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- 33 Rucklidge JJ, Brown DL, Crawford S, Kaplan BJ. Retrospective reports of childhood trauma in adults with ADHD. *J Atten Disord* 2006; **9**: 631–41.
- 34 Watson S, Chilton R, Fairchild H, Whewell P. Association between childhood trauma and dissociation among patients with borderline personality disorder. *Aust N Z J Psychiatry* 2006; **40**: 478–81.
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150
years ago

The medical certificates of admission papers

The views above expressed respecting the validity of medical certificates we have at length supported by declining to take any steps to procure the amendment of certificates which we felt convinced were without legal defect. The question has been brought to issue under the following circumstances. M___ A___ and C___ L___, two female patients, suffering from mania, were admitted into the Devon County Asylum, on the 3rd of September, 1857, upon the following medical certificates:—

COPY.] Sched. (F.) No. 3.

I, the undersigned, James Malachi Madden, being a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, and being in actual practice as a Surgeon, hereby certify, that I, on the thirty-first day of August, at her lodgings, Ballast Quay, in the parish of St. Leonard in the County of Devon, personally examined M___ A___, of Broadcliff, a domestic servant, and that the said M___ A___ is a person of unsound mind, and a proper person to be taken charge of and detained under care and treatment, and that I have formed this opinion upon the following grounds, viz.:

1. Facts indicating insanity observed by myself; Irritation of the brain, with severe pain in the upper part of the head.

2. Other facts (if any,) indicating insanity communicated to me by others; Incoherency of talking, using horrible expressions, wandering about night and day, abusing every person (informed by the nurse in attendance.)

(Signed,) (Name,) JAS. M. MADDEN,

(Place of abode.) *Heavitree, Exeter*

Dated this third day of September, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven.

COPY.] Sched. (F.) No. 3.

I, the undersigned, James M. Madden, being a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, and being in actual practice as a Surgeon, hereby certify, that I, on the second day of September instant, at her mother's house, in Heavitree, in the county of Devon, personally examined C___ L___, milliner, and that the said C___ L___ is a person of unsound mind, and a proper person to be taken charge of and detained under care and treatment, and that I have formed this opinion upon the following grounds, viz.:

1. Facts indicating insanity observed by myself; Improper and foul expressions, such as "bloody hell" and "cut throats," epilepsy 9 years ago.

2. Other facts (if any,) indicating insanity communicated by others; False impressions, and occasionally violent, and roaming about (informed by the mother.)

(Signed,) (Name,) JAS. M. MADDEN,

(Place of abode.) *Heavitree, Devon*

Dated this third day of December, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven.

On the copies of these admission papers being sent to the Office of the Commissioners in Lunacy, they were returned to the Clerk of the Asylum, with the facts observed by the medical man, underlined with red ink, and marked "too vague," "improper expressions no proof of insanity." On this we directed the Clerk to return them to the Commissioners with the following letter:—

COPY.] Devon County Lunatic Asylum,
(A) Exminster, 22nd Sept, 1857.

M___ A___ C___ L___

Sir,—I am desired by Dr. Bucknill to return you the enclosed admission papers, and to communicate to you his opinion that he was justified in admitting the patients upon them, since the facts stated, as observed by the Certifying Medical Practitioner, appear to him fully to satisfy the requirements of the act.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

(Signed,) WILLIAM MORGAN, Jun., Clerk.

To John Foster, Esq., Secretary Commissioners in Lunacy.

To this, the following reply was returned from the Commissioners' Office:—

COPY.] Office of Commissioners in Lunacy,
10, Whitehall Place, (S.W.)
(B) 23rd Sept., 1857.

M___ A___ C___ L___

Sir,—I am directed by the Board, in reply to your letter of the 22nd inst., to state that they retain their opinion, that the certificates relating to these patients are not such as legally justify their detention in the Devon Asylum; and they request that this opinion may be kept in view, in case any proceedings should be taken hereafter in reference to the subject.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

(Signed,) T. BARLOW.

Mr. Wm. Morgan, County Lunatic Asylum, Exminster, near Exeter

The circumstances and correspondence having been brought before the Board of Visitors at their next meeting, the following resolution was passed, and there the matter at present rests.

"A correspondence having been laid before the Committee, between the Commissioners in Lunacy and the Clerk, relating to the certificates in the cases of M___ A___, and C___ L___,

"Resolved: that in the opinion of the Visitors, the certificates appear to be correct; and the patients being of unsound mind, the Visitors do not consider it their duty to discharge them."

J. C. B.

Researched by Trevor H. Turner, Consultant Psychiatrist, Homerton Hospital, London

Asylum Journal of Mental Science, January 1858, vol. IV, 315–316.

The British Journal of Psychiatry (2008)
192, 123. doi: 10.1192/bjp.192.2.123