**Mon - Thurs** 9am - 9pm  
**Friday** 9am - 5.30pm  
**Saturday** 10am - 4.30pm

# CONTENTS

---

<b>4</b>	John Haslam
<b>7</b>	John Conolly
<b>9</b>	Samuel Tuke
<b>10</b>	Daniel Hack Tuke
<b>13</b>	Matthew Allen
<b>15</b>	Alexander Morison
<b>16</b>	Sander L. Gilman
<b>17</b>	Hugh Welch Diamond
<b>18</b>	Photographs by Diamond



---

John Haslam (1764-1844) Physician and specialist in insanity.

## John Haslam (1764 – 1844)

*Observations on insanity: with practical remarks on the disease, and an account of the morbid appearances on dissection.*

London, Printed for F. and C. Rivington, and sold by J. Hatchard, 1798  
248.f.18

In July 1795 John Haslam was appointed resident apothecary at the Bethlem Hospital. His duties included daily visits to each patient, supervising their management, and preparing their medication. *Observations on Insanity* was his earliest and most major work. Despite his published advocacy of moral treatment of the mentally ill which gained for him many admirers including Philippe Pinel and Samuel Tuke, Haslam was known to defend restraint of patients with chains, a method he considered more practical and humane than the use of the strait-jacket. He also invented a device known as Haslam's key to be used in force-feeding patients, and which, according to its inventor, caused less damage to the patient's teeth than other methods.

*Illustrations of madness : exhibiting a singular case of insanity, and a no less remarkable difference in medical opinion : developing the nature of assaillment... with a description of the tortures experienced by bomb-bursting, lobster-cracking, and lengthening the brain.*

London : Printed by G. Hayden ... : and sold by Rivingtons ..., 1810.  
Tr.B.34(3)

The "singular case of insanity" presented here by Haslam was that of James Tilly Matthews (1770 – 1815), a patient at Bethlem who had written letters accusing Lord Liverpool, the Home Secretary, of treason and alleging conspiracies directed against his life. Matthews interrupted a debate in the House of Commons

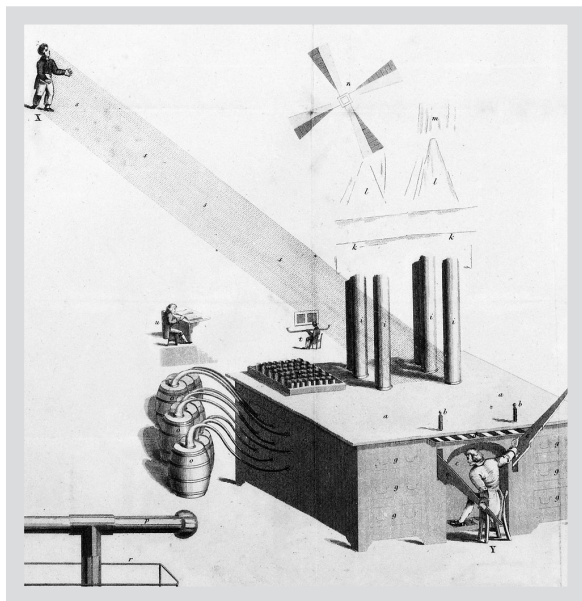


by shouting "Treason" at Lord Liverpool from the Public Gallery. He was arrested and was subsequently admitted to the Bethlem hospital on 28 January 1797. In 1809 his family and friends unsuccessfully petitioned for his release, arguing that he was no longer insane, and two physicians, Henry Clutterbuck and George Birkbeck, who had independently examined Matthews, both concluded that his symptoms were caused by his unjust confinement. But Haslam considered Matthews still to be a danger to public figures and argued against his release. Matthews, however, was to enjoy some posthumous revenge. Documents written by him were presented to the 1815-16 committee enquiring into mad-houses and testified to the medical negligence and cruelties committed by Haslam and some of his colleagues.

