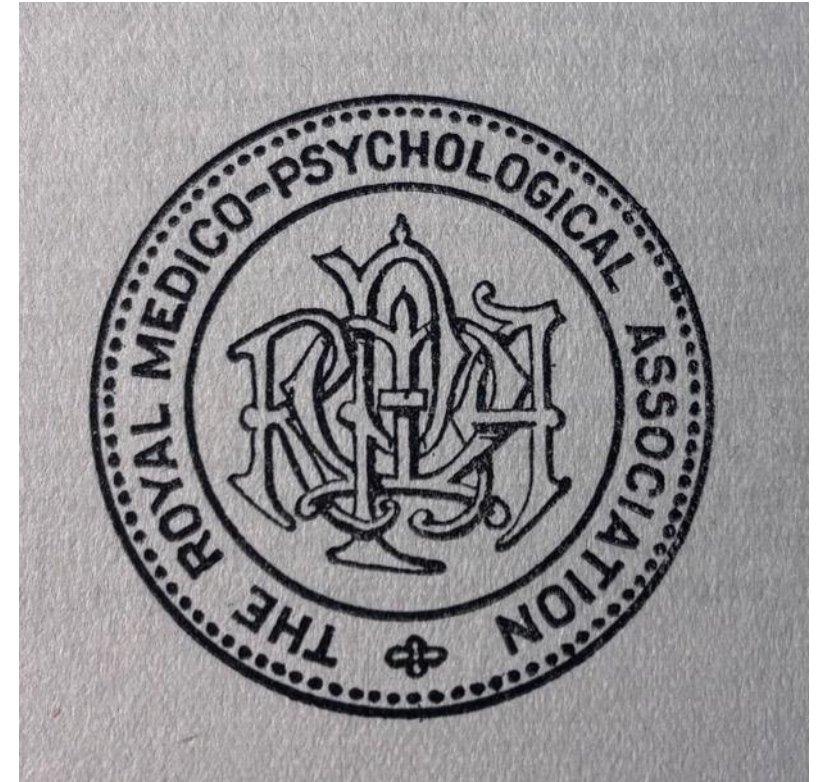
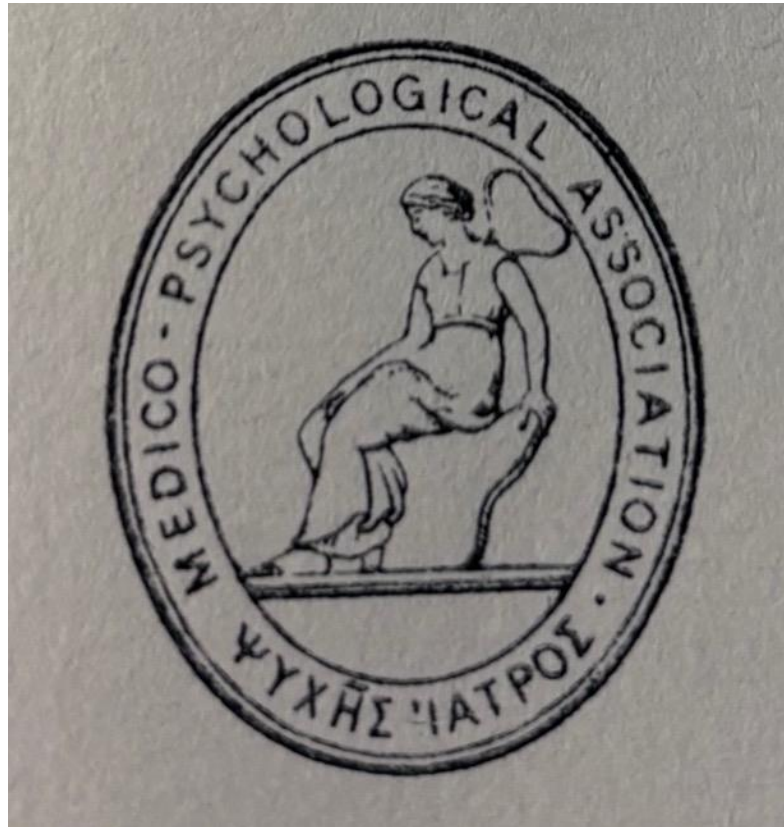


