

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.



W. A. F. Browne (1805–1885) and untitled picture by unidentified patient–artist, Browne Collection

This year marks the bicentenary of the birth of William A. F. Browne, a leading figure in 19th-century Scottish lunacy and one of the first asylum clinicians to take an interest in the artwork of patients. In 1834, while a physician superintendent at the Montrose Asylum, Browne published his classic book *What Asylums Were, Are and Ought To Be*, in which he set out his vision of how an asylum should be run. For Browne, the key was occupation: inmates should be kept busy either in work or in recreation. The book came to the attention of a wealthy philanthropist, Elizabeth Crichton, who persuaded Browne to take charge of her new asylum in Dumfries, a post he held from 1838 to 1857 before leaving to become one of the first Scottish Commissioners of Lunacy. As early as 1846 Browne had hired an art instructor and he reported that patients responded enthusiastically. He went on to collect the work of his patients, and some 135 works have survived. In 1880 Browne wrote an article entitled 'Mad Artists', which was published in the *Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology*. The accompanying picture is by one of the few unidentified patient–artists in Browne's collection. Further work by other patients from the collection, which is housed in the museum at the Crichton Royal Hospital, will be featured in subsequent months.

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