



Welcome everyone.

(If members of the Archives Committee are present - introduce them)

AA Members seem to have a warm place in their heart for AA history. Perhaps it's because our stories define our own history when we disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened and what we are like now.

AA also has a very strong verbal tradition. Much information is passed on by word of mouth. This has both its good and difficult sides. How do you know what is fact and what is myth? There is a great deal of myth that circulates by word of mouth in AA, and is accepted as fact when it is factually incorrect.

A great deal of effort has been taken to ensure that what will be presented to you has been verified in one or more reliable written reference sources.

Also, to more accurately relate the past to the present, Consumer Price Index (or CPI) conversion factors have been used to convert past dollar amounts to the equivalent of today's dollar values. For example, \$3.50 was needed in 1939 to purchase the Big Book. That would be equivalent to \$54 today.

## Brief Biographies - The Co-founders Of AA And Their Families

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Dr Bob And Anne Smith - Lois And Bill Wilson

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### Brief Biographies - The Co-founders Of AA And Their Families

First we'll cover some brief biographical information on the co-founders of AA and their spouses.

In reality, all four can legitimately be considered founders of the AA Fellowship.

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# The Wilson Family

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The Wilson Family

We'll begin with Bill W and his family followed by Lois and her family.

William Griffith Wilson (Bill W)

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November 26, 1895 - January 24, 1971

William Griffith Wilson (Bill W)

We'll begin with Bill W and his family followed by Lois and her family.

Bill was born on November 26, 1895 in East Dorset, VT. His sober date was December 11, 1934. As best as can be determined, he favored hard liquor and had a taste for gin. Bill is shown here in the classic photo distributed by AA.

Bill was also a chain smoker and developed emphysema which led to his death. He passed away on January 24, 1971 at age 75 and 36 years sober, in Miami Beach, FL It was also his and Lois' 53rd wedding anniversary.

Bill W was the architect and author of AA's 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service, and all the written works that explained them. This was an amazing achievement. He had no training at all as a writer. In 1990, Life Magazine named Bill W as one of the 100 most important Americans of the 20th century. Similarly, in 1999, Time Magazine named Bill W as one of the 100 international heroes and icons of the 20th century.

**Born In A Room Behind A Bar - Bill W's Paternal Grandmother - 1896**

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**The Wilson (Formerly Barrows) House**



**Helen Barrows And Bill**

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The Wilson (formerly Barrows) House - Bill W's Paternal Grandmother - Helen Barrows - 1896

Bill was born in a room behind a bar in the Wilson House (formerly called the Barrows House). It was a village hotel run by his grandmother, Helen Barrows (shown on the right holding Bill).

Bill was named after his paternal grandfather William C Wilson who was quite prominent in the community.

Young Bill W

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Age 4 (c 1899)



Age 10 (c 1905)

Young Bill W

Here we see Bill at age 4 on the left and age 10 on the right.



## Bill W's Father And Mother - Gillman Wilson And Emily Griffith

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**Their Marriage Was A Stormy One**

### Bill W's Father And Mother - Gillman Wilson And Emily Griffith

Bill W's parents, Emily Griffith and Gilman Wilson, were married in September 1894. The marriage turned out to be a stormy one. They separated in 1905 and divorced in 1907 when Bill was around 12.

Bill considered his parent's divorce a "great disgrace and great stigma." There is evidence that his father's drinking was a very prominent cause of the divorce.

In 1906 while on a picnic, Bill and his sister Dorothy, were informed by their mother that their father had gone for good. The news was devastating to Bill. His mother Emily left the following day for Boston, MA to attend an osteopathic medical school. During most of the remainder of her life she seemed rather distant from Bill.

Bill's father had previously moved to western Canada in 1905 and Bill did not see him again for 9 years until the summer of 1914.



The Griffith House - Bill W's Maternal Grandfather - Gardner Fayette Griffith - 1906

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The Griffith House



Like A Second Father To Bill

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The Griffith House - Bill W's Maternal Grandfather - Gardner Fayette Griffith - 1906

After his parents divorced Bill and his sister Dorothy were lovingly raised by his maternal grandparents Fayette and Ella Griffith.

Bill's grandfather Gardner Fayette Griffith was a second father to him and had a way of bringing out the best of Bill's skills.

Bill W's Paternal Grandparents - c 1915

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The Wilson Family

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Bill W's Paternal Grandparents - c 1915

This family photo shows Bill W with his sister Dorothy, his mother Emily and his paternal grandparents Helen and William C Wilson. Bill's great-grandmother is in the center of the photo.

According to Bill's sister Dorothy, their grandfather was an alcoholic and found sobriety through a profound spiritual experience.

## Burr And Burton Seminary - Manchester, Vermont - 1909

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Bill W And Ebby T Were Classmates For A Year

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### Burr And Burton Seminary - Manchester, Vermont - 1909

In 1909, at age 14, Bill's grandparents decided to send him to the prestigious Burr and Burton Seminary in Manchester, VT for his secondary education. He boarded at the school for 5 days a week and returned home by train to East Dorset on weekends.

Bill and Ebby T (Thacher) spent one year together at Burr and Burton. 25 years later Ebby would carry a message of recovery to Bill W when Bill had finally hit bottom.

In 1912, at the beginning of the school year at Burr and Burton, Bill W was president of the senior class, star football player, star pitcher and captain of the baseball team and first violin in the school orchestra.

## Bertha Bamford - 1912

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Bill W's "First Love" and High School Sweetheart

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### Bertha Bamford - 1912

On November 18, 1912, Bill W's schoolmate and "first love" Bertha Bamford, died from hemorrhaging after surgery at the Flower Hospital in NYC. She was the daughter of the rector of the Manchester, VT Zion Episcopal Church.

Bill learned about her death at school on November 19th and it began a 3-year episode of depression, which severely affected his performance at school and home.

In January 1913, Bill W failed nearly every mid-year exam and was forced to drop out of school. By April, it was clear that he could not graduate from Burr and Burton. He moved to Boston to live with his mother.

Bill W's Mother Emily - c 1913

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Bill W's Mother Emily - c 1913

In the late summer of 1913, after an absence of several months, Bill W returned to Burr and Burton and took the senior exams. He failed his German class and could not receive his diploma. Bill's mother, Emily, argued with the principal who would not budge.

Bill then went to live with his mother and sister in Arlington, MA (a suburb of Boston) where he made up his German course. In the fall of 1913, Bill W's mother, Emily, decided that he should become an engineer and attend MIT. He attended Arlington High School to prepare for examinations for MIT. He was essentially repeating his senior year.

## Norwich University - 1913

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**Second Only To West Point In Quality And Discipline**

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### Norwich University - 1913

Unable to pass the MIT entrance exams, in the fall of 1913 Bill enrolled at Norwich Military Academy in Northfield, VT. Norwich was considered second only to West Point in the quality and discipline of its military training. Total enrollment was 145 students. Still suffering from severe depression, Bill was absolutely miserable at Norwich.

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# The Burnham Family

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Lois Wilson

Now we'll discuss the family of Bill W's wife Lois Burnham Wilson.

Lois Wilson

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March 4, 1891 to October 5, 1988

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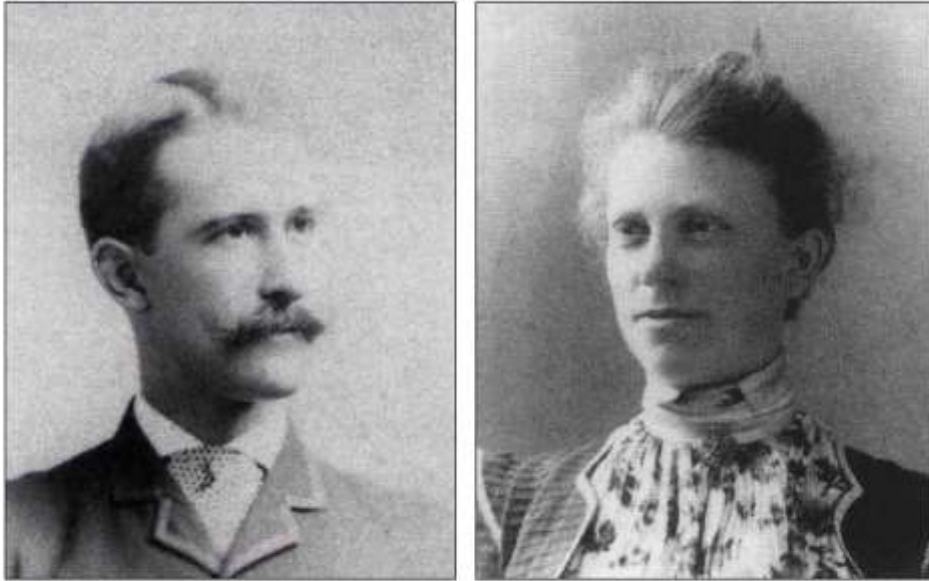
Lois Wilson

Lois was a brilliant and artistically talented woman. She was a co-founder of Al-Anon Family Groups together with her neighbor and friend Anne B (Bingham). She is shown here in the classic photo distributed by Alanon Family Groups.



Lois' Parents - Dr Clark and Matilda Hoyt Burnham - c 1888

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Lois' Parents - Dr Clark and Matilda Hoyt Burnham - c 1888

Lois' parents, Dr Clark Burnham and Matilda Hoyt Spellman, were married in 1888. Lois was the eldest of six children from a distinguished and affluent family. Her parents were openly affectionate and loved having the children around for family activities.

Born in Lancaster Pennsylvania, Lois' father was a prominent physician and honors graduate from college and medical school. His father Nathan Clark Burnham was a lawyer and physician and also a minister in the Swedenborgian Church which had recently come to America. He would later perform the marriage ceremony of Lois and Bill.

Lois' mother was from an affluent family. Her close cousin Laura was married to John D Rockefeller Sr. She managed the business affairs for her husband's medical practice.

Young Lois Burnham - 1891

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Lois And Parents



182 Clinton St - Brooklyn Heights, NY

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Young Lois Burnham - 1888

Lois was born on March 4, 1891 at 182 Clinton St in Brooklyn, NY a spacious brownstone in the affluent section of Brooklyn Heights, New York. A back room served as her father's medical office.

At this time Brooklyn was a separate city. It became a borough of New York City in 1898.

**Emerald Lake Vermont - c 1895**

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**Lois' Father At The Emerald Lake Cottage**



**The Lake Was Behind The Cottage**

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**Emerald Lake Vermont - c1895**

Lois' maternal grandfather lived his later years in Manchester, Vermont. He encouraged Lois' parent to purchase his home. A few years after they became enamored with a roomy cottage on Emerald Lake in East Dorset, Vermont.

They vacationed there from May to November each year. Emerald Lake was also a popular summer vacation spot for the family of Ebby T (Thacher). Over the years of extended summer vacations the two families became very close friends.

## Young Lois Burnham

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**Emerald Lake in Vermont**

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### Young Lois Burnham

Lois is shown on the left in a classic style of baby photo that was popular among well-to-do families in the late 1800s. The photo on the right shows Lois as a youngster at Emerald Lake in Vermont.

She was quite the tomboy and loved to fishing, swimming, sailing, climbing trees, catching frog and picking berries during long early morning walks.

Lois' Brothers And Sisters - c 1911

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Top: Rogers, Barbara, Katherine - Bottom: (Kitty) and Lyman

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Lois' Brothers And Sisters - c 1911

Lois was the first Burham child and then came Rogers, Barbara, Katherine (or Kitty) and Lyman.

Tragically Lois also had a bay sister Mathilda who was sickly since her difficult birth, and who died before she was a year old.

Lois Burnham (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) at Packer Collegiate Institute - 1910

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Lois Burnham (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) at Packer Collegiate Institute - 1910

Lois' father ensured that all the children had the best of educations. A young Lois began her education with a new form of pre-school education imported from Germany and called "kindergarten." She then attended Friends School and Packer Collegiate for grades 1 through 12.

Lois is shown here, second from the left, as a teenager while in Packer Collegiate, an all-girls school..

Not Especially Interested - 1914

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Lois At Emerald Lake, Vermont



Rogers Burnham

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Not Especially Interested - 1914

Bill and Lois first met in the summer of 1913, and spent some time together while both their families vacationed at Emerald Lake in VT. Lois (who was 4 ½ years older than Bill) was not especially interested in him when they first met.

They were introduced to each other by Lois' brother Rogers who became close friends with Bill and served as Best Man at Lois and Bill's wedding.



Secretly Engaged - September 11, 1915

In the summer of 1914, the relationship between Bill (age 18) and Lois (age 22) changed into a romance. In the following year their romance blossomed and on September 11, 1915 they became secretly engaged.



## Young Lt Bill W - 1917

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Had His First Drink Of Liquor At Age 22

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### Young Lt Bill W - 1917

On April 6, 1917 the US declared war on Germany and entered WW I.

