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NEUROLOGICAL STAMP

Alexander Ypsilante (1792–1832)

In 1933, Dr J E Caughey described a 54 year old woman with advanced myotonic dystrophy.¹ The patient was one of eight children, five of whom had the disorder. The family lived in quite poor circumstances in Brixton, London. Her father's generation were men of a professional class. Her grandfather was a professor of Greek at a northern university and her great grandmother was a "princess" of Greece whose brother was a "prince" and prominent statesman of a century previously. Dr Caughey found a historical document recording that the "prince" talked with a nasal voice and by age 20 was bald. This was Prince Alexander Ypsilante who was honoured on a Greek stamp in 1930. (Stanley Gibbons 435, Scott 354). The baldness is clearly shown but other features of the disorder cannot be clearly seen. The sternomastoids are covered by the tall collar. Dr Caughey's report is almost certainly the first contribution to neurological philately.

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