







# THE FOUNDING OF THE APPA

## The American PsychoPathological Association

100<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, March 4-6, 2010



### Synthesis



Morton Prince, 1854-1929

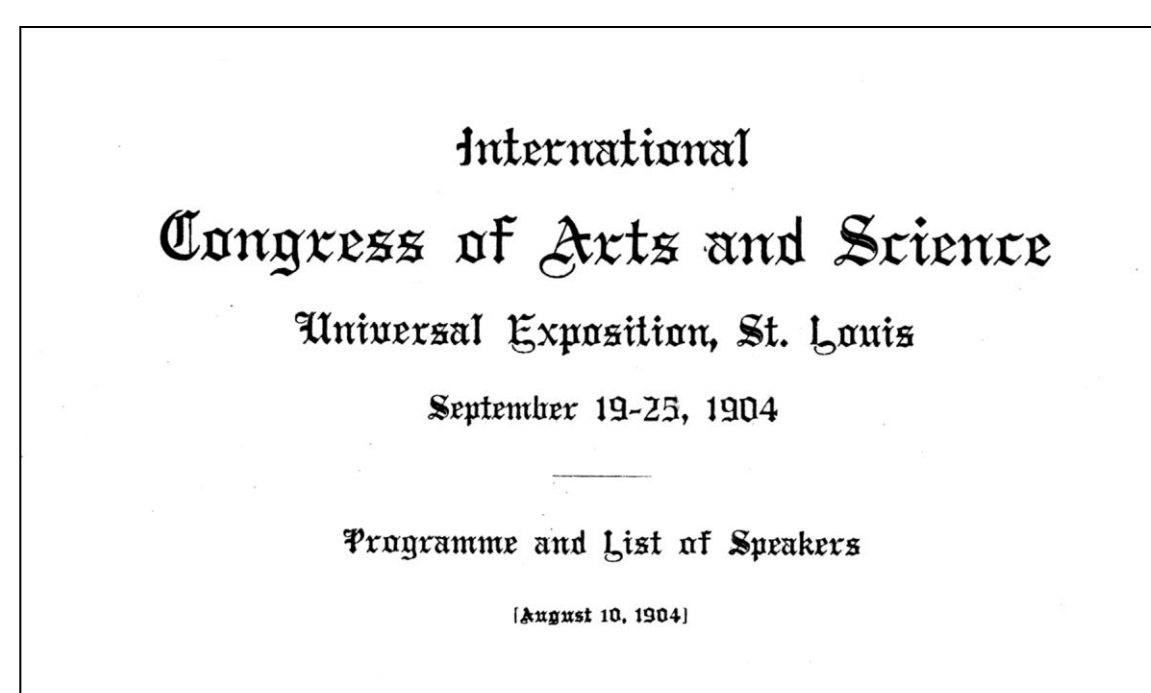
Morton Prince was a leading force in establishing psychology as a clinical and academic discipline in the United States. After earning his medical degree from Harvard in 1879, he traveled to Europe where he studied under Charcot and Bernheim. Back in Boston, Prince switched his practice from general medicine to neurology and psychology, as well as teaching at Harvard and later Tufts University.

Prince drew around him important scholars in the burgeoning field of psychopathology: William James, James Jackson Putnam, G. Stanley Hall, and Hugo Münsterberg, to name just a few. He hosted monthly meetings of an informal multi-disciplinary group of friends and colleagues at his home to discuss common areas of interest. Problems in psychology, biology, sociology and psychiatry were approached from different angles, and seriousness was tempered by wit.

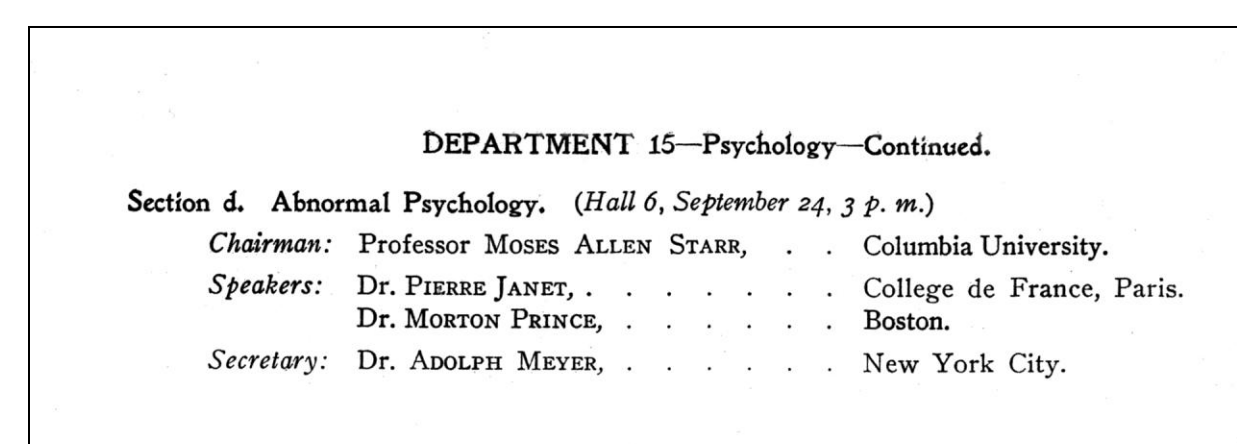
### The Congress of Arts & Science St. Louis Exposition, 1904



The Louisiana Purchase Exposition opened in St. Louis on April 30, 1904. Visitors to the fair experienced the marvels of new technologies such as telephones and motion pictures, as well as exotic peoples of distant lands. Hidden away from the fair-going crowds was something else: the International Congress of Arts and Science, a series of formal addresses by leading authorities around the world.