*Illustrations of madness. Edited with an introduction by Roy Porter.  
London and New York, Routledge, 1988  
Facsimile of edition first published in 1810.  
616.89 HAS*

It was Matthews' belief that a group of seven spies, four men and three women, hidden in a cellar close to the hospital, were controlling him with rays and gases emitted by a machine called the "Air Loom" and operated by the Middleman who, although unrelenting in his persecution, "appears to consider it as sport, and sits grinning, apparently delighted that he cannot be taken unawares." The rays were able to stop the circulation of the victim's blood via a magnetic field and constricted the air around the chest until the subject could not breathe. Matthews called this "Lobster-cracking." "Stomach-skinning" and "Apoplexy-working with the nutmeg grater" were the means by which "magnetic fluids" were introduced into the skull. "Event-workings," "brain-saying" and "dream-working" introduced involuntary thoughts into the brain. Matthews believed that several such criminal gangs operated in this way to target government ministers, including the Prime Minister, William Pitt, and had caused several British military disasters.

The leader of the gang was Bill, or the King, who has "never been observed to smile," and who "exerts the most unrelenting and murderous villainy," assisted by Jack the Schoolmaster, short-hand writer to the gang; Sir Archy, "a low-minded blackguard, always cracking obscene jokes," and whom some of the gang assert is "a woman dressed in men's apparel;" Augusta who "seldom works the machine, but frequently goes abroad to correspond with other gangs at the West end of the town;" Charlotte, whom the gang keeps "nearly naked, and poorly fed" and who "Mr. Matthews is led to suppose that she is chained;" the Glove Woman, never known to speak, whom "the rest of the gang are constantly bantering and plucking like a number of rooks at a strange jack-daw."



Matthews's illustration of the "Air Loom".  
Matthews's is considered to be the first fully documented case of paranoid schizophrenia, and is described in detail in John Haslam's *Illustrations of Madness*.

# Committee on Madhouses in England

Report, together with the minutes of evidence, and an appendix of papers from the Committee appointed to consider of provision being made for the better regulation of madhouses in England ... each subject of evidence arranged under its distinct-head.

London, 1815.

249.f.4

## Observations of the physician [Monro] and apothecary [Haslam] of Bethlem Hospital on the evidence before the Committee on Mad-houses.

London, 1816.

Tr.B.339(1)

The trenchant criticisms made by the House of Commons select committee of conditions at Bethlem Hospital and the treatment of its patients caused Haslam, along with the physician Thomas Monro, to resign his position at Bethlem. In this publication Haslam and Monro defend their conduct and appeal to the hospital governors for their reinstatement, but, despite Monro's assurance that chains were "fit only for the pauper lunatics: if a gentleman was put in irons he would not like it," the governors chose not to re-elect either to their posts, and dismissed Haslam without a pension.

## John Haslam (1764 – 1844)

*Considerations on the moral management of insane persons.* London : Printed for R. Hunter, 1817.

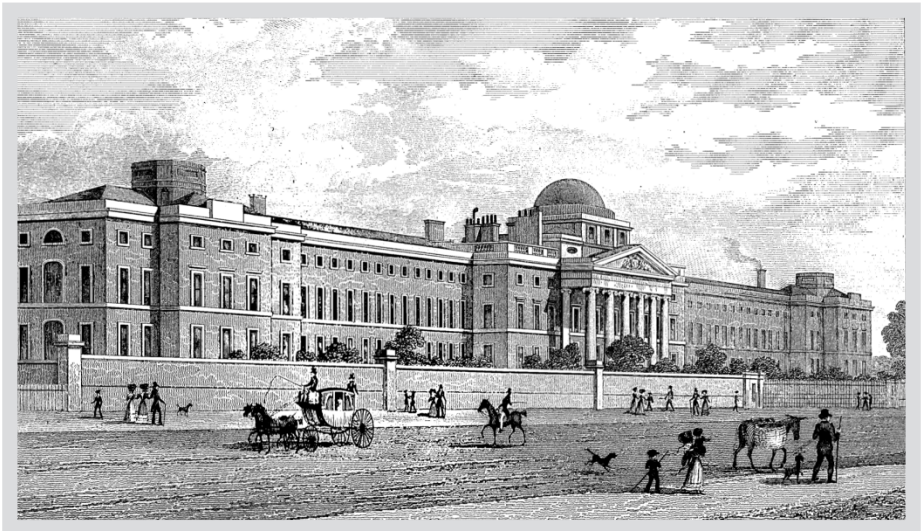
Tr.B.370(11)

"Coercion should never be considered, by the superintendent, or keeper, as a punishment, but as a means of cure. By the patient it will always be viewed as a punishment, and as an unjust usurpation of authority; because, being of deranged intellect, and not conscious of his disorder, he conceives all restraint on his actions to be an illegal assumption of power on the part of those who restrain him."