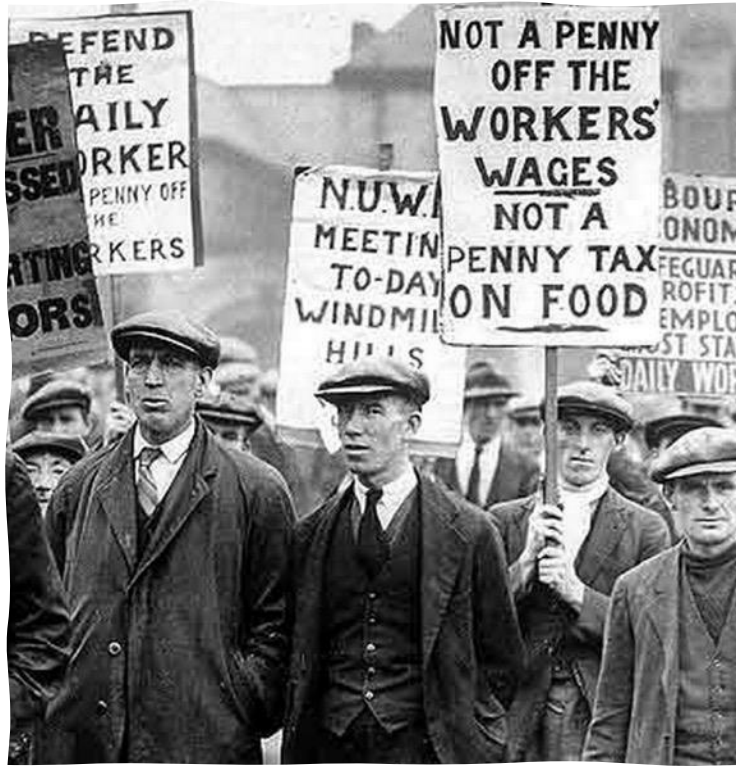
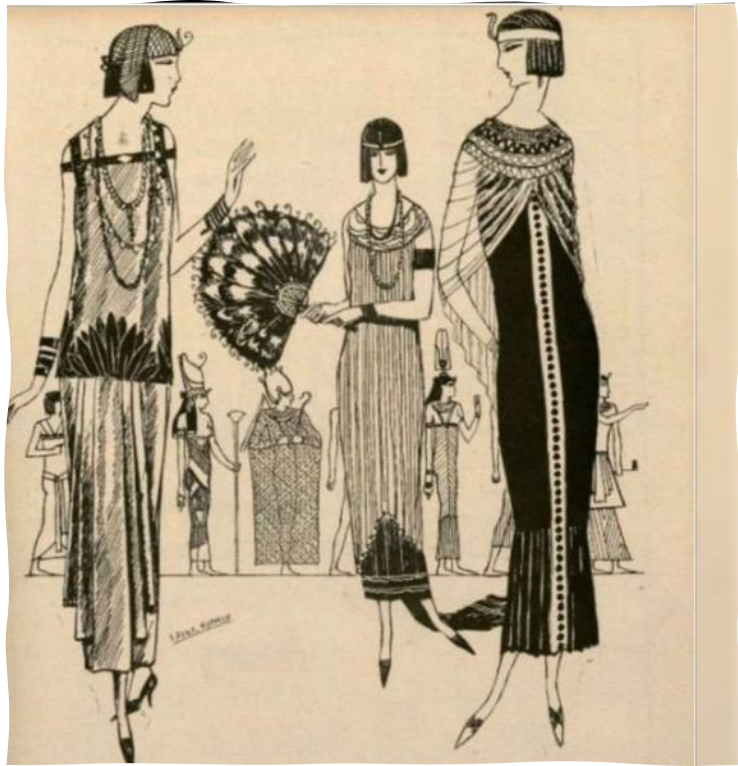
Receiving a Royal Charter: Power, Purpose, and Professional Identity a Century Later