In May 1917, Bill W, who was attending Norwich University Military Academy, left for officer's training at Plattsburg, NY. After eight weeks of artillery training at Ft Monroe, VA, he was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant in the 66th Artillery Corps and sent to Ft Rodman outside of New Bedford, MA.

That summer, Bill (at age 22) had his first drink of liquor at Emmy and Catherine Grinnell's house in New Bedford. It was a Bronx Cocktail made up of gin, dry and sweet vermouth and orange juice. He got thoroughly drunk, passed out, threw up and was miserably sick the next day. Bill wrote to Lois that he loved the experience with alcohol.

Bride And Groom On Their Wedding Day - January 24, 1918

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Lois In Her Wedding Dress



2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Bill W

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Bride And Groom On Their Wedding Day - January 24, 1918

Lois and Bill were married January 24, 1918 at the Swedenborgian Church of the New Jerusalem in Brooklyn, NY. Her grandfather performed the ceremony and, as mentioned earlier, her brother Rogers served as best man. The photo shows Lois in her wedding dress.

Unable to have children, Lois and Bill were prevented from adopting. They found out later that it was due to Bill's drinking reputation.



Harley-Davidson With Sidecar

#### Diary of Two Motorcycle Hobos - 1925 to 1926

When Bill returned from overseas after WW I in 1919, his alcoholism progressed rapidly. Lois often arranged month-long or more walking trips thru ME, NH and VT partly to give them time to think and partly to get Bill away from drinking.

In April 1925, Bill and Lois began a 1-year motorcycle camping trip on a 3-wheeler Harley-Davidson with sidecar to evaluate businesses.

## Bill W As Market Analyst - 1925 To 1926

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### Bill W As Market Analyst - 1925 To 1926

Among the places Bill and Lois visited were GE in Schenectady, NY and Portland Cement in Egypt, Pennsylvania. By winter, they were in Florida and then headed north into Canada. Bill was one of the first "market analysts." His alcoholism progressed further downward.

Return To New York City - Spring 1926

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Lois' Sister Kitty



Bill Openly Discussed His Drinking Problem

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Return To New York City - Spring 1926

In the spring of 1926, Bill and Lois returned to Brooklyn for the marriage of Lois' sister, Kitty.

Bill's drinking problem was openly discussed with his benefactor, Frank Shaw, at business conferences between him and Shaw. For the next few years fortune threw money and applause Bill's way.



#### Diary Of Two Motorcycle Hobos - 1925 To 1926

In the summer of 1926, Bill and Lois departed for another six months of investigating businesses. Lois later chronicled their travels in a book titled "Diary of Two Motorcycle Hobos."

They could have traveled first class on Bill's expense account and \$20,000 line of credit (\$241,000 today). Instead, they drove a second-hand DeSoto Lois outfitted with curtains so that they could sleep along side of the road.

For the next few years Bill was quite successful financially. However, his successes would later be ended by a worsening drinking problem. Over time, Bill sank into a form of drunken hostility that poisoned his relationships.

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# The Smith Family

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## The Smith Family

We'll continue with Bill W and Lois' story later in the presentation when we discuss the founding of AA.

First though we'll discuss some biographical information of AA's other co-founder Dr Bob, his wife Anne and their families.

Robert Holbrook Smith, MD (Dr Bob)

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Had An Older Foster Sister Amanda

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Robert Holbrook Smith, MD (Dr Bob)

Dr Bob was born August 8, 1879 in St Johnsbury, VT to Judge and Mrs. Walter Perrin Smith. He had a much older foster sister, Amanda, who became a history professor at Hunter College, NY.

Dr Bob's sober date is celebrated as June 10, 1935. That date is also celebrated as the beginning of the AA Fellowship.

As best as can be determined, Dr Bob favored hard liquor and had a taste for scotch.



## Young Smitty And His Father

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Son And Father Shared A Love Of Automobiles

33

### Young Smitty and His Father

Dr. Bob's son, "Smitty" shared a love of automobiles with his father and described him as devoted to being a doctor and a "man's man" who was very courteous and had a great sense of humor. He was quiet, cautious, conservative and insisted on keeping things simple. Unlike Bill, he had very few writings that survived him.

Dr Bob had a tattoo, likely from his Dartmouth College days, that was a blue and red dragon winding around his left arm from shoulder to wrist. And he loved to play poker. Dr Bob was quiet, cautious, conservative and insisted on keeping things simple.

He died of cancer at City Hospital in Akron On November 16, 1950, at age 70 and 15 years sober. His wife Anne had died the previous year.

In addition to being a co-founder of AA, Dr Bob served as a board Trustee from its inception up to 1944 and again from 1949 to the time of his death.

Unlike Bill, Dr Bob only had a limited number of writings that survived him. Two Grapevine articles that he wrote during the 1940's were titled "Tolerance" and "The Fundamentals - In Retrospect." The articles are classic Dr Bob - simple and straight to the point.

Dartmouth College - "The Drinkingest Ivy League School" - 1902



Forced To Leave The University Of Michigan Because Of His Drinking - 1907

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Dartmouth College - "The Drinkingest Ivy League School" - 1902

Dr Bob graduated from Dartmouth College in 1902. Dartmouth had a reputation as "the drinkingest of the Ivy League schools." Dr Bob's picture is in the upper right corner.

After graduation, he went through three years of drifting and selling heavy hardware in Boston, Chicago and Montreal. He entered the University of Michigan in the fall of 1905 as a 26 year old pre-med student and drank much more heavily.

In the spring of 1907, he left the university due to his drinking to take a 1-month "geographic cure" on a farm owned by a friend. Later that fall, after being allowed to take his exams, Dr Bob was forced to leave the university because of his drinking.

## Dr Bob As An Intern - 1910

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Stayed Dry For Two Years

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### Dr Bob As An Intern - 1910

Dr Bob transferred as a junior to Rush Medical College near Chicago. His drinking became so bad that his fraternity brothers called for his father. Despite his drinking, Dr Bob (at age 31) received his medical degree with high marks. However, prior to graduating, the Dean of the medical school required him to return for two more quarters and remain absolutely dry.

After graduation, Dr Bob received a highly coveted two-year internship at Akron City Hospital and for two years had no problem with drinking.



Hospitalized Over A Dozen Times By Early 1914

### City Hospital of Akron - 1912

In 1912 Dr Bob joined the medical staff at Akron City Hospital and set up practice at the Second National Bank Building. He remained there until he retired from practice in 1948.

After his internship, Dr Bob didn't take very long to return to old drinking habits. By early 1914 (after being hospitalized at least a dozen times) he was unable to get sober. His father sent a physician from St Johnsbury to bring him home to Vermont and Dr Bob stayed there for about 4 months. He did not touch a drink again until 5 years later - oddly enough in 1919 when prohibition started.

In 1929, Dr Bob went back to school to study under the Mayo brothers in Rochester, MN. He also studied at the Jefferson Medical School in Philadelphia, PA and became a surgeon proctologist.

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# Anne Robinson Ripley

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## Anne Robinson Ripley

Dr Bob's wife Anne was loved and revered by the Akron, OH members and by Bill and Lois. In a July 1949 memorial Grapevine article, Bill W wrote that Anne was "quite literally, the mother of our first group, Akron #1 and in the full sense of the word she was one of the founders of AA."

Anne Robinson Ripley - 1882

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Childhood Home in Oak Park, IL



Young Anne

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Anne Robinson Ripley - 1882

Anne Robinson Ripley was born March 21, 1881 in the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, IL to Joseph and Joyce Pierce Ripley. She was one of four children and grew up in a family of railroad people. It was a very sheltered atmosphere, although there wasn't much money at that time.

Anne Robinson Ripley - 1898

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Anne And Brother

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Anne Robinson Ripley - 1898

Anne was small and reserved and had a cheerfulness, sweetness, and calm that remained with her throughout her life. She attended Wellesley College on a scholarship, because her family couldn't have afforded to send her there otherwise.

Dr Bob met Anne in 1898 during his senior year at St Johnsbury Academy while she was a student at Wellesley. Anne was spending a holiday with a college friend. It was the beginning of a courtship between Dr Bob and her that lasted for 17 years. There is some historical evidence that concerns about Dr Bob's drinking was a contributing factor to their lengthy courtship.



17-Year Courtship

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#### Anne Robinson Ripley - January 25, 1915

No one today can be absolutely certain of the reason for the delay. There were years of schooling, work, and internship ahead for Dr Bob. There was also the possibility that Anne had a healthy fear of entering the state of holy matrimony with a drinking man. Perhaps she waited until Bob gave evidence of being sober for a time before she agreed to marry him.

However, they saw each other and corresponded regularly during this 17-year period, while Anne taught school in Oak Park.

On January 25, 1915 Anne and Dr Bob were married in Chicago, IL in the home of Anne's mother "at half after eight o'clock" (as the wedding invitation read). They took up residence at 855 Ardmore Ave, Akron, OH.

The first three years of their marriage were ideal, free from any of the unhappiness that was to come later. Dr. Bob continued to stay sober, and any lingering doubts Anne might have had were stilled.



Robert (Smitty) Smith - June 5, 1918

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With Mom



With Dad

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Robert (Smitty) Smith - June 5, 1918

On June 5, 1918 Dr Bob and Anne's son, Robert (Smitty) was born. But the year of Smitty's birth was also the year of a national event that had a very different impact on Dr. Bob's life - the 18th Amendment was passed - Prohibition.

## Dr Bob Starts To Drink Again During Prohibition - 1918

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Wrote Himself Alcohol Prescriptions For "Medicinal Purposes"

42

### Dr Bob Starts To Drink Again During Prohibition - 1918

Before the 18th amendment went into effect, Dr Bob was not aware that the government would oblige him by allowing doctors almost unlimited supplies of grain alcohol for "medicinal purposes."

Many times during those "dry" years, Dr. Bob went to the phone book, picked out a name at random, then filled out the prescription that would get him a pint of medicinal alcohol.

Son Smitty And Adopted Daughter Suzanne (Sue) - 1923

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With Dog Roger



Sue And Smitty

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Son Smitty and Adopted Daughter Suzanne (Sue) - 1923

Anne and Dr Bob also an adopted daughter, Suzanne (nicknamed Sue) born February 15, 1918 and adopted in 1923.

They also had a pit bull dog named Roger shown in the center of the left picture. Roger was a bit wild and had to be muzzled to keep from attacking neighbor's dogs.

Smitty and Sue's biographies are in a book titled "Children of the Healer." Both were the earliest witnesses to the founding of AA in Akron OH.

## Smitty And Sue - Two Different Paths

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Smitty And His Wife Betty

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### Smitty And Sue - Two Different Paths

Smitty and Sue's were the same age. World War II and then marriage, took Smitty from home and to Texas, where he remained to live the rest of his life.

## Smitty And Sue - Two Different Paths

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Sue



Ernie G AA #4

45

### Smitty And Sue - Two Different Paths

In September 1941 ,Sue married Ernie G (Galbraith) whose Big Book story is "The Seven Month Slip." He was almost twice Sue's age. Both Dr. Bob and Anne objected to Sue's marriage very strongly. Ernie could not stay sober and the marriage was a disaster.

A Terrible Tragedy - June 11, 1969

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Ernie And Sue's Daughter Bonna



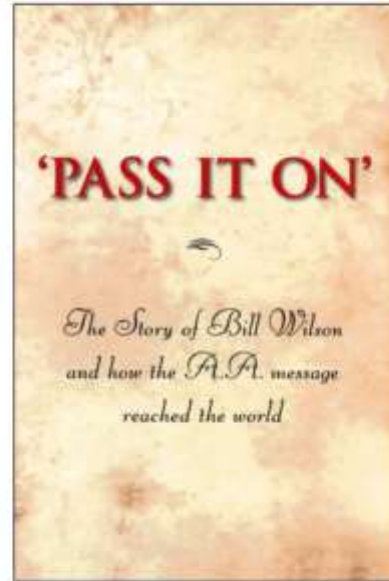
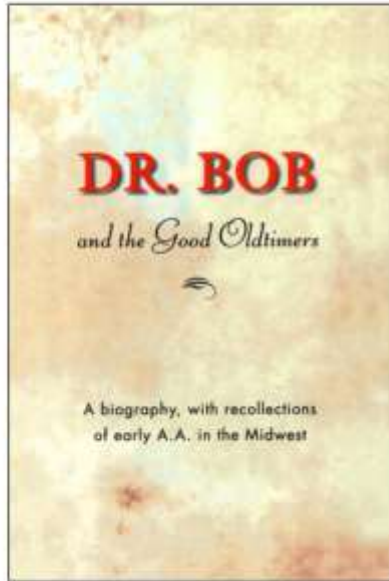
Granddaughter Sandy

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### A Terrible Tragedy

Ernie and Sue had two children, a son Mickey and a daughter Bonna who suffered from mental illness compounded by alcoholism and drug addiction.

Tragically, on June 11, 1969, Bonna committed suicide after taking the life of her 6-year-old daughter Sandy. Ernie G died two years later to the day.