*Medical jurisprudence : as it relates to insanity, according to the law of England.* London : Hunter, 1817.

Tr.B.66(2)

Haslam often appeared as an expert witness at insanity trials and emphasised the importance of medical expertise in the management of mentally ill persons over that of lay managers and administrators.





---

John Conolly (1794-1866) Physician  
and alienist

## John Conolly (1794 – 1866)

*An inquiry concerning the indications of insanity with suggestions for the better protection and care of the insane.*

London, John Taylor, 1830

Heritage Centre (CON)

Conolly argued that asylum treatment served only to exacerbate the symptoms of mental illness in those patients committed to their care. He advised that if patients should be admitted to an asylum it should be one that is publically rather than privately funded thus protecting the interests and welfare of patients over that of financial interests.

In 1838 Conolly applied for the post of superintendent at the Hanwell County Asylum in Middlesex. The post, however, was given to J.R. Millingen, an army surgeon whose regime at Hanwell turned out to be disastrous. Following Millingen's resignation in 1839, Conolly took over the post and quickly announced the abolition at Hanwell of all forms of mechanical restraint such as chains, manacles, and strait-jackets, and their replacement by a purely moral and persuasive approach to patients.

## John Gideon Millingen (1782 - 1862)

*Aphorisms on the treatment and management of the insane; with considerations on public and private lunatic asylums.*

London : John Churchill, 1840.

234.a.25

“Except in cases of violent mania, restraint is rarely necessary; unless it be to prevent the mischievous idiot and the maniac from destroying property, when gentle restraint is required to prevent them from constantly tearing their clothes and bedding, or breaking the window-panes, or anything they can lay hold of. It may, however, be occasionally employed as a punishment, the dread of which keeps many lunatics in order.”

## Robert Gardiner Hill (1811 - 1878)

*Lecture on the management of lunatic asylums, [for the total abolition of personal restraint].*

London, 1838.

290.i.9

“In the treatment of the insane, medicine is of little avail, except (of course) when they are suffering also from other diseases, to which lunatics as well as sane persons are liable. Moral treatment with a view to induce habits of self-control, is all and every thing.”

Although the non-restraint of mentally-ill patients is usually thought of as an innovation introduced by John Conolly at the Hanwell County Asylum in Middlesex, it had first been pioneered in 1838 by Robert Gardiner Hill at an asylum in Lincoln. Before taking up his appointment at Hanwell, Conolly had visited Hill's asylum, noting his methods and expressing his admiration for them.

## John Conolly (1794 – 1866)

*The treatment of the insane without mechanical restraints.*

London, Smith, Elder & Co., 1856

Heritage Centre (CON)

## Jean Etienne Dominique Esquirol (1772-1840)

*Des maladies mentales : considérées sous les rapports médical, hygiénique et médico-legal.*

Paris : J.-B. Baillière ... [et al.], 1838.

256.h.2-3

## John Conolly (1794 – 1866)

*Hanwell. County Lunatic Asylum*

*The reports of John Conolly, M.D. the resident physician of the County Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell, to the Michaelmas sessions, 1842.*

London, 1842.