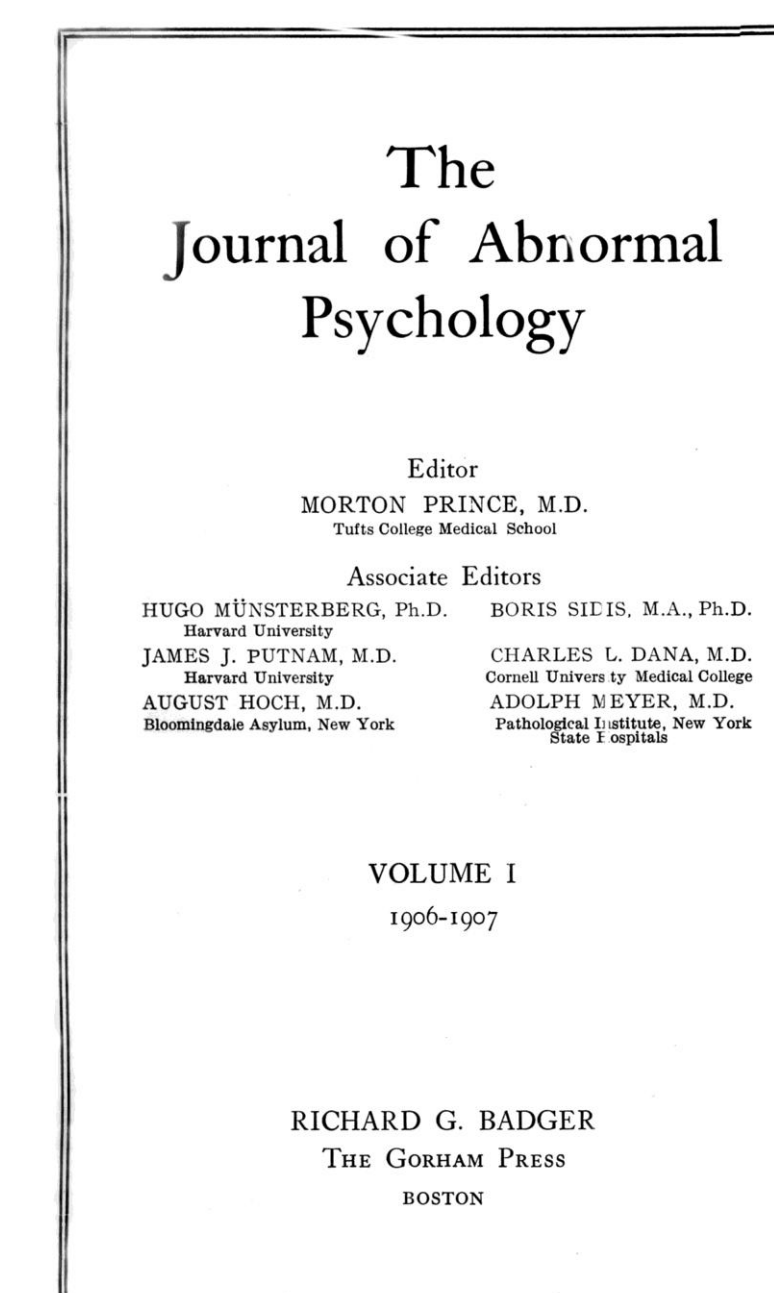
The section on Abnormal Psychology met on September 24, 1904. The invited speakers were Pierre Janet of the Collège de France and Morton Prince of Tufts College Medical School. Adolf Meyer served as secretary of the session.



Janet's address was titled "Mental Pathology," while Prince's was called "Some of the Present Problems of Abnormal Psychology." Both addresses were later published in *The Psychological Review*.