#### AA Historical Sources - Co-founder Biographies

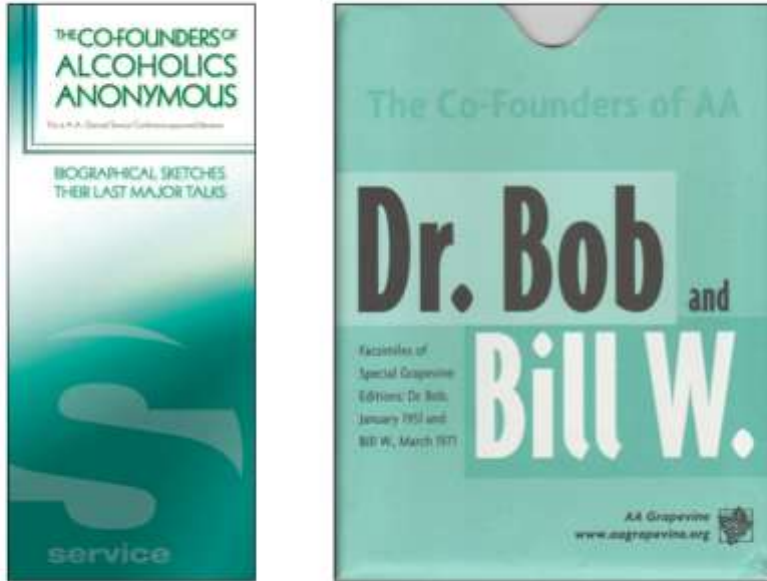
Both Dr Bob and Bill W have very informative biographies.

"Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers" contains the life story of the AA's co-founder, interwoven with recollections of early AA in the Midwest.

"Pass It On" contains the Story of Bill W and How the AA Message Reached the World.

## The Co-Founders of AA and Grapevine Memorials

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Additional Biographical Information

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### The Co-Founders of AA and Grapevine Memorials

The pamphlet titled “The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous” contains brief biographies of Dr Bob and Bill.

The Grapevine memorial issues published about our two co-founders are still available today and are historical gems of biographical information that you won’t find anywhere else. The AA Grapevine is one of the most under-appreciated, yet richest, sources of AA historical information.



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## Milestones Prior To AA

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### Milestones Prior To AA

In the next series of slides, we will discuss a number of milestones prior to AA that directly or indirectly influenced the founding of AA.

## Origin of the Word "Alcohol"

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From The Arabic Word "Al-kuhul"

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### Origin of the Word "Alcohol"

Let's look at the historical origins of some words we are very familiar with today. Those words are "alcoholism" "alcoholic" and "skid row." We will also cover how alcohol and alcoholism was generally dealt with prior to the founding of AA.

The origin of the word "alcohol" goes far back in history and comes from the Arabic word "al-kuhul." The word originally meant any fine powder. The alchemists of medieval Europe later applied the word "alcohol" to essences obtained by distillation and this led to its current usage. However, it was not until the 18th century (or 1700s) that the word "alcohol" came to designate the intoxicating ingredient in liquor.



Educator, Abolitionist And Temperance Advocate

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#### Anthony Benezet - "Mighty Destroyer Displayed" - 1774

The earliest American writing on alcoholism was a 1774 essay by Anthony Benezet titled "Mighty Destroyer Displayed." Benezet was an American educator, an abolitionist and a temperance advocate. In these early days of the temperance movement, the word "temperance" was used, more often than not, to encourage moderation in drinking not abstinence from drinking.

There were still many hard lessons about alcoholism waiting to be learned.

## A New Republic On A Binge - Late 1700s To Early 1800s

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Top: Washington and Jefferson - Bottom: Franklin and Adams

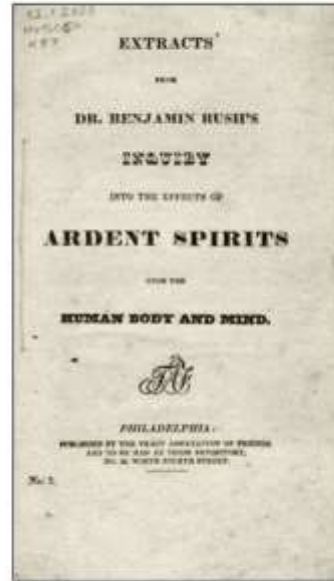
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### A New Republic On A Binge - Late 1700s To Early 1800s

The late 1700's marked the beginning of the most severe national problem with alcohol in the history of our country. Right from its birth, the newly formed republic of the United States was truly on an alcohol binge of immense proportion.

American alcohol consumption increased enormously from the late 1700's to early 1800's and became a national problem of such magnitude that many of the prominent historical figures of the time (such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams) urgently called for a national change in drinking practices.

## Dr Benjamin Rush - Father Of American Psychiatry - 1784



**"A Progressive And Odious Disease"**

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Myth: Dr Silkworth was the first US physician to call alcoholism a "disease"

The first American physician to call alcoholism a disease was Dr Benjamin Rush. He was a member of the Continental Congress, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and Surgeon General of the Army during the American Revolution. He is often called both the father of American psychiatry and father of the American temperance movement.

In 1784, Rush wrote a paper titled "An Enquiry into the Effects of Ardent Spirits on the Human Body and Mind." He described habitual drunkenness as "a progressive and odious disease" and that total abstinence "suddenly and entirely" was the only effective treatment.

In 1810 Rush also called for the creation of what he called "sober houses" where alcoholics could be confined and rehabilitated. This was the forerunner of Treatment Centers.

It's a bit ironic that Dr Bob, during some of the worst years of his drinking, received his medical degree from Rush University which was named in honor of Dr Benjamin Rush, a pioneer in the treatment of alcoholism.

## American Temperance Societies



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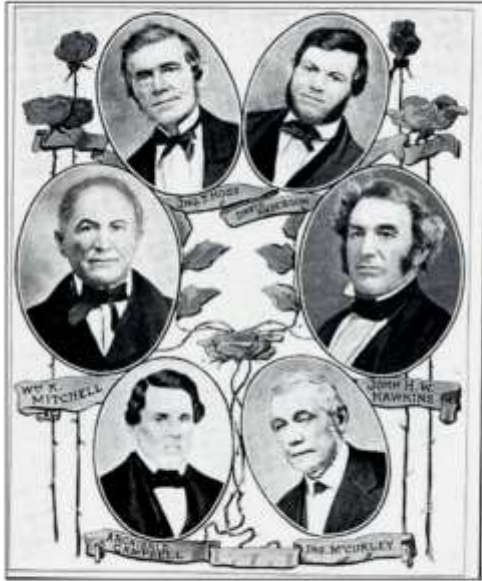
### American Temperance Societies

One reason for the growth in US alcohol consumption in the 1700s and 1800s was that, due to the lack of hard currency, alcohol was used as a form of currency in business for bartering and trading. It was also a common practice of the time for employers to provide their employees (which included children) with daily rations of distilled liquor as part of their pay. Drinking preferences also shifted from beer and wine to distilled liquor.

Problem drinking spanned all ages (from children to seniors). By the 1820s, average US consumption was 7 gallons of pure alcohol per person each year. Today, average US consumption of alcohol is around 1.8 gallons per person per year.

In the early 1800's, religious and political leaders viewed drunkenness as a national curse. Momentum was picked up by religious leaders who changed the notion of "temperance as moderation" to "temperance as abstinence." This began the growth of American temperance societies.

## The Washington Temperance Society - April 5, 1840



Become A Member By Signing The Pledge

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### The Washington Temperance Society - April 5, 1840

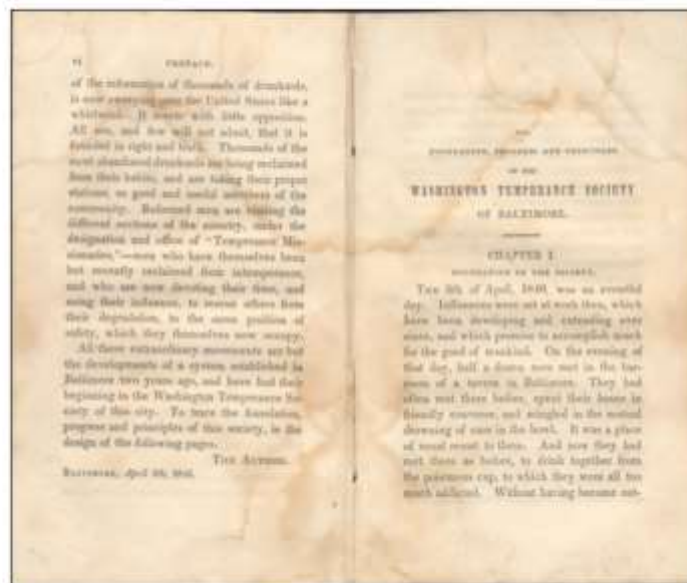
One of those temperance societies was quite similar to AA and existed almost a century before AA.

On April 5, 1840, a group of six drinking club friends (William Mitchell, John Hoss, David Anderson, George Steers, James McCurley and Archibald Campbell) from Chase's Tavern in Baltimore, MD formed a total abstinence society. Pledging "not drink any spirituous or malt liquors, wine or cider" they named themselves the "Washington Temperance Society" (in honor of George Washington). They later became known as "Washingtonians."

They required a pledge of total abstinence and attendance at weekly meetings where members would tell their stories of drunkenness and recovery. As a body, they recognized no religion or creed and were politically neutral. Each member was supposed to help alcoholics who were still drinking. They sought out new prospects (or what they called "hard cases"). Their weekly meetings were held at Chase's tavern until the owner's wife objected to the increasing loss of their best customers. They had a 25-cent initiation fee (\$6 today) and member's dues of 12 ½ cents per month (\$3 today).

On November 19, 1840, the Washingtonians held their first public meeting. Growth of the movement was extremely rapid. Widespread and enthusiastic support came from numerous temperance societies. The Washingtonians had great success in mobilizing public attention on temperance by relaying their "experience sharing" of alcoholic debauchery followed by glorious accounts of personal reformation. A leader of the movement noted, "There is a prevalent impression, that none but reformed drunkards are admitted as members of the Washingtonian Society. This is a mistake. Any man may become a member by signing the pledge and continue so by adhering to it."

## The Washingtonian Decline - 1847



56

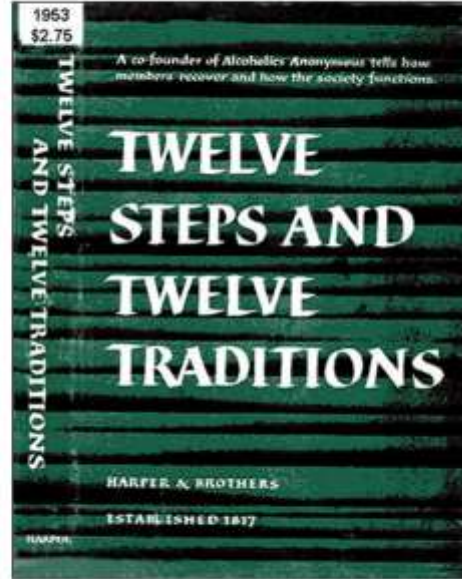
### The Washingtonian Decline - 1847

By mid-to-end 1843, the Washingtonian movement peaked after having reached all major areas of the US. Estimates of its membership vary and are contradictory. The sole requirement for membership was to sign a "total abstinence pledge." Members included primarily of teetotalers, temperance advocates, and a large segment of adolescents (under age 15) and drinkers of various types whose numbers far exceeded that of the "drunkards." A reliable estimate of the number of alcoholics in the mix is impossible to derive. Over the lifetime of the movement, hundreds of thousands signed pledges but the number of rehabilitated alcoholics was likely under 150,000.

It is estimated that Washingtonians "spent its force" by 1847 and began its downfall. The society originally favored "moral suasion" to achieve reformation of the alcoholic through abstinence. However, as the Washingtonian membership makeup changed rapidly and radically to consist mainly of non-alcoholic temperance advocates, sentiments shifted away from reformation of alcoholics to the pursuit of a legal means to prohibit alcohol. Washingtonian practices came to be viewed as outmoded and interest waned. There was no sudden or massive collapse. When the novelty and emotional appeal of the Washingtonians became outmoded, they simply faded from the scene over time.



**Myth: Washingtonian Activities In Politics, Religion And Abolition Caused Their Downfall**



**Bill W Grapevine Article On The Washingtonians**

**Myth: Washingtonian Involvement In Politics, Religion And The Abolition Of Slavery Caused Their Downfall**

“AA Comes of Age” (pg 125) cites issues such as religion, politics and abolition of slavery as root causes of the Washingtonian decline. While there were certainly cases of this, there is no compelling evidence to support or conclude that these issues had a major role in the Washingtonians downfall. They appear to be a myth.