John Crichton
RCPsych 100 years of Charter
21 May 2026



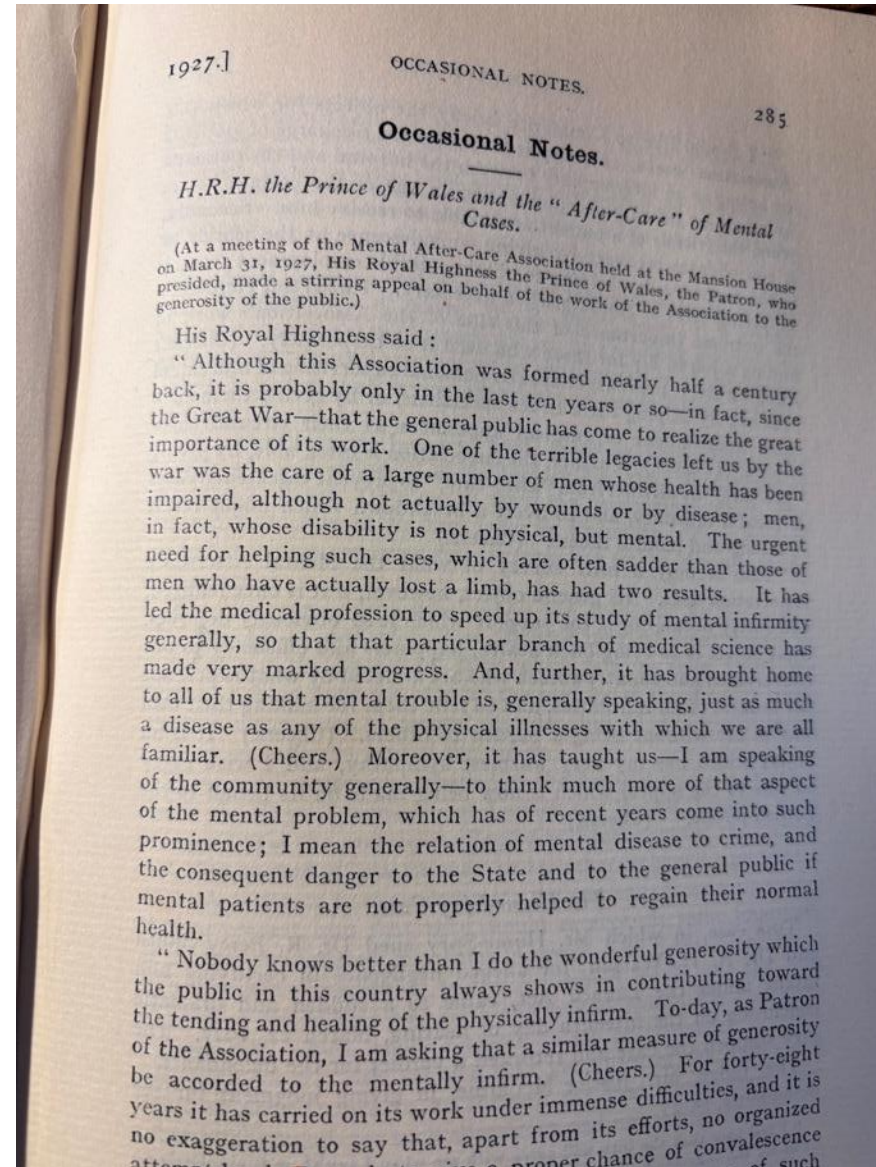
ΨΥΧΗΣ ΙΑΤΡΟΣ

Psyches Iatros – Physician to the soul



1926 Tutmania, the General Strike and TV

Prince of Wales 1927



Wednesday 13th March 1926 – Royal Charter

- ‘Royal’ granted 9th September 1925
 - The Royal Medico Psychological Association
 - To cultivate the Science of mental disease
 - Improve the treatment of persons suffering from mental disorder
 - Facilitate the exchange of information and ideas amongst Members
- “granted a higher status... recognised in a signal manner by the Head of the State”
- “an edifice which has proved so enduring... and has still the vitality to press forward” Lt.-Col. J. R. Lord, President-Elect, *Journal of Mental Science*, “Occasional Notes”, 1926

What is a Royal Charter?

Created under royal prerogative – part of our common law Constitution

“one Body Corporate and Politic... with perpetual succession”

Creates legal corporation

Delegates public authority

Use in Universities and Psychiatric hospitals pre legislation

Why psychiatry sought a Charter

Search for parity

Legitimacy and influence

Institutional security

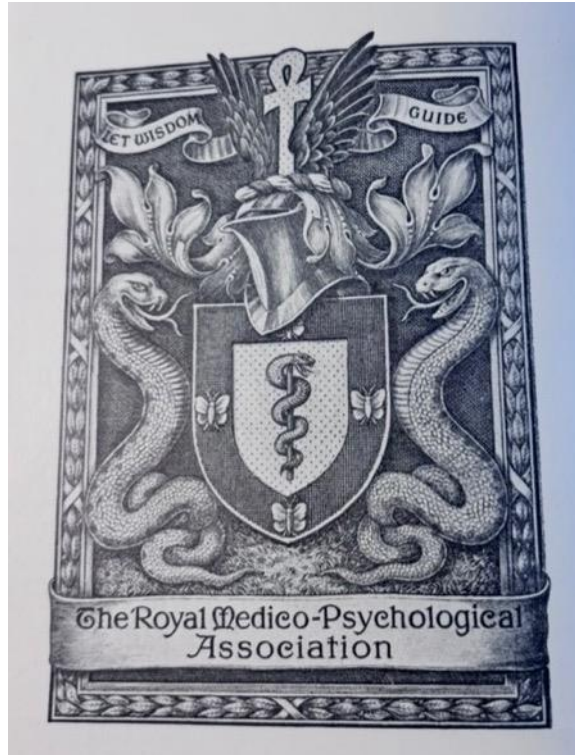
“science has made very marked progress... it has brought mental disease more into line with physical disease”

Journal of Mental Science, 1926, Annual Meeting proceedings (Presidential/AGM address)

The Charter's purpose

- “promotion and cultivation of science... improvement... of persons suffering from mental disorder”
- Science
- Treatment
- Professional cohesion
- To grant scholarships, prizes and certificates and other awards or distinctions
- Branches in the UK or Elsewhere
- Making or Byelaws at the AGM to be presented to the Privy Council

Psychiatry's self-image (1926)



What was missing

- Patient voice
- Diversity
- Rights and consent
- External accountability
- Authority assumed

A century later





RC
PSYCH
ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PSYCHIATRISTS