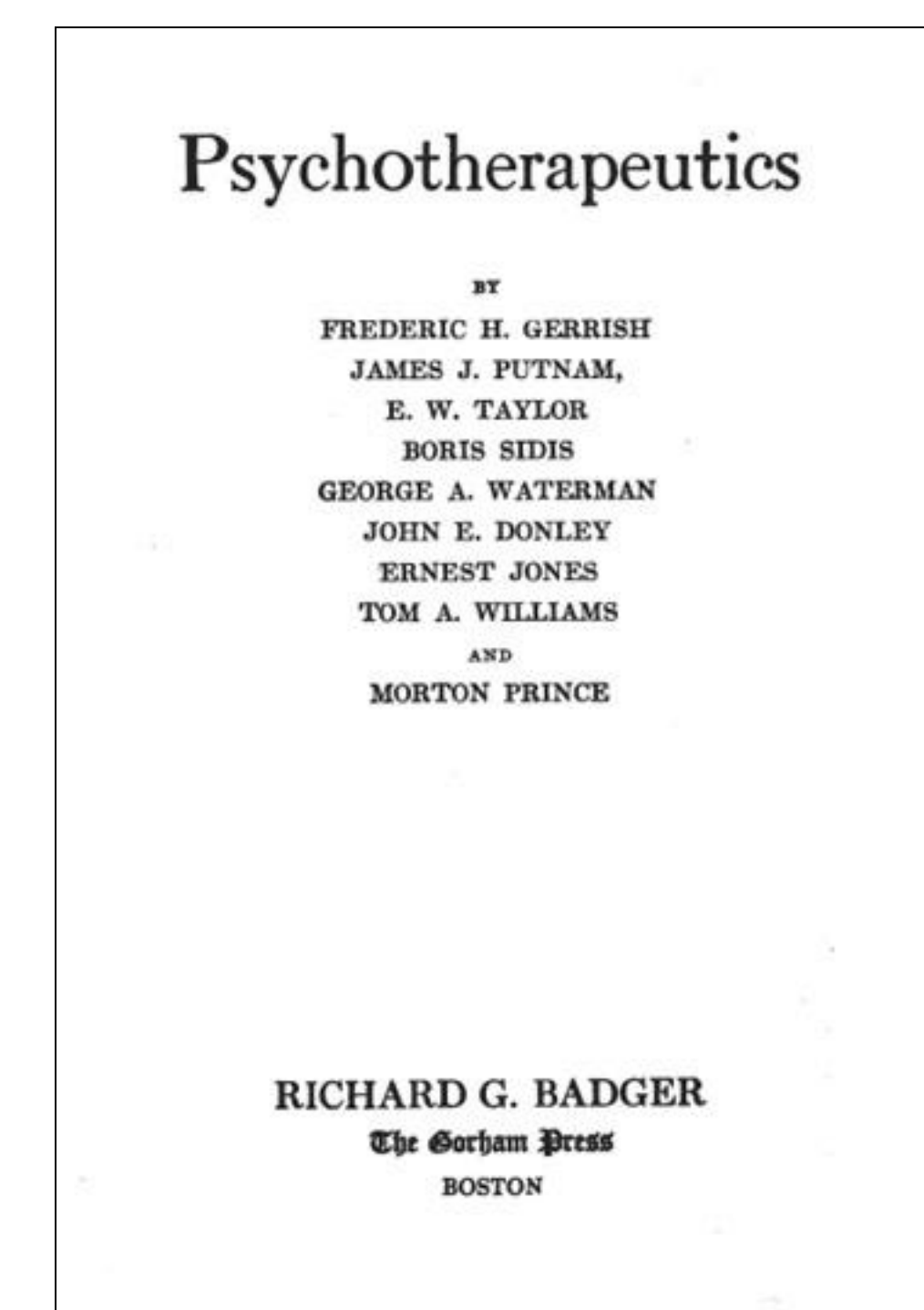
### The Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1906

On learning that young scholars were having their papers rejected by conservative journal editors, Morton Prince met the problem head on. In 1906 he founded *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, with well-known psychologists, psychiatrists and neurologists as collaborators. Prince's publication became the first official journal of the APPA.



