HENRY MAUDSLEY

Henry Maudsley FRCP (5 February 1835 – 23 January 1918) was a pioneering British psychiatrist, commemorated in the Maudsley Hospital in London and in the annual Maudsley Lecture of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Maudsley was born on an isolated farm near Giggleswick in the North Riding of Yorkshire and educated at Giggleswick School.[1] Maudsley lost his mother at an early age. His aunt cared for him, teaching him poetry which he would recite to the servants, and secured for him a top tutor and an expensive apprenticeship to University College London medical school.[2] He earned ten Gold Medals and graduated with an M.D. degree in 1857, though is said to have avoided subjects and clinical work he found onerous and to have antagonised his teachers.[2]

He apparently had some intention to then pursue a career in surgery but, according to his autobiography, when he didn’t receive a letter of reply to his first application because it was mistakenly sent to his old address, he changed his mind and...
Maudsley was agnostic and was critical of religion and reports of supernatural phenomena. In his book *Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings* (1866) he wrote that so-called supernatural experiences could be explained in terms of disorders of the mind and were simply “malobservations and misinterpretations of nature.”[12] His book is seen as an early text in the field of anomalous psychology.

**MAUDSLEY HOSPITAL**

In 1907, Maudsley collaborated with Frederick Mott, a neuropathologist, to make an offer to London County Council to found a new Maudsley Hospital, for which Maudsley donated £30,000, with the council finding another £30,000 plus. This was to be a new mental hospital that would treat early and acute cases and have an out-patient clinic. The hospital also housed teaching and research. The buildings were ready in 1915, temporarily used for war veterans, and officially opened in 1923. A special Act of Parliament had made voluntary treatment there financially possible.[13][14]

Maudsley’s £30,000 has been described as an astonishingly high sum, and he still had at least £60,000 spare upon his death.[6]

A bronze bust of Maudsley overlooks the main staircase at the Institute of Psychiatry next to the Maudsley Hospital.[6]

**LATER LIFE**

In his later years, Maudsley became something of a recluse, resigning from the Medico-Psychological Association and, in some scattered writings, expressing regret at his career choice of psychiatry. He submitted articles to the philosophy journal *Mind*, watched cricket and sent postcards.[6]

While earlier he had argued, per eugenics,[15]

Maudsley’s wife died before him, and they had no children.[16]

He appears to have destroyed his own papers and correspondence.[6]
ARTICLES

"Sex in Mind and Education", The Fortnightly Review, Vol. XV, 1874.[17]
"Materialism and Spiritualism", The Journal of Mental Science, Vol. LXIII, October 1917.

MISCELLANY

"Introductory Lecture Delivered at University College, on October 2nd 1876,"The Lancet, N°. 12, December 1876.

SEE ALSO

Henry Maudsley, another 19th-century Englishman, who was an important machine tool pioneer

WORKS

The Physiology and Pathology of Mind, D. Appleton & Company, 1867.
Responsibility in Mental Disease, D. Appleton and Co., 1896 [1st Pub. H. S. King, 1874].
The Physiology of Mind, Macmillan & Co., 1876 [Enlarged and revised, 3rd edition].
The Pathology of Mind, Macmillan, 1879 [of the 1867 work].
Heredity, Variation and Genius, with Essay on Shakespeare and Address on Medicine, John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, 1906.
Religion and Realities, John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, 1918.

FURTHER READING

Henry Maudsley FRCP (5 February 1835–23 January 1918) was a pioneering British psychiatrist, commemorated in the Maudsley Hospital in London and in the annual Maudsley Lecture of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Life and career. Influence. Maudsley acquired a reputation as an outstanding essayist on medical and literary topics. An early hit was a spectacular essay on Edgar Allan Poe. He made numerous contributions to the Journal of Mental Science.