



# Lichfield Science & Engineering Society

LICHFIELD **GARRICK**  
*Theatre & Studio*

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**8:00 pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

**in the Studio Theatre of the Lichfield Garrick, Castle Dyke, Lichfield**

## **KING GEORGE III AND THE PORPHYRIA MYTH - Application of Computer Diagnosis to Historical Figures**

**Professor Timothy Peters** MA, DSc, FRCP, FRCPath.  
**Ironbridge Institute**  
**University of Birmingham**

Although several psychiatrists had found that the recurrent madness of King George III was typical of manic depressive disorder, Ida MacAlpine and Richard Hunter adamantly stated in 1965 that this diagnosis was incorrect. They claimed that the King and some of his ancestors and descendants suffered from attacks of Acute Intermittent Porphyria, later changed to a diagnosis of the milder and rarer Variegate Porphyria. This has, surprisingly, been accepted by historians and the general public.

Recent re-evaluation of the relevant archives has thrown considerable doubt on the porphyric diagnosis. Supported by computer diagnostics the features of the King's recurrent mental illness meet the criteria for Bipolar Disorder I. The basis and reasons for the misdiagnosis and consequences of the revised diagnosis will be discussed.

Professor Timothy Peters graduated in medicine and biochemistry from St Andrew's University. After training at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London and the Rockefeller University, New York he joined the Department of Medicine, Hammersmith Hospital and later moved as Head of the Division of Clinical Cell Biology at the MRC Clinical Research Centre, Northwick Park.

Subsequently he moved to King's College, London as Head of the Department of Clinical Biochemistry where among other interests he established the National Centre for the Diagnosis, Clinical Care and Research into the Porphyrias.

On retirement he graduated MA in Industrial Archaeology where he is a member of the Ironbridge Institute. His principal research concerns the medical aspects of historical figures.

**This lecture will be preceded by the Society's AGM at 7:30**

For further information, please see our website at [www.LSES.org.uk](http://www.LSES.org.uk)  
Students and Members Free.

Visitors £5.00. Tickets are not issued in advance, please pay at the door.

Members must sign in. Those signing in before 7:50 pm will have precedence over all visitors.

This lecture is expected to finish by 10.00 pm.