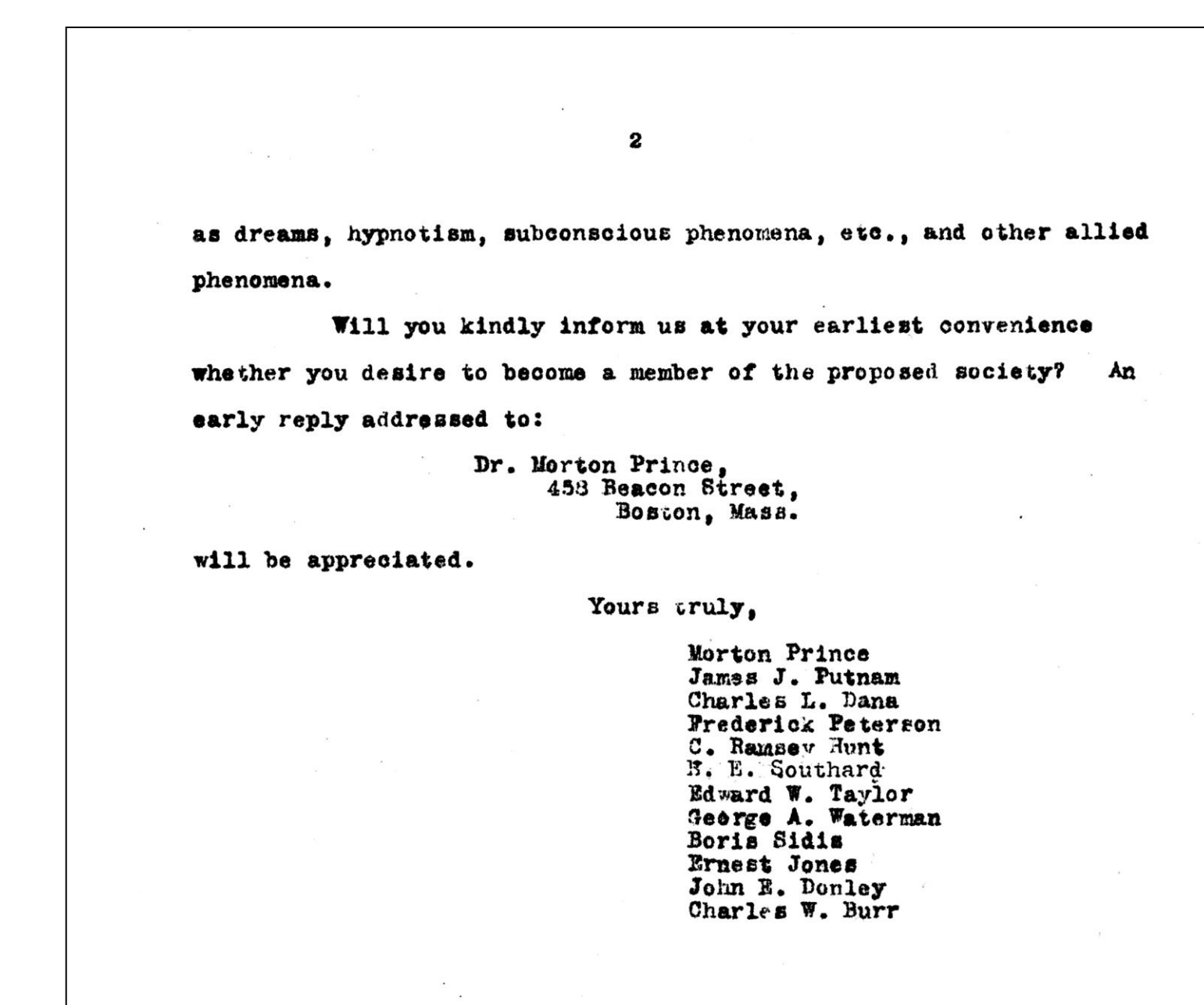
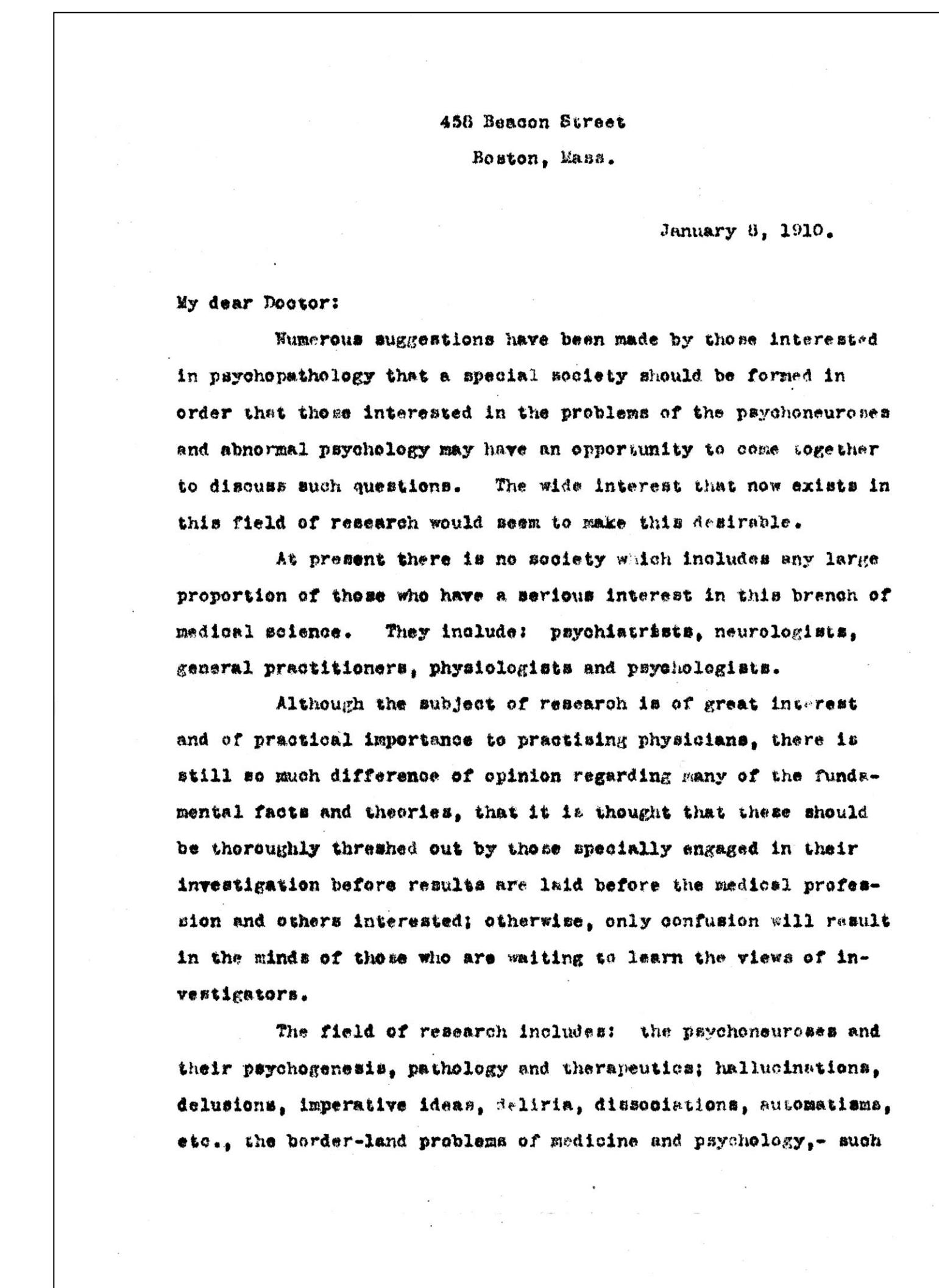
### Psychotherapeutics, 1909

Frederick H. Gerrish was a professor of surgery at Bowdoin Medical College. While serving as president of the American Therapeutic Society in 1909, he chose at the members' request the topic "Psychotherapeutics" for their annual meeting symposium. When published, the proceedings of this symposium were in such demand that two additional printings had to be released. Clearly, psychopathology was becoming an area of increasing interest.