243.b.13



Samuel Tuke (1784-1857) Asylum reformer and philanthropist



William Tuke (1732-1822) Philanthropist and founder of the York Retreat

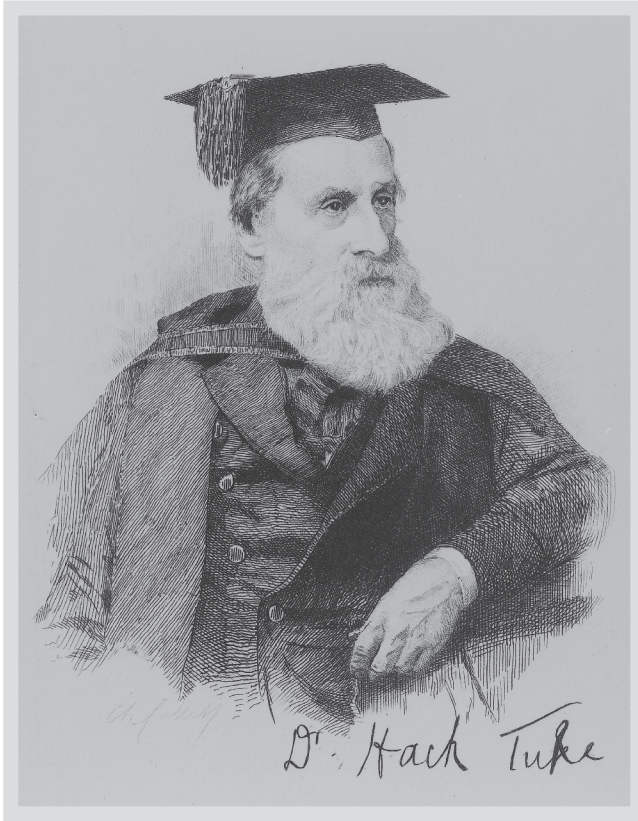
## Samuel Tuke (1784 – 1857)

*Description of the "Retreat," near York, for insane persons of the Society of Friends.*  
York, W. Alexander, 1813  
A.10.i.18

The Retreat was a Quaker asylum founded in 1796 by the author's grandfather William Tuke (1732 – 1822), a tea and coffee merchant. Samuel served as its treasurer from 1822 to 1853. Here the essential humanity of mentally-ill patients was acknowledged in practice and traditional methods were replaced with moral treatment. This work describes the asylum's reformed methods and helped to spread the word regarding moral as opposed to coercive treatment.

*Description of the "Retreat," near York, for insane persons of the Society of Friends.*  
York, W. Alexander, 1813  
Facsimile edition published London, Dawson's of Pall Mall, 1964, with an introduction by Richard Hunter and Ida MacAlpine.  
B3 TUK





---

Daniel Hack Tuke (1827-1895) Physician and writer on psychological medicine

## Daniel Hack Tuke (1827 - 1895)

Rules and list of the present members of the society for improving the condition of the insane; and the prize essay on the progressive changes which have taken place since the time of Pinel, in the moral management of the insane and the various contrivances which have been adopted instead of mechanical restraint.

*London, John Churchill, 1854.  
Tract 4(11)*

## Philippe Pinel (1745 – 1826)

*A treatise on insanity : in which are contained the principles of a new and more practical nosology of maniacal disorders than has yet been offered to the public. Sheffield : Printed by W. Todd for Cadell and Davies, 1806. A.8.i.21*

A translation into English by D.D. Davis, physician to the Sheffield General Infirmary of Pinel's famous work first published in 1801. In charge of the female insane wards at the Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris, Pinel, like Tuke, came to believe that customary medical treatments for madness were ineffective, and that symptoms exhibited by patients were as a consequence of mechanical restraint and of their general maltreatment. The image of Pinel literally striking the chains from the hands and feet of inmates is pure fiction but conveys, if metaphorically, his rejection of restraint and punishment, and his belief in the forces of reason.

*Traité sur l'Aliénation Mentals. 2e edit. entièrement refondue. Paris, 1809. A.8.i.20*

## Daniel Hack Tuke (1827 - 1895)

*Chapters in the history of the insane in the British Isles. London : Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1, Paternoster Square, 1882 Printed by William Clowes and Sons, Limited, London and Beccles). 295.a.31*

Daniel Hack Tuke was the son of the asylum reformer and philanthropist Samuel Tuke, and great-grandson of William Tuke, founder of the York Retreat, a private asylum of the Society of Friends. In 1847 Daniel was appointed secretary and house steward to the Retreat.

*Reform in the treatment of the insane : early history of the retreat, York ; its objects and influence, with a report of the celebrations of its centenary. London : J. & A. Churchill, 1892. A.10.i.15*



The York Retreat



## Godfrey Higgins

*Letter to Earl Fitzwilliam respecting the abuses at the York Lunatic Asylum, with reports, &c. Doncaster, 1814*  
*Tr.B.86(2)*

The magistrate Godfrey Higgins joined with the Tuke family in investigating persistent rumours of ill-treatment of patients at the York Lunatic Asylum, a privately-run asylum founded in 1777, and which had evaded inspection until 1813 despite the fact that one of its patients, Hannah Mills, had died there in 1790 in circumstances that were never satisfactorily explained. Higgins discovered physical abuse and neglect of patients, insanitary conditions, the sexual abuse of patients by their keepers, and no separation of male and female patients. Higgins's report led to the replacement of the governors of the asylum and its staff, and the introduction of an adequate inspection regime and proper supervision of the keepers.