Prohibition was certainly a very divisive issue among the Washingtonians as were power struggles among its leadership. However, the major causes of the Washingtonians downfall were a direct result of their departing from their original membership makeup (which started out as all alcoholics) and their departing from their original primary and single purpose (which started out as one alcoholic helping another alcoholic who was still suffering). It’s a powerful lesson on the vital importance of AA’s Traditions to the ongoing survival of the AA Fellowship.

The claim that the Washingtonian downfall occurred due to their involvement in politics, religion and the abolition of slavery stems from Bill W when he first wrote about the Washingtonians in an August 1945 Grapevine article. It was his first article in a long series that explained the Traditions.

The prior month’s July 1945 Grapevine included a Michigan member’s article on the Washingtonians that contained a number of factual errors. Bill accepted the article as factual and carried the errors into his Tradition 10 essay in the 12&12. When Bill W writes something it is often interpreted as gospel. But Bill as a genuine human being made his share of human errors in his writings.

## Myth: Washingtonian Activities In Politics, Religion And Abolition Caused Their Downfall



Past AA General Service Board Chairman Dr Milton Maxwell

Quart. J. Stud. Alc., Vol. 11, 410-452, 1950.

### THE WASHINGTONIAN MOVEMENT

By Milton A. Maxwell, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Sociology  
State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington

#### INTRODUCTION

Certain similarities between the Washingtonian movement of the nineteenth century and the present day Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous have been commented upon by a number of observers. In view of this resemblance there is sure that historical interest in an account of the first movement in the United States which brought about a large-scale rehabilitation of alcoholics. The phenomenal rise and spread of the Washingtonian movement throughout the land in the early 1840's was the occasion of much discussion, exciting a deep interest. The cause of its equally rapid decline have been a subject of much speculation and are still of concern to the members of Alcoholics Anonymous who may wonder whether or not their movement is destined to a similar fate. This article, therefore, will present not merely a description and history of the movement but also an analysis of the similarities and differences between the Washingtonians and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Since the Washingtonian movement is so intimately linked to the temperance movement, it may be well to recall the developments which preceded 1840. Before the 1820's, "temperance" was hardly a popular cause. Even in 1812, when Ighen Beecher proposed to his fellow Congregational ministers that they formulate a program for combating intemperance, "...the regular committee reported that 'after (a)id(s) and respectful inquiry' it was convinced that nothing could be done to check the growth of intemperance..." (1). The custom of serving liquor at ecclesiastical meetings probably influenced the outcome of this "respectful inquiry." But Ighen Beecher was not to be stopped. He headed a new committee that recommended the following steps:

...that distinct assemblies obtain from the use of ardent spirits (not wine) all ecclesiastical meetings, that members of churches abstain from unlawful vending or purchase (not from lawful vending and purchase) of liquor, that farmers, mechanics and manufacturers substitute monetary compensation for the reform of spirits, that voluntary associations aid the civil magistrates to enforce the law, and that the pamphlet of Dr. Math (2) be printed and circulated (3).

The fact that these proposals were regarded as radical by the

Myth: Washingtonian involvement in politics, religion and the abolition of slavery caused their downfall

Past AA General Service Board Chairman Milton A Maxwell wrote a splendid research paper on the Washingtonians in 1950 while he was an Assistant Professor at the State College of Washington.

Maxwell's article later became a primary source for Grapevine articles written in October 1962, February 1971 and January 1991. There are several other Grapevine articles about the Washingtonians.

It should be noted, however, that the articles do not go through a vetting and verification process to validate and confirm their content. So one should be careful in interpreting their historical accuracy.

## Myth: Washingtonian Activities In Politics, Religion And Abolition Caused Their Downfall

October 1962

### BEFORE THEY HAD AA

*How some basic AA ideas were tried out nearly a century and a quarter ago . . .*

**The Washingtonians:**  
An AA colleague recently dropped by at the Grapevine office to leave a letter and handwritten notes, nearly a century old, called "Six Right With the Washingtonians." Thought we might like to look through it, to read, and see how close drinks had come to hitting on AA. Some that long before 1935. We began to read.

In the spring of 1861, the author, T. E. Arthur, relates, "there was assembled in a drinking-house in this city (Washington) six men, well advanced in years, who had for a long time been confirmed drunkards, or waddled to the loss of strong drink as to have found it almost impossible to live without daily resort to it." Though they met accidentally, and had gone there to drink, there was, that day, "in the mind of each a strong desire to get out of his enslaved and wretched condition." They talked "less the feelings of

each became known to the others, and they felt a sudden hope springing up in their minds—a hope in the power of association. Had experience had power to each that alone it could not stand. But together . . . they would conquer!" They organized a society, called it The Washington Temperance Society, and "determined that they would increase their number."

What happened to them? By an AA "coincidence" there arrived at the Grapevine the same week an excerpt from a scholarly treatment of "The Washingtonian Movement" written by Milton A. Maxwell, Ph.D. and published in the *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol: The Washingtonians, Dr. Maxwell points out, had certain notable features later incorporated into AA: ... Unfortunately, the movement eventually was torn apart in the political and doctrinal warfare associated with the temperance and abolition movements.*

constantly available (5) A reliance upon the Higher Power (6) Total abstinence from alcohol. Unfortunately, the movement eventually was torn apart in the political and doctrinal warfare associated with the temperance and abolition movements. Also, The Washingtonians lacked widely important features of AA, among which Dr. Maxwell lists: (1) a program for personality change (2) anonymity (3) a steady flow of new ideas into the groups from outside their local memberships, and (4) assistance of casual and non-regulars. Dr. Maxwell sounds a sad note warning us to the vital importance of sustained, energetic Twelfth Step work: "Whether, and so long as, the Washingtonians were working hard at the reclamation of drunkards, they had wretched success and the movement floundered and grew. This would support the idea that active outreach to other alcoholics is a factor in therapeutic success, and a necessary condition for growth—and even for survival."

The following pictures, taken from the Arthur book, are typical of 19th-Century efforts to scare people sober. They indicate that old J. Balfanzers hasn't changed much in the past hundred years.

October 1962 Grapevine Article

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Myth: Washingtonian Involvement In Politics, Religion And The Abolition Of Slavery Caused Their Downfall

As an example, the October 1962 Grapevine article about the Washingtonians illustrates the difficulties of using the magazine as a reference source. It is mainly due to the editorial license that is interspersed among source references.

The October 1962 Grapevine article about the Washingtonians states: "What happened to them? By an AA 'coincidence' there arrived at the Grapevine the same week an excerpt from a scholarly treatment of 'The Washingtonian Movement' written by Milton A. Maxwell, PhD and published in the *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*. -- The Washingtonians, Dr. Maxwell points out, had certain notable features later incorporated into AA: ... Unfortunately, the movement eventually was torn apart in the political and doctrinal warfare associated with the temperance and abolition movements."

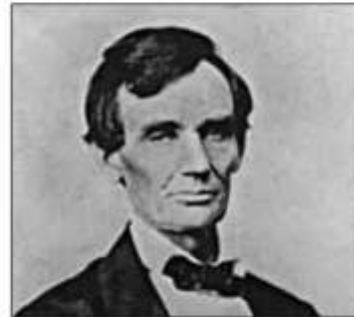
The sentence that begins with "Unfortunately" was the editorial license of the Grapevine article's author. Maxwell's paper makes no mention at all about the abolition movement or slavery.

## Washingtonians - Early 1840s

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Washingtonian Home in Chicago



Abraham Lincoln

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### Washingtonians - Early 1840s

In 1841, the Washingtonians organized the first “Martha Washington Society” meeting for women and children in NY. They provided moral and material support to reform female alcoholics and assisted the wives and children of male alcoholics. This was the first temperance movement in which women assumed leadership roles.

On February 22 1842, Abraham Lincoln spoke to the Springfield, IL Washingtonians. He praised the movement and criticized earlier temperance movements that defined the alcoholic as incorrigible.



Coined The Words "Alcoholism" And "Alcoholic"

#### Dr Magnus Huss - 1849

The words "alcoholism" and "alcoholic" were coined in 1849 by Swedish physician Magnus Huss. He used the terms in medical papers in which he described a state of chronic, destructive intoxication and a diseased condition produced by alcohol. It took nearly a century (or the mid-1900s) for the words "alcoholism" and "alcoholic" to gain widespread use in America.



"Skid Road" Became "Skid Row"

### Seattle, WA - 1852

The term "skid row" is believed to have originated in 1852 from a section of Seattle, WA. A sawmill built in Pioneer Square near Puget Sound used skids (or tracks of peeled logs) to drag timber to the mill. The area became home to vagrants and destitute alcoholics. It was first known as "Skid Road" and later as "Skid Row."

The term was picked up by the national press to describe blighted city areas frequented by chronic alcoholics. It is still used in cities today such as downtown Los Angeles, CA whose Skid Row has an estimated homeless population of 8 to 9,000.

## Cary Amelia Moore Nation - Mid-1840s To Early-1900s



"Hatchetations"

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### Cary Amelia Moore Nation - Mid-1840s To Early-1900s

Cary Nation was an American temperance leader and quite an imposing character. At age 21, she married Dr Charles Gloyd who was an alcoholic. Her efforts to reform him failed, and he died of his alcoholism shortly after their marriage.

In 1877, she married David Nation, a minister and lawyer. They settled in Medicine Lodge, KS where she responded to what she considered a divine calling to destroy saloons. Nearly 6 ft. tall and dressed as a deaconess, she was a imposing figure and gained national renown for her radical opposition to alcohol.

In Wichita, KS, she began to use a hatchet to ruin saloons, describing her havoc-wreaking calls as "hatchetations." Arrested 30 times for disturbing the peace, funds from her lectures and sales of souvenir hatchets paid for her bail and fines. She published newsletters called "Smasher's Mail" the "Hatchet" and the "Home Defender" which helped pay for a home for wives of alcoholics in Kansas City, KS.

In 1901, her husband David divorced her for desertion.

## Franchises And Miracle Cures - Late 1800s

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Sometimes The Remedy Was More Dangerous Than The Problem

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## Franchises And Miracle Cures - Late 1800s

In the late 1800's, businesses offering so-called alcoholism "cures" grew at a prolific rate. In many cases the remedy they prescribed was far more dangerous than what it was supposed to fix.

Some of these unregulated businesses became so popular that they grew into what we would today call "franchises" or "chains." Two prominent chains were the Keeley Institute and the Gatlin Institute.

Between 1880 and 1920, more than 500,000 alcoholics and addicts took the Keeley Cure (which was praised by some as a cure of miraculous potential and at the same time attacked by others as a fraud).



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# Timeline History Of AA

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## Timeline History Of AA

That concludes the preliminary milestone history material and now I'd like to move into the history of AA in the framework of describing the origin and evolution of AA's Three Legacies.

## AA Comes Of Age - July 1-3, 1955

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Kiel Auditorium, St Louis, MO



The Three Legacies Of AA

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### AA Comes Of Age - July 1-3, 1955

AA's 20th anniversary and second International Convention was held in St Louis' Kiel Auditorium July 1-3, 1955. The historic convention introduced a new circle and triangle symbol that was prominently displayed on a large banner draping the back of the stage.

In "AA Comes of Age" (pg 139) AA's co-founder, Bill W, described the circle as representing the whole of AA. The triangle represented AA's 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

Each of AA's 3 Legacies has a foundation of 12 spiritual principles. They are

The 12 Steps for the Legacy of Recovery

The 12 Traditions for the Legacy of Unity and

The 12 Concepts for the Legacy of Service

Bill W defined the Three Legacies of AA to be the gifts from the founders and old-timers to each succeeding generation in AA. Those gifts were freely received and are freely given.

We are going to walk through a timeline of how those gifts came to be.

## Notable Names In AA History - Born In The 1800s

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- 1862 Charles B Towns
- 1873 Dr William D Silkworth
- 1874 John D Rockefeller Jr
- 1878 Rev Frank Buchman
- 1879 Dr Bob
- 1881 Anne S
- 1881 Rowland H
- 1888 Henrietta Sieberling
- 1889 Sister Ignatia (Bridget Gavin)
- 1891 Lois W
- 1893 Rev Sam Shoemaker
- 1895 Bill W
- 1896 Dr Harry Tiebout
- 1896 Ebby T

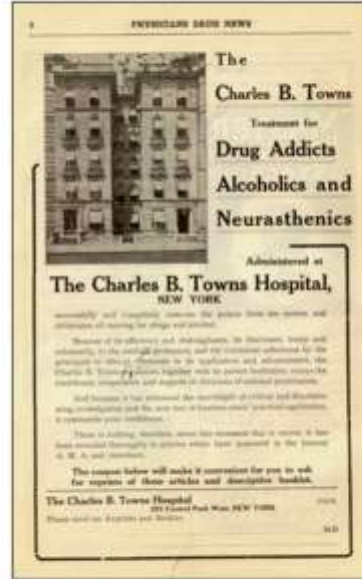
All Born In The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

67

### Notable Names in AA History - Born in the 1800s

AA is a product of the 20th century yet most of the prominent names in AA history were born in the 19th century. The youngest name on the list is Ebby T (Thacher) born in 1896 prior to the turn of the century. He carried a message of recovery to AA's co-founder Bill W which is described in the Big Book chapter "Bill's Story." The eldest names on the list is Charles B Towns born in Georgia in 1862 during the middle of the Civil War.