### The Proposal

The time was right to propose a new organization. Prince, along with eleven distinguished co-signers, issued a letter to gauge interest in establishing an organization devoted to the study of psychopathology.



Within four months, the American Psychopathological Association was formed.





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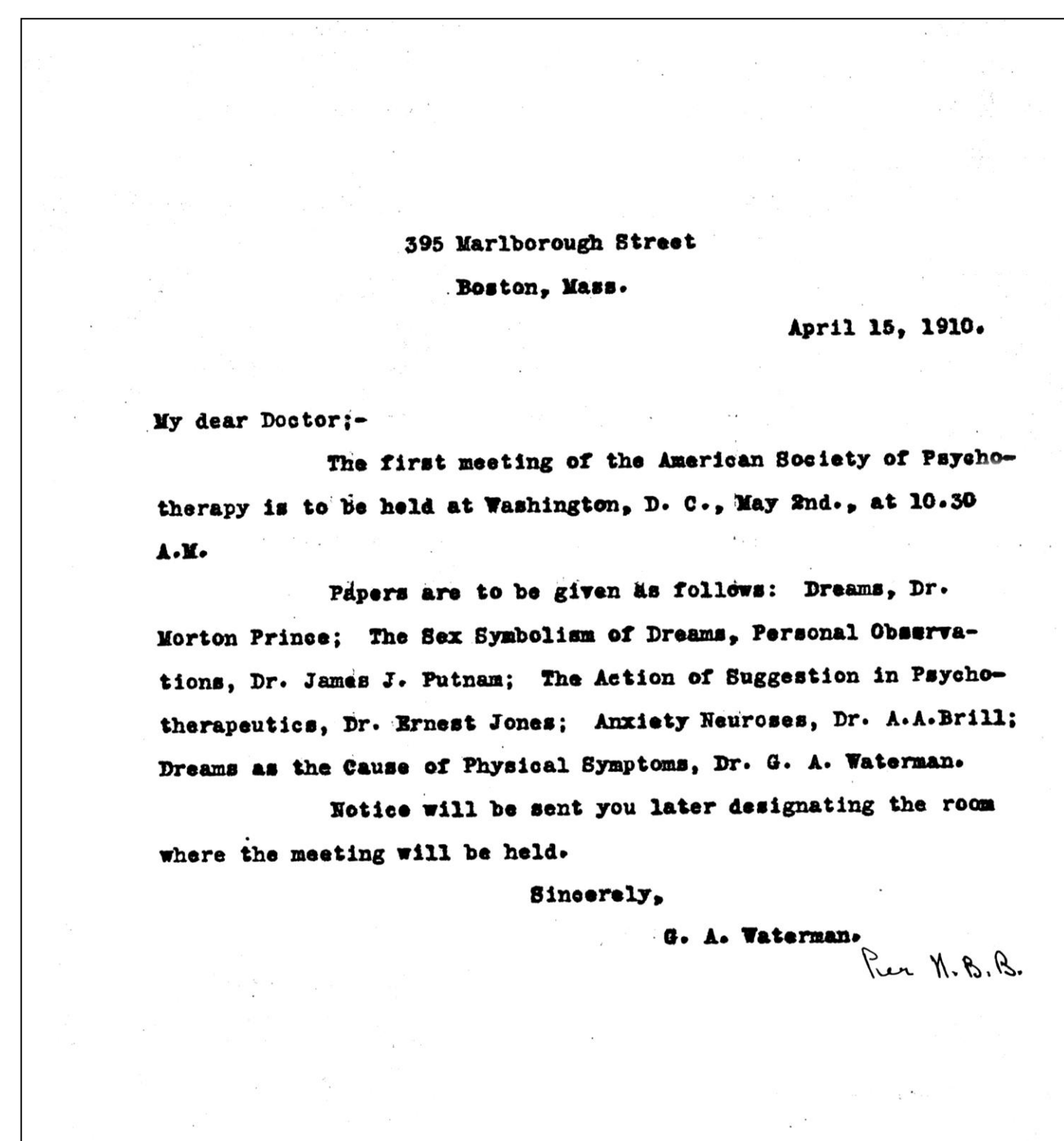