## A complete collection of the papers respecting the York Lunatic Asylum

*Published originally in the York newspapers, during the years 1813, 1814, and 1815.*  
*York, Printed at the Herald-Office, 1816*  
*Tract A.26(2)*

"William Vicars took into the Asylum a good and nearly new blue coat, a new silk shag waistcoat, a pair of good velveteen breeches, a new down hat, cost 15s. two pair of blue stockings, never been mended, a pair of new shoes, two new blue and white striped shirts, a short velveteen jacket, another scarlet waistcoat, spotted with black, another pair of velveteen breeches, two neckerchiefs, one of silk, and one of cotton, two pocket handkerchiefs and two night caps. He brought back with him, one short jacket and one waistcoat, two white shirts, two pair of stockings, an old hat, not the hat he took, and a pair of bad shoes. He has not brought back one article he took with him."

## John Wilson Rogers

A statement of the cruelties, abuses, and frauds, which are practised in madhouses.  
*2nd edition*  
*London, 1816.*  
*Tract 9778*

## George Man Burrows (1771 - 1846)

Cursory remarks on a bill now in the House of Peers for regulating of madhouses: its probable influence upon the physical and moral condition of the insane, and upon the interests of those concerned in their care and management; with observations on the defects of the present system.

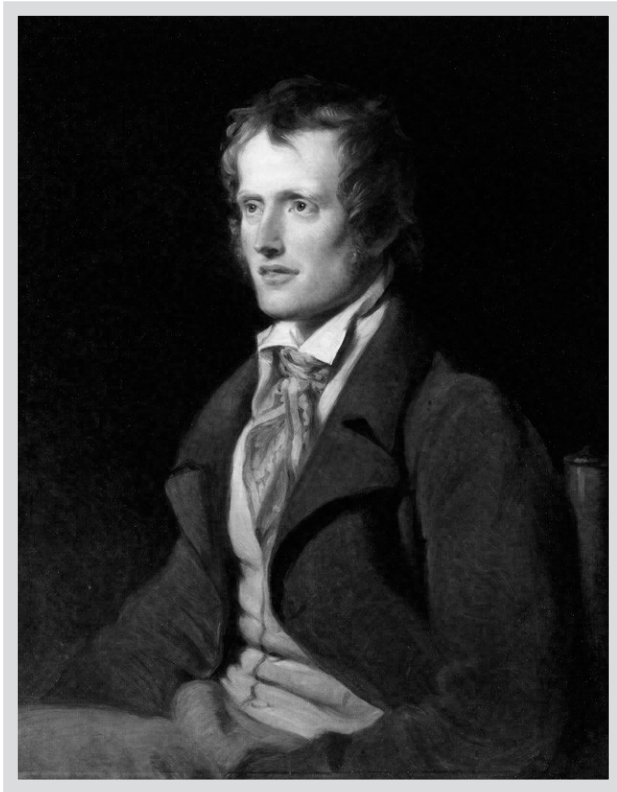
*London : Harding, 1817.*  
*Tr.B.369(3)*

## A Constant Observer

Sketches in Bedlam : or, Characteristic traits of insanity as displayed in the cases of one hundred and forty patients of both sexes, now, or recently, confined in New Bethlem ... to the above are added a succinct history of the establishment, its rules, regulations.

*London : Sherwood, Jones, 1823.*  
*270.i.42*

This work by the constant observer consists of detailed case studies including that of George Barnett, aged thirty-two, who "fired a pistol at Miss Frances Kelly, at Drury-lane Theatre, while performing the part of Nan in the farce of Modern Antiques, on the night of Saturday, February 16th, 1816, with intent to kill her..."



---

John Clare (1793-1864) Poet, farm labourer, naturalist, and patient at Matthew Allen's asylum at High Beach in Epping Forest

## Matthew Allen (1783 – 1845)

Cases of insanity, with medical, moral and philosophical observations upon them: Part 1, Vol.1. Atmospheric: the seasons; diurnal, lunar and planetary influence, with an inquiry into the cause of epidemics, and of cholera morbus in particular.