## Charles B Towns Hospital - 1901



Private Drying Out Hospital for the Wealthy

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### Charles B Towns Hospital - 1901

In 1901, the Charles B Towns Hospital opened in NYC as a private "drying out" hospital for the well-to-do. It first opened on 81st and 82nd Streets and later moved to 293 Central Park West. Towns also opened an annex at 119 W 81st St to provide treatment for patients of "moderate means." Hospital fees had to be paid in advance or be guaranteed. Treatment fees for alcoholism ran from \$75 to \$150 in the main hospital (\$1,875 to \$3,750 today) and \$50 (\$1,250 today) in the annex.

Towns had no medical background but was recognized as an international leader and reformer in the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction. He played a significant role in providing financial support to Bill W during development of the Big Book and helped arrange much favorable publicity for AA in its early years.



Origin Of The Twelve Steps

A Fragment Of History By Bill W - July 1953

Bill W published a July 1953 Grapevine article titled "A Fragment of History" which can be found in the book "The Language of the Heart" (pgs 195-202). It chronicles the origin of AA's Twelve Steps.

In the article, Bill named Dr William D Silkworth as one of the three main channels of inspiration for the Steps. He identified the other two main channels of inspiration as William James and the Oxford Group.



The Little Doctor Who Loved Drunks

#### Dr William D Silkworth - 1918

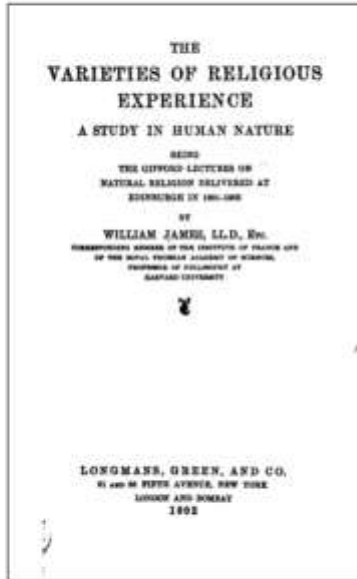
Dr William D Silkworth is central to the Big Book chapter "The Doctor's Opinion." Bill W fondly called him "the little doctor who loved drunks." The photo shows Dr Silkworth around 1918 when he was on active Army duty during World War I. It was at this time when he decided to change medical specialties from neurology to the treatment of alcoholism and drug addiction.

Dr Silkworth joined the Towns Hospital staff in 1930 after losing his investments and savings in the massive stock market crash of the Great Economic Depression.

He was the medical director of Towns Hospital in 1934 when Bill W sobered up there after four admissions. We'll get to Dr Silkworth's specific influence on the Steps and Big Book in just a few slides.

## The Varieties Of Religious Experience - 1902 - William James - 1907

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James Is Mentioned By Name Twice In The Big Book

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### The Varieties Of Religious Experience - 1902 - William James - 1907

Harvard professor William James presented the “Gifford Lecture Series on Natural Religion” in 1901 at the University of Aberdeen in Edinburgh, Scotland. His lectures were published in June 1902 in a critically acclaimed book titled “The Varieties of Religious Experience - A Study In Human Nature.”

James cited numerous examples of 2 styles of spiritual transformation, one was gradual and the other was sudden and dramatic - neither was considered superior to the other.

Thirty-two years after its publication a copy of the book was given to Bill W during his last stay in Towns Hospital. It strongly influenced Bill and early AA members and is mentioned in the Big Book. James is mentioned twice in the Big Book by name. He is also called the founding father of American psychology.

## Emmanuel Episcopal Church - The Emmanuel Movement - 1906

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Introduced The Use Of Spirituality And Recovered Alcoholics As Lay Therapists

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### Emmanuel Episcopal Church - The Emmanuel Movement - 1906

Another influence to AA's later development occurred In 1906 when the Rev Drs Elwood Worcester and Samuel McComb, along with physician Dr Isador Coriat, opened a clinic in the Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Boston, MA.

It introduced the use of spirituality, and recovered alcoholics as lay therapists, in the treatment of alcoholism. Among the noted lay therapists were Courtenay Baylor, Richard Peabody, Francis Chambers and Samuel Crocker.





First Century Christian Fellowship

#### Rev Frank N D Buchman - Keswick Chapel, England - July 1908

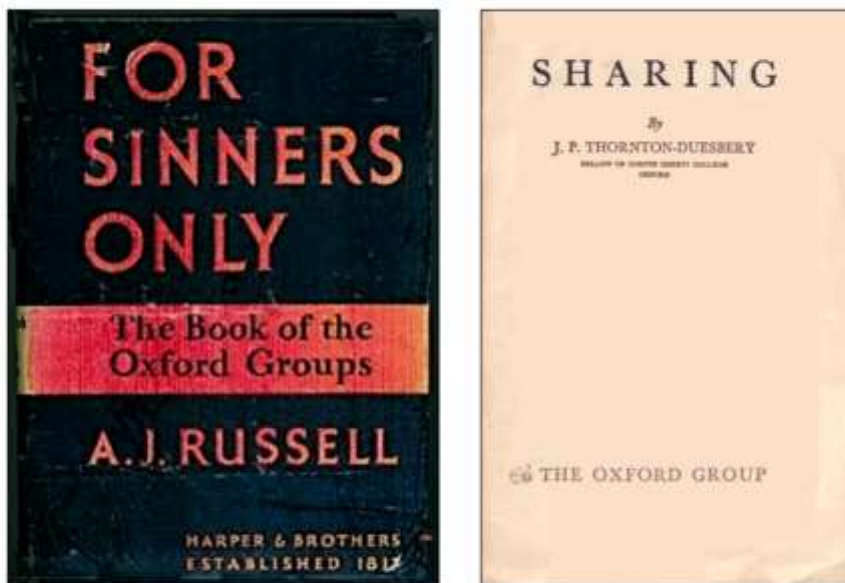
Lutheran Minister Frank Buchman attended the Keswick Convention of Evangelicals in England in mid-1908.

After hearing a sermon by a woman evangelist, Jessie Penn-Lewis, he had a profound conversion experience and helped another attendee to go through the same experience.

Returning to the US, he started his "laboratory years" working out the principles he would later apply on a global scale. His movement was initially called the "First Century Christian Fellowship." In the 1920's it was renamed to the "Oxford Group" and in 1938 renamed again to "Moral Re-Armament" or "MRA." In 2001 "MRA" was renamed to "Initiatives of Change." The organization today bears virtually no similarity at all to its early roots.

## Core Principles Of The Oxford Group

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Four Absolutes - Five C's - Five Procedures

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### Core Principles of the Oxford Group

Frank Buchman worked mostly in Princeton, Cambridge and Oxford Universities. His movement received wide international publicity in the 1920's-30's.

Core Oxford Group principles consisted of the "four absolutes" (of honesty, unselfishness, purity and love, which were believed to be derived from scripture in the Sermon on the Mount). Additionally the OG advocated the "five C's" (of confidence, confession, conviction, conversion and continuance) and "five procedures" (of 1. Give in to God, 2. Listen to God's direction, 3. Check guidance, 4. Restitution and 5. Sharing for witness and confession).

The OG gave AA the term "sharing." They were also strong advocates of self-examination, admission of character defects, amends for harm done and working in service with others. Reputedly, Buchman dated the founding and name of the "Oxford Group" when he met with undergraduates from Christ Church College of Oxford University).

Rev Samuel Moor Shoemaker - Calvary Episcopal Church - 1918/1925

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Calvary House

Oxford Group US Headquarters

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Rev Samuel Moor Shoemaker - Calvary Episcopal Church - 1918/1925

In early 1918, Sam Shoemaker met Frank Buchman in Beijing China. He too had a spiritual conversion experience and became a devoted member of Buchman's movement.

Shoemaker became rector of the Calvary Episcopal Church in NYC in 1925 and held a leadership role in the Oxford Group. The OG's US headquarters were set up at Calvary House, a building immediately next to the church.

One more accomplishment of Shoemaker was the Calvary Rescue Mission.

## Urban Rescue Missions - 1872



Jerry McAuley



Water Street Mission In New York City

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## Urban Rescue Missions - 1872

The first urban rescue mission in the US was founded in New York City in October 1872 by ex-convict Jerry McAuley. Rescue missions were later spread across America by the Salvation Army and were focused primarily on Skid Row alcoholics.

When McAuley died (in 1884), he was succeeded by Samuel Hopkins Hadley. His example of recovery from alcoholism was cited in William James' 1902 book "The Varieties of Religious Experience."

## Harry R Hadley - Calvary Rescue Mission - Late 1920s

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His Father's Recovery Is Cited In The Varieties Of Religious Experience

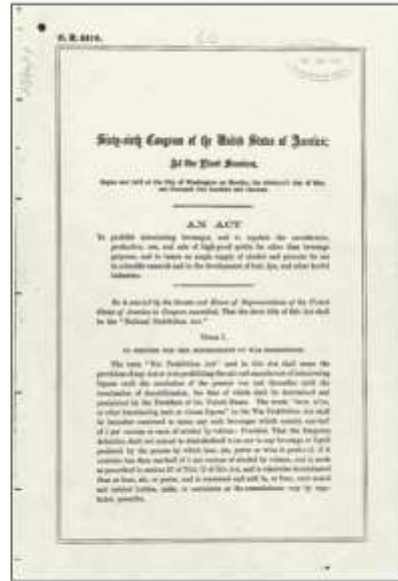
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### Harry R Hadley - Calvary Rescue Mission - Late 1920s

In the late 1920's Hadley's son, Harry, joined with the Rev Sam Shoemaker to establish the Calvary Rescue Mission. It was the place from which Ebby T (Thacher) carried a message of recovery to Bill W.

Hadley was also in charge of the mission when Bill W, fresh out of Towns Hospital, visited there seeking alcoholics to work with. But I'm getting a little ahead of myself.

Prohibition - the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment - January 16, 1919



The Volstead (National Prohibition) Act

Prohibition - the 18th Amendment - January 16, 1919

The 18th amendment to the US Constitution, prohibiting alcohol, was ratified on January 16, 1919. On May 19 of that year, Congress passed the Volstead (or National Prohibition) Act over President Wilson's veto. Terms such as "bootlegger," "speakeasy" and "bathtub gin" entered the national vocabulary.

Both Bill W and Dr Bob did the worst of their drinking at a time when alcohol was illegal in the US.



The Great Stock Market Crash

### Black Tuesday - October 29, 1929

On October 28 and 29, 1929 the Stock Market in NYC collapsed. Contrary to myth, people did not jump out of office windows when their fortunes were lost. Because of the crash, Bill W was broke and \$60,000 in debt (equivalent to \$750,000 today). He and his Wall St benefactor, Frank Shaw, parted company.

Soon after, Bill's friend, Dick Johnson, offered him a job in Montreal, Canada with Greenshields and Co. By Christmas, Bill and his wife Lois were in Canada living lavishly in a furnished apartment in Mount Royal overlooking Montreal. They had a new Packard automobile and membership in a Country Club.

In less than ten months after arriving in Montreal, Bill was fired from Greenshields and Co due to his drinking and fighting in the country club. Lois went back to Brooklyn - her mother had fallen ill. Bill stayed in Montreal to clean up details.

In December, after a binge that started in Montreal and carried him into VT, Lois went to get Bill. They returned to 182 Clinton St and moved into a room there. Lois' mother was terminally ill with bone cancer and she passed away on Christmas day. Bill, drunk for days before, could not attend the funeral and he stayed drunk for many days after.

January 1963

### THE BILL W.—CARL JUNG LETTERS



**H**ERE is a vital chapter of AA's early history never before published. Before Bill brought the message to Bob, even before Ebby carried the message to Bill, there was one—known as Richard H—who had taken the message to Ebby. Richard H, a helpful, helpful alcoholic, had been set on the spiritual path to recovery by the influential psychiatrist, Dr. Carl Jung of Zurich. This extraordinary exchange of letters reveals for the first time not only the direct historical ancestry of AA, but the human situation which Jung, deeply involved with patients and with a scientific reputation at stake, felt he had to be cautious about revealing his personal and lasting belief that the ultimate source of recovery are spiritual sources. Permission to publish Dr. Jung's letter has been granted to the Grapevine by the Jung estate.

January 23, 1961  
Professor Dr. C. G. Jung  
Korntal-Zurich  
Switzerland  
Dear Dr. Jung:  
This letter of great appreciation has been very long overdue. May I first introduce myself as Bill W., a co-founder of the society of Alcoholics Anonymous. Though you have surely heard of us, I think if you are aware that a certain conversation you once had with one of your patients, a Mr. Richard H, back in the early 1930's, did play a crucial role in the founding of our fellowship.