## The Meeting



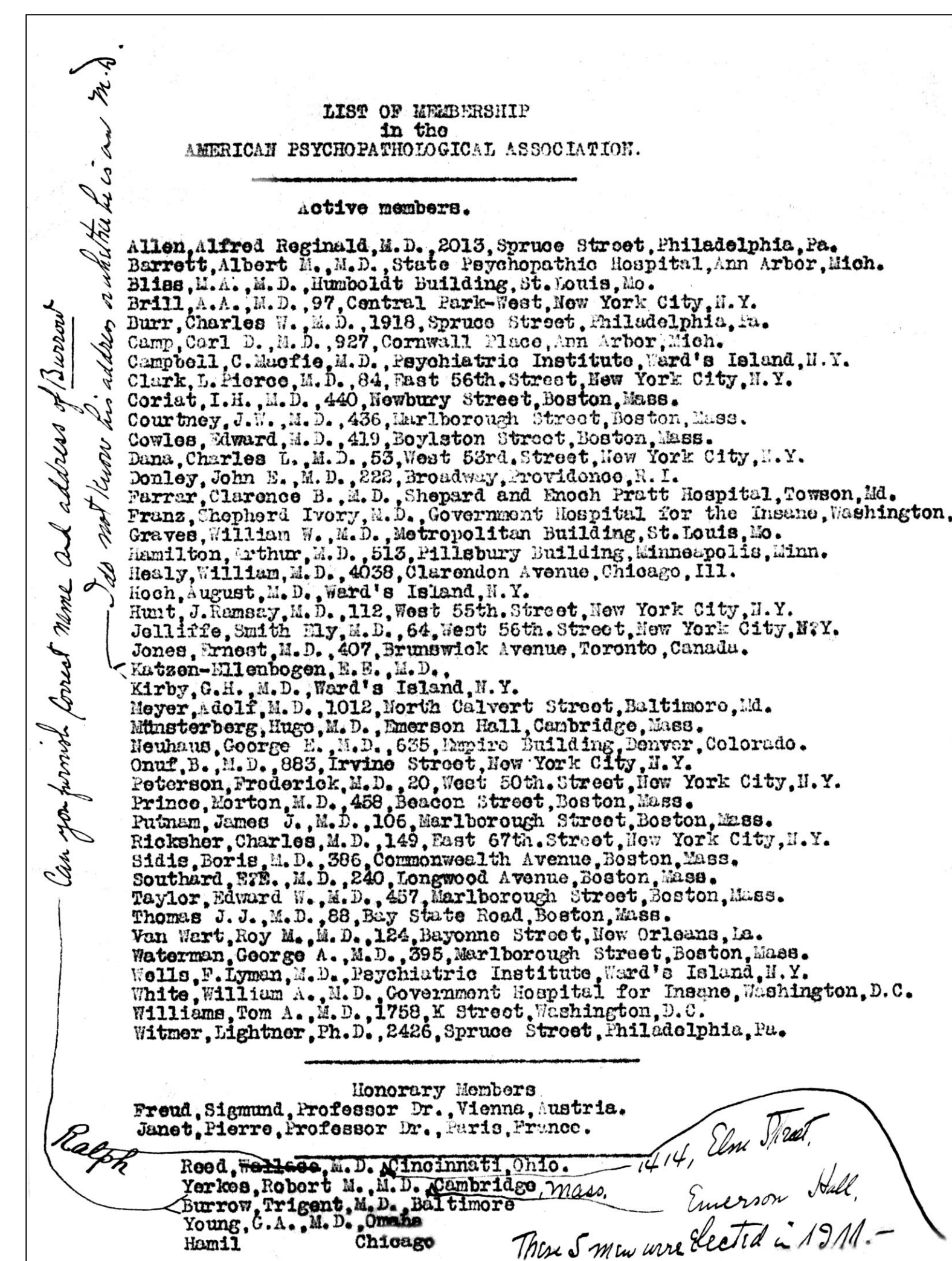
On May 2, 1910, the American Psychopathological Association was organized at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. Both the American Neurological Association and the American Medico-Psychological Association (now the APA) were holding annual meetings at the Willard, which made it easy for interested participants to attend.

A notice was mailed out a few weeks before the meeting by George A. Waterman; he slightly botched the name of the new association of which he became secretary.



## The Members

No roster exists giving the names of members who attended the first meeting. The earliest surviving membership list is from 1911, showing the original members plus five newly elected members. It appears there were 42 founding members.