*London: George Swire; York: H. Bellerby, 1831.*

*MSS.6*

Annotated copy of pages from "Cases of insanity...", interleaved with MS notes, probably by the author.

Matthew Allen was the proprietor of the asylum at High Beech in Essex from 1825 -45, having previously worked at The Retreat in York. Allen promoted a system of management and outdoor occupation; and recommended open air tasks for inmates, as well as voluntary confinement. The Northamptonshire poet John Clare (1793 – 1864) was a patient at High Beech from 1837 until 1841 when he left the asylum and made the long trek on foot back to his home in the Northamptonshire village of Helpston where he spent a few months before eventually being removed to Northampton General Lunatic Asylum in which he died in 1864.

## Benedict-Auguste Morel (1809 – 1873)

*Le Non-restraint, ou de l'abolition des moyens coercitifs dans le traitement de la folie, suivi de considérations sur les causes de la progression dans le nombre des aliénés admis dans les asiles.*

Paris, 1860.

292.c.3

## Edgar Sheppard (1819 - 1897)

Lectures on madness in its medical, legal, and social aspects.

London : J. & A. Churchill, 1873.

270.g.2

[p.181, 183]

## Andrew Wynter

*The borderlands of insanity and other allied papers.*

London, 1875

286.e.8

“There is no objection urged against a natural mingling of the sexes under proper precautions, and the only practical objection urged against it that we have ever heard, is that the organization of asylums does not permit of these mixed gatherings. The decorous and regulated intercourse of the sexes is in itself an invaluable lesson in self-restraint.”

## Joseph Mortimer Granville (1833 - 1900)

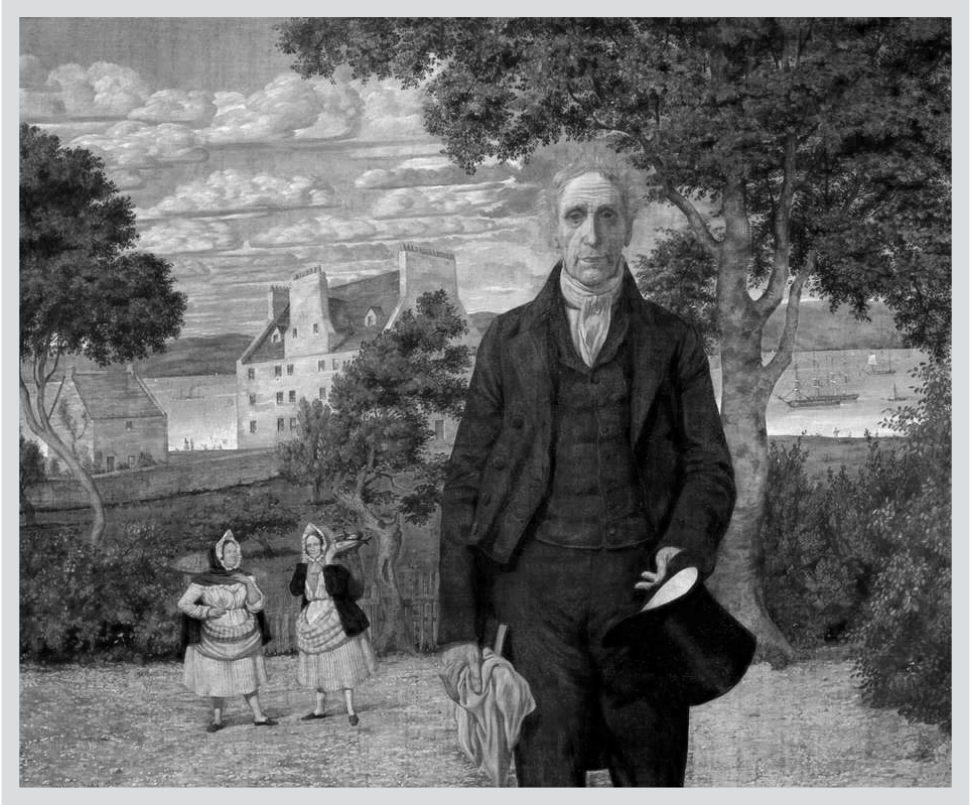
The care and cure of the insane: being the reports of the Lancet commission on lunatic asylums, 1875-6-7, for Middlesex, the city of London, and Surrey, (republished by permission) with a digest of the principal records extant, and a statistical review of the work of each asylum from the date of its opening to the end of 1875.