Though Richard H, has long since passed away, the ramifications of his remarkable experience while under treatment by you has definitely become part of AA history. Our membership should his experience with you recall him.

Having exhausted other means of recovery from his alcoholism, it was about 1931 that he became your patient. I believe he remained under your care for perhaps a year. His admission for you was brief, and he left you with a feeling of melancholy.

To his great consternation, he soon relapsed into intoxication. Certain that you were his "court of last resort," he again returned to your care. Then followed the conversation between you and him that was to become the first link in the chain of events that led to the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous.

My recollection of his account of that conversation is this: First of all, you frankly told him of his hopelessness, so far as any further medical or psychiatric treatment might be concerned. This candid and forthright statement of yours was beyond doubt the first foundation stone upon which our society has since been built.

Coming from you, one to be treated and admired, the impact upon him was immense.

When he then asked you if there was any other hope, you told him that there might be, provided he could become the subject of a spiritual or religious experience—or what, a genuine conviction. You pointed out how such an experience, if brought about, might re-orient him when working the world. But you did caution, though, that while such experiences had sometimes brought recovery in alcoholics, they were, nevertheless, comparatively rare. You recommended that he place himself in a religious atmosphere and hope for the best. This I believe was the substance of your advice.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. H. joined the Oxford Group, an evangelistic movement then at the height of its success in Europe, and one with which you are doubtless familiar. You will remember their large emphasis upon the principles of self-survey, confession, restitution and the giving of oneself in service to others. They strongly stressed meditation and prayer. In these months, Richard H. did find a conversion experience that released him for the time being from his compulsive drinking.

Returning to New York, he became very active with the "OIG" here, there led by an Episcopal clergyman, Dr. Samuel Sheenwater. Dr. Sheenwater had been one of the founders of that movement, and his was a powerful personality that exerted intense sincerity and conviction.

At this time (1932-34) the Oxford Group had already selected a number of alcoholics, and Richard, feeling that he could especially identify with these sufferers, addressed himself to the help of all others. One

First In The Chain Of Events That Led To The Founding Of AA - January 23, 1961

Bill W wrote a January 1963 Grapevine article on his 1961 exchange of letters with Dr Carl Gustav Jung. The article is in "The Language of the Heart" (pgs 276-281).

In his first letter Bill informed Dr Jung that his past treatment of an alcoholic patient was "the first in the chain of events that led to the founding of AA." Bill went on to relate that Jung's patient treated found sobriety through the Oxford Group. This, in turn, led to his helping another alcoholic (Ebby T) who carried a message of recovery to Bill in 1934.





Only Hope Was A Vital Spiritual Or Religious Experience

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#### Rowland H - Dr Carl Gustav Jung - Early 1930s

The alcoholic patient was Rowland H (Hazard) who came from a very wealthy colonial Rhode Island family. Detailed and accurate Information about him has been difficult to obtain and verify. The Hazard family has persistently made it known that they wish to keep their family matters private.

Rowland was treated by Dr Jung in Zurich, Switzerland in the late 1920s or early 1930s. After returning to drinking and being treated a second time, Rowland was told by Dr Jung that there was no medical or psychological hope for an alcoholic of his type; that his only hope was a vital spiritual or religious experience - in short a genuine conversion experience.

Rowland was hospitalized again for his alcoholism in February and March 1932. From January 1933 to October 1934 his drinking left him unable to carry on his business activities.

Courtenay Baylor became Rowland's therapist in 1933, and continued to work with him through 1934. It was under the influence of Baylor's Emmanuel Movement therapy (with its combination of spirituality and simple lay therapy) that Rowland actually began to recover.

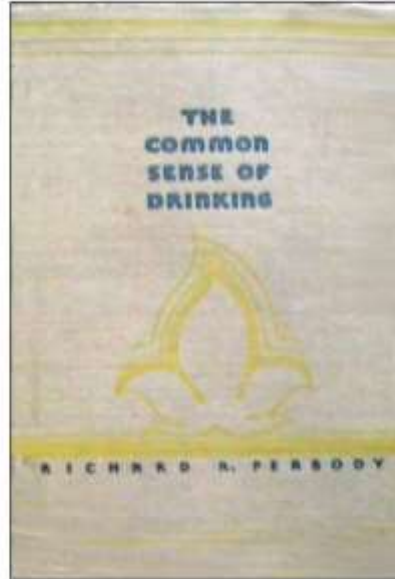
Rowland became a prominent member and vestryman of the Calvary Episcopal Church in NYC (the Oxford Group's US headquarters).

In the latter 1930s, he was a member of the Oxford Group's "Business Team" together with Bill Wilson, James Newton and T Henry Williams of Akron, OH.

He later moved to Shaftsbury and Bennington VT which would lead to his eventual contact with Ebby T (Thacher).

Richard Peabody - The Common Sense Of Drinking - 1931

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Half Measures Are To No Avail

82

Richard Peabody and The Common Sense of Drinking – 1931

“The Common Sense of Drinking” by Richard Peabody, was published in 1931. It strengthened the concept of alcoholism as an illness and contained the statement “Half measures are to no avail.” The book later became a prominent reference source in the early AA Fellowship.

Unfortunately, Peabody himself was unable to stay sober.



Akron Oxford Group Connection

83

James Newton - Bud Firestone - Sam Shoemaker - 1931

AA's Oxford Group seeds were sown in Akron, OH 4 years prior to Bill W finding sobriety.

Russell (Bud) Firestone was the son of business tycoon Harvey S Firestone Sr. In 1931 Bud was drinking a fifth or more of whiskey a day. James Newton, a Firestone executive and prominent OG member, introduced Bud to Sam Shoemaker. Bud spiritually surrendered with Shoemaker and was released from his alcohol obsession and joined the OG.

Harvey S Firestone Sr - Akron Oxford Group - January 1933



Grateful For The Help Given To His Son Bud

Harvey S Firestone Sr - Akron Oxford Group - January 1933

Two years later, in January 1933, Harvey Firestone Sr, grateful for the help given his son Bud, sponsored an Oxford Group conference weekend headquartered at the Mayflower Hotel in Akron, OH.

Frank Buchman and 30 members of his team were met at the train station by the Firestones and Rev Walter Tunks (Firestone's minister and rector of St Paul's Episcopal Church).

The event included 300 overseas members of the OG and received widespread news coverage. It also attracted some notable names in AA history such as Henrietta Sieberling, T Henry and Clarace Williams and Dr Bob's wife, Anne who later persuaded Dr Bob to attend OG meetings.



Bill W's First Hospital Admission - Aided By His Brother-in-Law

85

#### Dr Leonard V Strong - Towns Hospital - Autumn 1933

By the Autumn of 1933 Bill W was quite literally drinking himself to death. In desperation, his wife Lois turned to their brother-in-law Dr Leonard V Strong for help. He arranged and paid for Bill's first admission to Towns Hospital. Dr Strong was married to Bill's sister Dorothy.

In Towns Hospital, Bill was subjected to the "belladonna cure." The regimen was fairly brutal and primarily involved much "purging and puking" aided by, among other things, castor oil. Belladonna, a hallucinogen, was used to ease the symptoms of alcohol withdrawal.

## Prohibition Repealed - December 5, 1933



Only Part of the US Constitution That Has Been Repealed

86

### Prohibition Repealed - December 5, 1933

In early 1933, beer had become legal and Dr Bob went through what he called in his Big Book story the "beer experiment." It was not long before he was drinking a case and a half a day fortifying the beer with straight alcohol.

In his Big Book story, Dr Bob also says this was around the time when he was introduced to the Oxford Group. He participated in the OG for 2 ½ years before meeting Bill W.

On December 5, 1933, the 21st amendment to the US Constitution was ratified repealing the 18th amendment. The almost decade and a half prohibition of alcohol was widely disregarded and yielded fortunes for organized crime in bootlegging and smuggling. The 18th amendment also has the distinction of being the only part of the US Constitution that has been repealed.

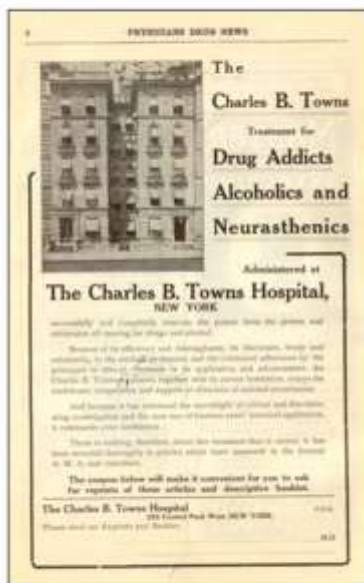


Ebby Approached By The Oxford Group

#### Ebby T - Cebra G - July 1934

In July 1934, Ebby T (Thacher) was approached in Manchester, VT by two old drinking friends, and now sober Oxford Group members, Cebra G (Graves) and Shep C (Cornell). They informed Ebby of the OG but he was not quite ready yet to stop drinking.

Cebra and Shep later vacationed at Rowland H's house in Bennington, VT and learned that Ebby was facing criminal charges and commitment to an asylum because of his drinking. Rowland and Cebra attended Ebby's trial and persuaded the judge (who was Cebra's father) to parole Ebby to their custody. Ebby stayed in Bennington, VT with Rowland H for several weeks.



Bill W's Third Admission

### Towns Hospital - September 17, 1934

Bill W's third admission to Towns Hospital (again paid by Dr Leonard V Strong) occurred on September 17, 1934. During this stay Dr Silkworth pronounced Bill a hopeless drunk and informed Lois that Bill would likely have to be committed. Bill left the hospital a deeply frightened man and sheer terror kept him sober. He found a little work on Wall St, which began to restore his badly shattered confidence.

On November 11, 1934, Armistice Day, Bill W went to play golf and got drunk and badly injured. Lois began investigating sanitariums in which to place Bill.



## Ebby T - Calvary Rescue Mission - 1934

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Mission Entrance

89

### Ebby T - Calvary Rescue Mission - 1934

While in Vermont, Rowland H introduced Ebby to the Oxford Group and later took him to the Calvary Rescue Mission in NY City. In late November, while staying at the Calvary Mission and working with the OG, Ebby T heard about Bill W's problems with drinking. He phoned Lois who invited him over for dinner. Ebby had been boyhood friends with both Lois and Bill.

Ebby visited Bill and shared his recovery experience in the OG which is described in the Big Book chapter "Bill's Story." Days later, Ebby returned with Shep C to speak to Bill about the OG. Bill did not think too highly of Shep. Lois recalled that Ebby visited several times, once even staying for dinner.

On December 7, Bill W decided to investigate the Calvary Mission on 23rd St. arriving drunk with a drinking companion found along the way (Alec the Finn). Bill kept interrupting the service wanting to speak. On the verge of being ejected, Ebby came by and fed Bill a plate of beans. Bill later joined the penitents and drunkenly "testified" at the meeting.

Dr Silkworth - Bill W's Towns Hospital Admission - December 11, 1934



CHARLES R. TOWNS HOSPITAL 205 COLING FORD ROAD SILK WORTH, N.H.		page 65
NO. 122	W. W. Wilson	Nov 4-3770 Volume 21
RELATIVE	122 Clinton H. Belgrave - 40 y	and 38
REFERRED BY	AMERICAN	PHYSICIAN
ADMITTED BY	Dr. J. B. Smith	PHYSICIAN
ADMITTED	11-11-34	DATE
RECEIVED	11-11-34	DATE
PREP. 5	NO	DATE PAID 11-5-34

Bill W's Fourth And Last Admission - His Sober Date

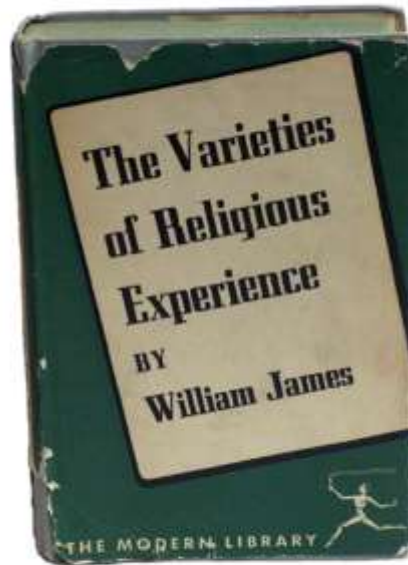
90

Dr Silkworth - Bill W Towns Hospital Admission - December 11, 1934

After three admissions, to Towns Hospital Dr Silkworth told Bill's wife Lois that his condition appeared hopeless and he would likely have to be put in an institution. Bill managed to stay sober for a while but on November 11, Armistice Day, he got drunk and severely injured.

Following Ebby's visits to his home, Bill entered Towns Hospital for the fourth time and drank his last beer in the hospital lobby on December 11, 1934 . This was Bill's sobriety date.

