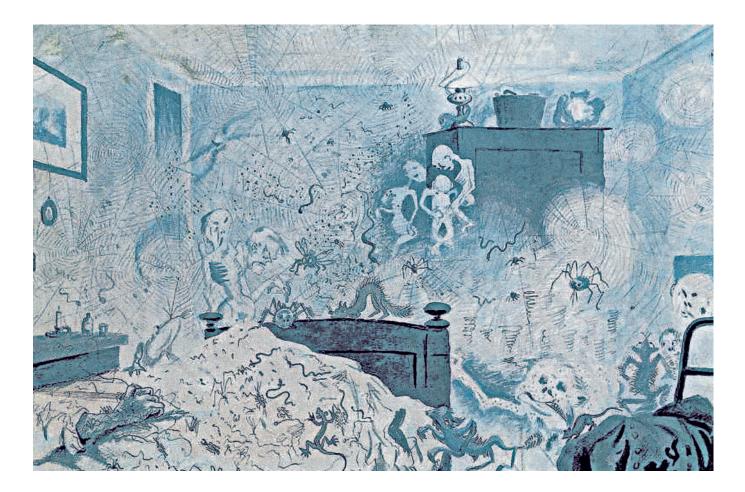# Psychiatry in pictures

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.

Memory image of acute alcoholic delirium. Picture selection and text by Dr Peter Kramp.

This 'memory image' was published by the Danish 'doctor of insanity and nervous disorders' Einar Brünniche in 1919 (Erindringsbilleder fra akut, alhoholisk Delirium [*Memory images of acute, alcoholic delirium*] *Bibliotek for Læger*, **111**, 199–214). The image, together with the 'case histories' on delirium tremens (written by the patients themselves) make up the article. The artist is unknown and the image is not dated. The two case histories date from 1900 and 1901 – a time before delirium tremens could be treated effectively. The image is most likely from the same period.

Brünniche concludes his article by writing the following about the memory image: 'Finally, I should like to present an image, a reproduction of a coloured drawing, in which a patient, an artist, without words, but none the less very effectively and vividly, describes the memory of his past, alcoholic delirium . . . It shows us the many facets of hallucinations, their animal imagery, their life and mobility and their partial transformation of real objects; it shows us the air brimming with cobwebs, threads and smoke. However, I should think that the image illustrates a stage at which the delirium has not yet reached its zenith since the patient is still bedridden. True, the hallucinations seem spooky, but they have not yet filled him with uncontrollable dread; he has not yet been stirred to action, he has not yet taken steps to ward off the danger. Besides, the picture speaks for itself'.

The picture belongs to the Medical Museion in Copenhagen, which has given its permission for publication.

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