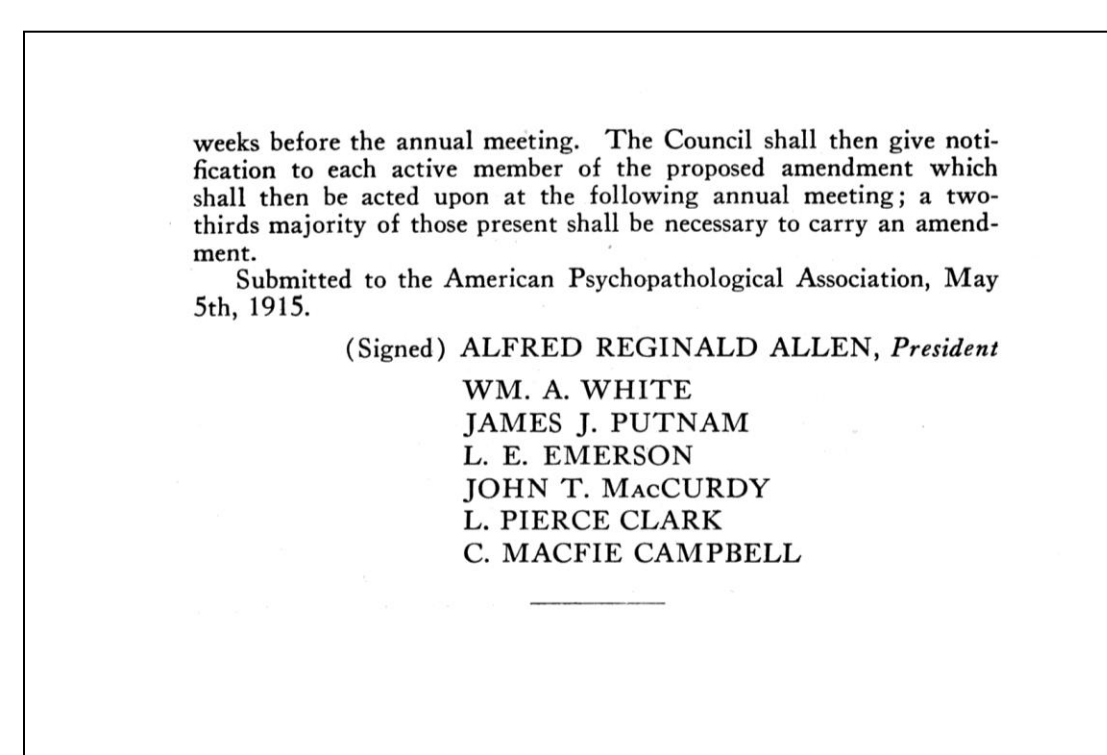
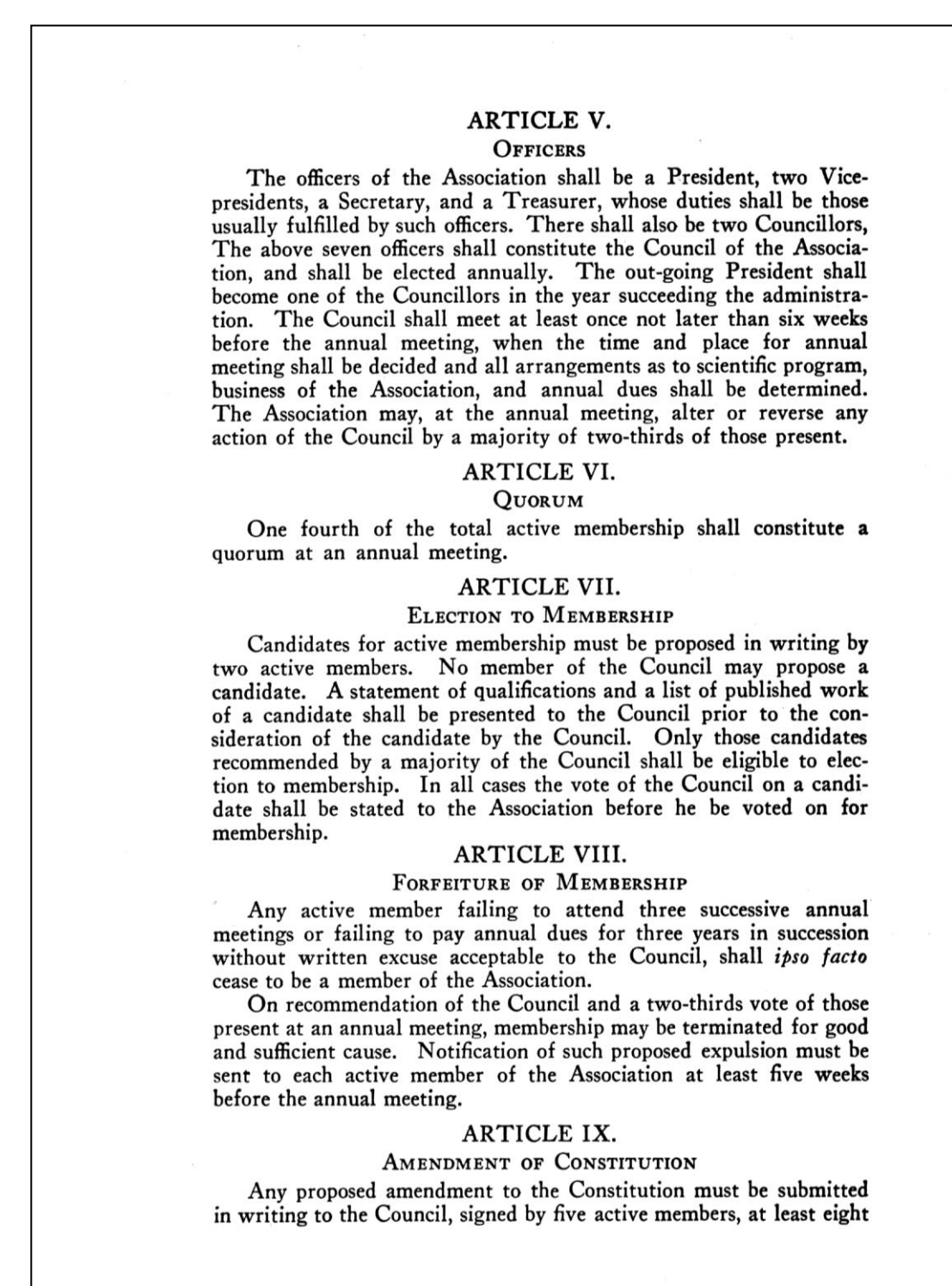
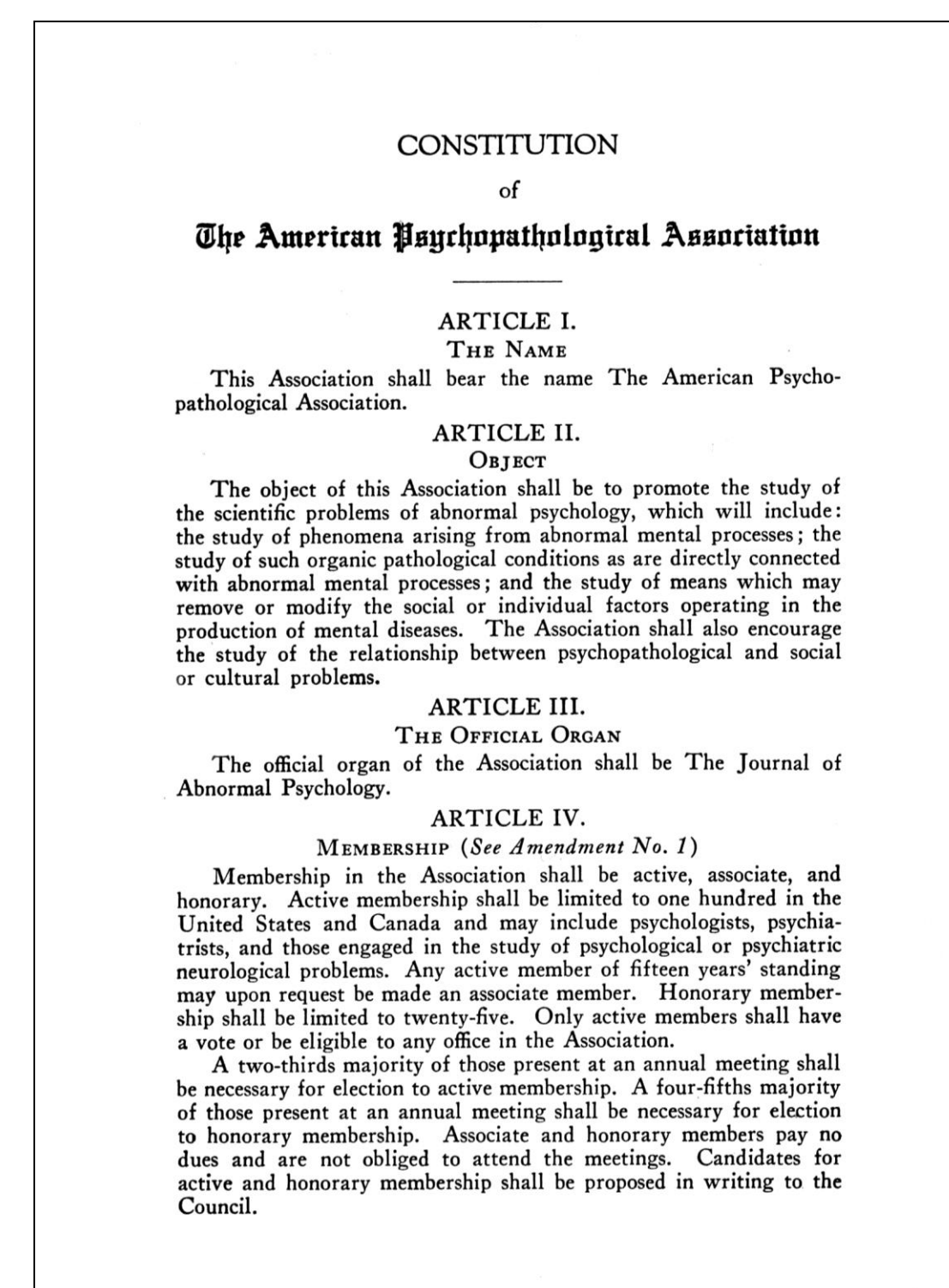
The proceedings of the meeting were published in the June-July 1910 issue of *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, which was designated the official journal of the APPA.

### PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The first annual meeting of the American Psychopathological Association was held at the New Willard Hotel, Washington, D.C., May 2, 1910, at 10:30 A.M., with Dr. Morton Prince in the chair as president pro tem. At this meeting the association was formally organized. Dr. Prince was elected president for the ensuing year, and Dr. G. A. Waterman was elected secretary and treasurer. It was decided to have the drawing up of a constitution and by-laws to a executive committee consisting of five members and that the body, with the president and secretary, should act as a temporary committee on elections to membership for the ensuing year, and should also decide upon the time and place of the next meeting. Dr. A. E. Allen (Philadelphia), Dr. J. J. Putnam (Boston), Dr. Adolf Meyer (Baltimore), Dr. August Hoch (New York), and Dr. Ernest Jones (London), were elected as members of this committee. It was decided that the official name of the society should be the American Psychopathological Association, and that *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology* should be its official organ. The following papers were then presented to the association: (1) The Sex Symbolism in Dreams, Dr. J. J. Putnam; (2) The Action of Suggestion in Therapeutics, Dr. Ernest Jones; (3) The Anxiety Neuroses, Dr. A. A. Brill; (4) Dreams as a Cause of Symptoms, Dr. G. A. Waterman; (5) Mechanism of Dreams, Dr. Morton Prince. Owing to the similarity of the subject matter of the papers presented it was deemed advisable to discuss them collectively after all had been read. For this same reason the publication of the discussion relative to the paper by Dr. A. A. Brill which appears in the present number of *The Journal* will be postponed until after the publication of the other papers.

## The Constitution

A committee to write a constitution was appointed at the first meeting, but a constitution was not adopted until the annual meeting in New York in 1915. Although amended several times over the years, the spirit of the document remains the same.



## The Legacy

In 1945, Samuel W. Hamilton wrote:

The genius of this Association has been to give opportunity for small groups of earnest men to talk things over freely. In the early days of the Association outstanding figures in various fields were brought in, men with a tremendous enthusiasm for their work, and those who were young members at the time say it was an inspiration to come and hear. So we must continue to do.

And in his 1970 presidential address, Fritz A. Freyhan said:

I wonder whether historians of American psychiatry have recognized the immensely important role which this association has played. Because the founders were brilliant men who made scientific distinction a requirement for membership, the association spear-headed new thoughts, unfolded the broader context of behavioral science, and served as a catalyst between the analytical, biological and psychosocial approaches to psychopathology.

## Bibliography

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