London : Hardwicke and Bogue, 1877.

286.g.13-14



Engraving of the Royal Earlswood Asylum in Surrey



Portrait of Sir Alexander Morison  
(1779 – 1866) alienist painted by  
Richard Dadd (1817-1886)

## Alexander Morison (1779 - 1866)

*The physiognomy of mental diseases.*  
London : Published for the author, 1840.  
226.K.1

Morison was inspector of the Surrey lunatic asylums, and served as physician to the Bethlem Hospital from 1835 until 1853. It was his belief that facial physiognomy could supply useful evidence for the diagnosis and classification of mental disorders. In 1852 his portrait was painted by the artist Richard Dadd (1817 – 1886), a patient for twenty years at Bethlem and then at Broadmoor.

## Sir Charles Bell (1774 - 1842)

*Essays on the anatomy of expression in painting.*  
London : Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806.  
M.11.c.6

"I mean not here to trace the progress of the diseases of the mind, but merely to throw out some hints respecting the character of the outrageous maniac. You see him lying in his cell regardless of every thing, with a death-like fixed gloom upon his countenance. When I say it is a death-like gloom, I mean a heaviness of the features without knitting of the brows or action of the muscles. If you watch him in his paroxysm you may see the blood working to his head; his face acquires a darker red; he becomes restless; then rising from his couch he paces his cell and tugs his chains. Now his inflamed eye is fixed upon you, and his features lighten up into an inexpressible wildness and ferocity."

## John Conolly (1794 – 1866)

*The physiognomy of insanity.*  
*Medical Times & Gazette 1858; Vol.7*

Conolly's series of articles was illustrated with engravings derived from the photographs taken by Hugh Welch Diamond.

## Sander L. Gilman

The face of madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the origin of psychiatric photography.

*New York, Brunner/Mazel, 1976*  
WM 11 FA1 GIL

In Sander Gilman's *The Face of Madness*, Hugh Welch Diamond (1809 – 1886) is described as "the father of psychiatric photography." From 1848 to 1858 Diamond was Resident Superintendent of the Female Department of the Surrey County Lunatic Asylum. During this time he was influential in disseminating information on new developments in photography and applied this interest to his professional work. In 1852 he presented a series of photographic portraits of patients to illustrate different types of insanity. This was the first systematic use of photography for this purpose. In 1856 Diamond followed this with a paper presented at the Royal Society in which he set out what he considered to be the three functions of photography in the treatment of the mentally-ill. First, it could be used to record the appearance of patients with different psychiatric conditions, following theories of the physiognomy of insanity current at that time; second, photographs were useful as a means of identification for readmission and treatment; third, photography enabled the mentally-ill to be presented with an accurate self-image, as an aid to treatment.

The Royal Society of Medicine owns twenty-two original Diamond prints. Copies were made in sepia and in black-and-white, some of which are displayed throughout this exhibition.

"There is, perhaps, no better established fact in British society than that of the corresponding growth of modern wealth and pauperism. Curiously enough, the same law seems to hold good with respect to lunacy. The increase of lunacy in Great Britain has kept pace with the increase of exports, and has outstripped the increase of population."

Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) writing in 1858.



---

Hugh Welch Diamond (1809-1886) Photographer and asylum superintendent.



Seated patient with a straw hat and a dead bird.

The way she cradles the dead bird with its limp, broken neck while wearing a surprised expression presents an uneasy question of whether she mourns the bird's death or was the cause of it.

Photo by Hugh Welch Diamond c. 1855





---

This photo was not annotated, so we are left to muse on whether the woman's ambiguous smile and confident pose denote a state of madness, a return to health, or a challenge to society's view of sanity.

Photo by Hugh Welch Diamond c. 1855



The ROYAL  
SOCIETY of  
MEDICINE

---

**Contact us**

library@rsm.ac.uk  
020 7290 2940

**Exhibition hours**

**Mon - Thurs** 9am - 9pm  
**Friday** 9am - 5.30pm  
**Saturday** 10am - 4.30pm