Bill later fell into a deep depression while in the hospital and had a profound spiritual experience which he later jokingly called his "hot flash" experience. Fearing that he had gone crazy, he called for Dr Silkworth who told Bill to hang on to what he had experienced because it seemed so much better than what he came into the hospital with.



Basis For Steps 1, 2 and 3

### The Varieties of Religious Experience - 1901/1902

During his hospital stay Bill read William James' book "The Varieties of Religious Experience" and found it deeply inspiring. It revealed 3 key points for recovery: 1st: the need for a complete defeat in a vital area of life (or what we today call "hitting bottom") 2nd: the admission of defeat (or what we today call "acceptance") and 3rd: an appeal to a higher power for help (or what we today call "surrender"). These spiritual principles later became the basis for Steps 1, 2 and 3.

Calvary House - Calvary Hall - Late 1934

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Calvary House



Calvary Hall Oxford Group Meeting

92

Calvary House - Calvary Hall Oxford Group Meeting - Late 1934

Bill W left Towns Hospital. He and Lois began attending Oxford Group meetings with Ebby T, Shep C and Rowland H in Calvary Hall at Calvary House.

Bill worked with alcoholics at the Calvary Mission and Towns Hospital, emphasizing his "hot flash" spiritual experience. Alcoholic Oxford Group members began meeting at Bill's home on Clinton St in Brooklyn.

They would also meet after Oxford Group meetings at Stewart's Cafeteria near the mission.



Started Oxford Group Meeting For Dr Bob

93

#### Henrietta Sieberling - The Williams' Home - March 1935

In March 1935, Henrietta Sieberling, encouraged by her friend Delphine Weber, organized a Wednesday-night Oxford Group meeting at the home of T Henry and Clarace Williams.

It was started specifically to help Dr Bob with his drinking. Dr Bob later began to confess openly about his drinking problem but he could not stop drinking no matter how much or how hard he tried. OG meetings continued at the William's house until 1954.



Hit The Alcoholics Hard With The Medical View

#### Bill W - Dr Silkworth - April 1935

After a few months, at having no success in sobering up other alcoholics Bill W came very close to giving up on his efforts. However, his wife Lois reminded him that he was staying sober because of his working with others.

In April 1935, Bill had a talk with Dr Silkworth who advised him to stop preaching about his hot flash experience in the hospital and hit the alcoholics hard with the medical view on alcoholism. Silkworth advised Bill to break down the strong egos of alcoholics by telling them about the obsession that condemned them to drink and the allergy that condemned them to go mad or die. It would then be so much easier to get them to accept the spiritual solution

## An Historic Phone Call - May 11, 1935

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Akron Mayflower Hotel Lobby



Rev Walter Tunks

95

### An Historic Phone Call - May 11, 1935

Bill returned to Wall St and met Howard Tompkins who was involved in a proxy fight for control of the National Rubber Machinery Co in Akron, OH. Bill went to Akron in May 1935 but the proxy fight was quickly lost. In poor spirits and tempted to enter the hotel bar, Bill realized he needed another alcoholic. He phoned clergy members listed on the hotel lobby directory and reached the Rev Walter Tunks.



Henrietta Sieberling

96

#### An Historic Phone Call - May 11, 1935

The Rev Walter Tunks referred Bill to Oxford Group member Norman Sheppard who then referred Bill to Henrietta Sieberling. Bill introduced himself to her as “a member of the OG and a rum hound from New York.” Henrietta met with Bill at her gatehouse (at Stan Hywet Hall) on the Sieberling estate. She viewed Bill’s arrival as the answer to her prayers for Dr Bob and called Dr Bob’s wife Anne to arrange a dinner the next day.





Sieberling Gatehouse



Young Bob (Smitty)

97

#### Sieberling Gatehouse - Dr Bob's Home - May 12, 1935

At 5PM on Mother's Day May 12, 1935 Bill W (age 39) met Dr Bob (age 55) his wife Anne and their young son Smitty (age 17) at Henrietta Sieberling's gatehouse. Dr Bob was so badly hung over that he couldn't eat dinner and planned to stay only 15 minutes.

Privately, Bill told Dr Bob of his alcoholism experience in the manner suggested by Dr Silkworth. Dr Bob then opened up and he and Bill talked until after 11PM. Dr Bob's planned 15 minutes turned into 6 hours.



Two Bottles Of Liquor In The Kitchen

98

Portage Country Club - Dr Bob's Home - May/June 1935

Henrietta Sieberling arranged for Bill to stay at the Portage Country Club. Later, in early June, Bill moved to Dr Bob's house at the request of Anne Smith. Bill insisted on keeping two bottles of liquor in the kitchen to prove that he and Dr Bob could live in the presence of liquor.

Oxford Group Meetings At The Williams' Home - May 1935

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T Henry And Clarace Williams



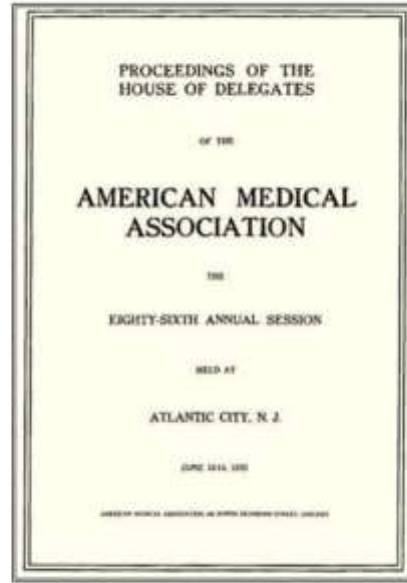
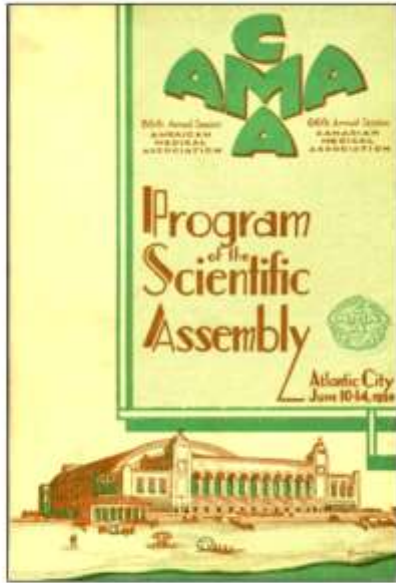
The Williams' Living Room

99

Oxford Group Meetings At The Williams Home - May 1935

They all went to Oxford Group meetings at the home of T Henry and Clarace Williams. T Henry, who was an executive with the National Rubber Machinery Co, lost his job due to the proxy fight that brought Bill to Akron, OH. OG meetings continued at the William's house until 1954.

## Dr Bob's Last Binge - June 1935



The AMA Convention Ran From June 10 - 14, 1935

100

### Dr Bob's Last Binge - June 1935

In his Big Book story Dr Bob briefly describes his 3-day binge at an AMA convention in Atlantic City, NJ. Upon his return to Akron, Bill W helped him through a 3-day sobering up period to get ready for a scheduled surgery. Dr Bob had his last drink on the day of the surgery and gives the date as June 10, 1935. AA also marks this date as the beginning of the AA Fellowship.

The books "AA Comes of Age" (147) "Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers" (72) and "Pass It On" (147) all erroneously state that the AMA Convention began the first week of June 1935. The AMA Archives has long-ago confirmed that the convention began in the 2nd week of June 1935 on June 10. Allowing for 3+ days of binging and blacking out followed by 3 days of sobering up, Dr Bob's sober date appears to actually be June 17th not June 10th.

## The Search for AA #3 - Letter From Bill W to Lois - May 1935

May '35

W. G. W.  
care of  
Dr. R. M. SMITH  
Surgeon - 100 Second Nat'l Bldg  
Syracuse, Ohio

DARLING :

I am writing this in the office of one of my new friends, Dr. Smith. He had my trouble and is getting to be a very ardent Groupie. I have been to his house for weeks and the rest of the family is as nice as he is. I have witnessed at a number of meetings and have been taken to a number of people. Dr. Smith is helping me to change a Dr. McKay, once the most prominent surgeon in town, who developed into a terrific rake and drunk. He was rich, lost everything, wife committed suicide, he is ostracized and on the point of suicide himself. His change if accomplished, would be a most powerful witness to the whole town as his case is so notorious.

I was infinitely relieved to get your note saying the insurance is paid. It seems very hard to burden Howard with it. Make it clear to him about the bonus and money from the Deas. I certainly wish we had more slack but it can't be helped.

I am sorry I was blue yesterday. There happened to be an inspection tomorrow but I have my fingers crossed.

Am very anxious to hear what the Deas says. I should have written him in the first instance, as Carrie probably got her eye on that slack.

We do make progress however - The lawyer, Dr. Weigh has resigned from the board.

I love you so very much and hope it is so hard for you to wait there alone. Anyhow, for the first time in my life - I know I am doing my best at a really worthwhile job.

Love, Darling -  
BILL

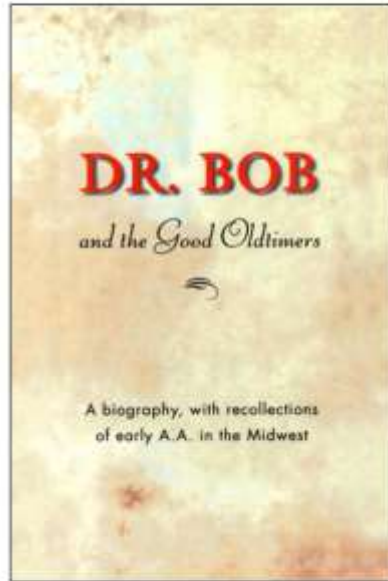
### Carrying A Message To A Still Suffering Alcoholic

101

## The Search for AA #3 - Letter From Bill W to Lois - May 1935

The first prospect Bill W and Dr Bob tried to help was a physician, a Dr M (McKay). He was described by Bill W, in a letter to Lois, as "once the most prominent surgeon in town, who developed into a terrific rake and drunk - he was rich, lost everything, wife committed suicide, he is ostracized and on the point of suicide himself - his change if accomplished, would be a most powerful witness to the whole town as his case is so notorious."

An example of the letter that Bill wrote to Lois is illustrated in an appendix to his autobiography "Bill W - My First 40 Years" and is shown in the slide. It's a forgery - it shows Bill and Lois living in Bedford Hills, NY which didn't occur until 1941.



"Dos And Don'ts" In Working With Other Alcoholics

102

#### Eddie R - Almost AA #3 - June 1935

In "Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers" there is a funny story that took place in early June 1935 in Akron. Dr Bob suggested that he and Bill W work with other alcoholics. A local Minister, J C Wright, provided a prospect who lived down the street from Dr Bob and who was quite a character.

Bill and Bob tried in vain, throughout the summer, to sober up Edgar (Eddie) R (Reilly) who was later described as an "alcoholic atheist and able to produce a major crisis of some sort about every other day." Eddie R missed the opportunity to be AA #3 but he showed up at Dr Bob's funeral in 1950. He was sober and attending the Youngstown, OH group.

Eddie, has the dubious distinction of being mentioned in the book "Dr Bob and the Good Old-timers" as the member who chased Anne Smith with a butcher knife. Eddie was one of the early prospects who helped Bill and Dr Bob to learn a great deal about the "dos and don'ts" in working with other alcoholics.



City Hospital Of Akron



Bill D AA # 3

103

#### AA # 3 And Akron Group # 1 - Late June 1935

In late June Dr Bob and Bill W visited Bill D (Dotson) at the City Hospital of Akron. Bill D was a prominent attorney and had been hospitalized 8 times in 1935 for his drinking. It took 5 days before Bill D would admit that he could not control his drinking.

On Independence Day July 4, 1935 Bill D checked out of the hospital never to drink again. Akron's Group #1 (AA's first group) marks its beginning as the date that Bill D left the hospital.

Although Bill D is anonymously discussed in the Big Book chapter "A Vision for You" his personal story did not appear in either the original manuscript or 1st edition Big Book. The reasons for this are not clear. He was Ohio's Panel 1 Delegate to the 1st General Service Conference in 1951. Bill W went to Akron to personally record Bill D's story for inclusion in the 2nd edition Big Book which was published in 1955.



Halfway House Of Sorts



The Unbeliever

#### 182 Clinton Street - Hank P - Late 1935

Lois W went to Akron to join Bill at the Smith's house for two weeks in July 1935. Bill W left Akron and returned to NYC in August 1935. Bill focused his efforts on getting the NY Group established. They met at Bill's home on Clinton St and it also became a halfway house of sorts. Ebby T came to live there in November.

In late 1935, Hank P (Parkhurst) whose Big Book Story is "The Unbeliever" and Fitz M (Mayo) whose Big Book Story is "Our Southern Friend" sobered up at Towns Hospital with Bill's help. Hank and Fitz joined with Bill and in the following years Hank started AA in NJ and also had a major role in the development of the Big Book. Fitz M started AA in Washington, DC and helped start AA in Baltimore, MD.





Hitler Remark Taken Out Of Context

105

#### Rev Frank Buchman - Oxford Group PR Disaster - August 26, 1936

On August 26, 1936 Frank Buchman and the Oxford Group experienced an international public relations disaster. A "NY World Telegram" article by William H Birnie quoted Buchman as saying, "I thank heaven for a man like Adolph Hitler, who built a front-line of defense against the anti-Christ of Communism."

Although the remark was taken out of context in its reporting, it plagued Buchman's reputation for many years and it marked the beginning of the decline of the Oxford Group.

Over time, Bill was criticized by the NY Oxford Group members for working only with alcoholics. In Akron, T Henry and Clarace Williams were also criticized by Oxford Group members who did not support their efforts with alcoholics.

The Oxford Group was out to save the world and sought out famous public figures to join their ranks for the publicity it would generate. Bill simply was out to save some nameless drunks.

## Charles B Towns Hospital - Group Conscience - December 1936



First Recorded Experience Influencing The Traditions

106

## Charles B Towns Hospital - Group Conscience - December 1936

In "AA Comes of Age" (pg 102) the earliest personal experience that influenced the Traditions, and AA's Legacy of Unity, occurred when Bill W was two years sober. In December 1936, Charles B Towns offered Bill a lucrative job at his hospital as a lay alcoholism therapist. After years of a hand to mouth existence Bill wanted the job very much.

The question was put to the NY group meeting in Bill's home and they rejected it. Bill complied and cooperated with their decision and later wrote in "AA Comes of Age" (pgs 101-102):

"Three blows, well and truly struck, had fallen on the anvil of experience ... The common welfare must come first ... AA cannot have a class of professional therapists ... and God, speaking in the group conscience, is to be our final authority." Bill went on to write "Clearly implied in these three embryo principles of tradition was a fourth: Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."



On Again Off Again - Drinking And Sobriety



Calvary House

107

### Ebby T Drinks Again - NY Separates From The Oxford Group - August 1937

In April 1937, Ebby T (Thacher) got drunk after 2 ½ years sobriety. It began an on-again, off-again pattern of drinking and sobriety that would stay with Ebby.

During their earliest years, the Akron and NY groups were affiliated with the Oxford Group. It was helpful at first but over time it produced problems, particularly after Buchman's public relations disaster in 1936.

Leaders of the Oxford Group at the Calvary Mission ordered alcoholics staying there not to attend meetings at Clinton St. Bill W and Lois were criticized by OG members for having "drunks only" meetings at their home. The Wilson's were described as "not maximum" (an OG term for those believed to be lagging in their devotion to OG principles).

In August 1937 Bill and Lois stopped attending OG meetings at the Calvary House and the NY AAs separated from the OG. This was the beginning of AA separating itself from outside affiliation. It set the groundwork for what would later become Tradition 6. The Akron group remained affiliated with the OG for two more years.



Hospitals, Paid Missionaries And A Book Of Experience

108

#### Dr Bob And Bill W - The Williams' Living Room - Akron - Late 1937

In October 1937, Bill W and Dr Bob met again in Akron, OH. After 2 1/2 years there were still just two groups and about 40 sober members (more than half were sober for over a year). It was actually a remarkable success story since every one of the sober members had previously been considered hopeless and beyond any help at all.

Bill had some rather grandiose ideas for AA hospitals, paid missionaries and a book of experience to carry the message to distant places. Dr Bob liked the book idea but not the hospitals and paid missionaries. In a meeting at T Henry Williams home, Bill's ideas narrowly passed. A single vote made the difference among the meeting of 18 Akron members. The NY group was more enthusiastic. This historic milestone marked the collective group conscience decision to write the Big Book.



Fund Raising For The Book Project

Dr Leonard V Strong - Willard S Richardson - 1937/1938

The book project's first challenge was financing and it was no simple matter. The country was still in the grips of the great economic depression and the prospects of World War II were looming dangerously large in Europe and Asia.

Initial efforts to raise funds were not successful. Bill W's brother-in-law, Dr Leonard V Strong, set up a meeting in December 1937 with Willard S Richardson (who was an ordained minister and manager of John D Rockefeller's philanthropies). A second meeting took place in January 1938.



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REPORT ON A VISIT TO THE  
 YOUNG FELLOWSHIP  
 FROM THE A. S. HENNINGSEN S. S. D.

The self-styled Fellowship Group of Akron, Ohio and vicinity, was first being formed by the visit of William G. Wilson of Cleveland.

Wilson was an alcoholic of years experience who, through a definite religious experience which he has alluded to and which is testified to by Dr. William G. Henning, superintendent of the Charles D. Frye Hospital, 227 Lincoln Park East, has been, but without name or address. Following one of the previous visits in the hospital of suffering alcoholic alcoholics, Wilson had sought out an "insurance" like plan to "keep up". Through one of the Christian Scientists he located Dr. Robert S. Davis, a prominent local surgeon, who has since had some of alcoholics and whose practice as a result has been just about ruined. Davis was ready for such an approach and within a short time followed completely in Wilson's footsteps.

Robert S. Davis, M.D.  
 Dr. Davis is by most with profession's college education at Northwestern, then at the faculty of Harvard, then at University of Chicago. After practicing a period he was appointed physician in general at Jefferson Medical College Hospital, Philadelphia. He received an M.D. from the University of Chicago.

Dr. E. A. Ferguson - one of Ohio's foremost eye specialists, located at Akron. Dr. Ferguson, a man of scientific eye, told me Dr. Davis was a brilliant and skillful surgeon. He said there were no better in his line within the country. He stated, however, that for years, Davis's drinking had given more, that he, Ferguson, had at different times carried the man down as his other doctor friend. As a result his medical business and his practice had almost been sacrificed to his early losses of his drunkenness, nearly three years ago, he said. Davis had stopped drinking, and ever since had been enjoying the confidence of all. He was still busy, said Ferguson, just as skillful a surgeon and regarded as highly by the profession as he was in his earlier days. Ferguson had learned of the work Davis was doing with alcoholics. He had visited Davis's apartment in the past if needed. He was for it and had extended admiration for Davis both professionally and in this work. He stated further that Davis was called upon to give an hour of his time, free, to this work with alcoholics that it was very difficult for him to handle enough professional business to make a decent living. He thought it was time for Davis to devote this work but would help as he could before expense in personally and improve his practice.

Dr. Samuel Hays - General practitioner at Sylvania Falls, aged about 50. Hays had been an alcoholic but had been cured by Davis and the Friends' society and the Christian Scientist prescription. Hays said that Davis stood at the top of his profession. He said Davis was the hero of the scientific reform movement there and that something must be done to help him as he could regain more of his conservative practice and still give more of his time to this work. At present his own scientific work taking an average of 10 hours

Exceptionally Favorable Report on the Young Fellowship

Frank Amos - February 1938

In February 1938, Willard Richardson asked Frank Amos to visit Akron, OH and make a report on the small Fellowship of alcoholics. His report was very detailed and exceptionally favorable. The main emphasis in the report was on Dr Bob's desperate financial situation and actions that should be taken to help him.

Willard Richardson Letter To John D Rockefeller Jr - February 23, 1938



February 23, 1938  
Dear Mr. Rockefeller:  
FROM THE A. A. AMOS, G. S. O.

We may recall by seeing to you a few weeks about a group of men and women who have been saved from the most forms of alcoholism by real religious experience. The impression as to the importance of the experience and ability of these people grows upon us. Through conferences and studies we have been trying to fully understand and to help these friends who are well sustained from location by Don Turk in Stillhouse, Cleveland, and Akron, and who face a situation difficult to solve. The demands upon their time and strength by needy men and women are heavy. They cannot wisely expect or institutionalize the service. They can finance a certain amount of help for each other by a small revolving fund, which they are doing. But situations in one or these centers, especially Akron, present a problem and a real opportunity as we see it.

After careful consideration we asked Mr. Amos, who was to be in Ohio on business, to study the Akron situation thoroughly. He spent most of three days there and reported to us last Monday. His typewritten statement is attached but you probably will not need to read it. It bears out the truth of statements made to us. Briefly, Dr. Smith, an able man and the first convert in that section, is the leader of 40 or 50 men and women in that area. His knowledge has lasted for nearly three years and in the interim has been very desirable. But his hard experience with drink makes his rehabilitation as a specialist slow, and the demands made by the houses and new alcoholism are heavy. He is connected with the Akron City Hospital and does important service there. But his office and home facilities are inadequate. His friends, as Mr. Amos' report indicates, think if he could be helped financially for one year, possibly two, he would be able to bring a secretary, a suitable office, and some other aid, to get fully on the feet professionally and could develop some helpers in the group of good men there and in Cleveland who would take much of the burden of the liquor work. Mr. Amos estimates the cost to do this effectively at \$5,000 for the two years.

We don't see that this matter so important that we are bringing it to you as worthy of careful consideration. Mr. Smith, as you probably know, is to take a sort of forced vacation in Florida. He would be glad to give you his point of view and told us to assure you that he sincerely recommended your undertaking this interest. Mr. Chipman thinks as he does. Would you think best to allow us, under proper business arrangements, to provide the Akron situation with as much as is necessary up to \$5,000 for one year and possibly two?

Recommended \$5,000 Donation For One Or Two Years

111

Willard Richardson Letter To John D Rockefeller Jr - February 23, 1938

Willard Richardson sent Amos' report to John D Rockefeller Jr urging a donation of \$5,000 a year for 1 or possibly 2 years. (\$76,000 a year in today's dollars).

There is some confusion and erroneous information in AA literature on the amount that Rockefeller was asked to donate. Bill W wrote in a May 1947 Grapevine article (LOH 61) that the recommended donation was \$30,000 and then later in "AA Comes of Age" (pg 150) wrote that it was \$50,000. Both these amounts are mistaken based on GSO Archives records - one of which is shown in this slide. It's not clear where Bill W got the figures he cited.

John D Rockefeller Jr - March 17, 1938



Donates \$5,000 And Much More In Years To Come

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John D Rockefeller Jr - March 17,1938

On March 17,1938 Rockefeller replied to Richardson that it was contrary to the policy of his philanthropies to fully fund a charitable enterprise unless it was decided to carry it indefinitely.

Rockefeller declined to make a donation for the second year but did provide \$5,000 to be held in a fund in the Riverside Church treasury.

Much of the fund was used to immediately assist Dr Bob by paying off the mortgage to his home. The remainder was used to provide Bill and Dr Bob with \$120 a month (\$1,800 a month today) so that they could continue to dedicate themselves full time to the Fellowship.





Oxford University Requested Its Name Stop Being Used By The Movement

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### From Oxford Group To Moral Rearmament (MRA) - 1938

Nations of the world armed for World War II and Frank Buchman called for a “moral and spiritual rearmament” to address the root causes of the conflict. He renamed the “Oxford Group” to “Moral Re-Armament.”

Another factor influencing the renaming was that Buchman’s “Hitler” remark caused Oxford University to request that its name stop being used by the movement.



Bill Wrote Outlines And Dictated The Expanded Text

### 17 William St - Draft Big Book Page (Bill's Story) - April 1938

In April 1938 the writing of the Big Book began at the business office of NY member Hank P at Honors Dealers, 17 William St, Newark, NJ.

Bill W wrote draft outlines on legal pads and dictated the expanded text to Ruth Hock (who was then the Honors Dealers Secretary). Most of the drafts were discarded in a later move to Vesey St in NYC. A difficult loss to AA's Archives was the draft page containing the initial version of the 12 Steps.

Each week Bill would read the drafts to those who met at his home. Edited copies were sent to Dr Bob and the Akron members for further review and editing. As they worked their way through the chapters, NY and Akron members also wrote the personal stories to be included in the book.

## Letter From Bill W To Dr Bob - Spring 1938

Bill W. to Dr Bob  
(4-25-38) April 1938  
Dear Bob (Bill):

DR. BOB W. S. D.  
1000 THE A. A. MICHELLE BLDG.  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Copy to: [unclear] [unclear]  
(See original package)

I have been certain that there have been swarms. After getting home from Akron I had almost concluded to let the book like the quiet while people thought it over. I found, however, that a lot of people including Frank Bane had got quite active. Frank thought something ought to be started right away. I told him that you people had only just begun to consider the matter and pointed out at length the dangers and difficulties of such a venture, particularly one that of undomestic publicity. Considering the case as which we grew, he, and others including myself, began to think that publicity could come anytime. Why then not use our anonymous view of ourselves, thus providing the possibility that some one else picked the situation before we had a chance to say anything. Thus we came to the conclusion that in a hasty way a beginning should be made. In this fashion, having some definite proposals laid out and some writing done, we would have a no-nonsense basis for discussion.

As a starting point I have, with the help of the SARA here, dictated and mimeographed two chapters of the proposed book. One is the nature of an introduction and the second my own story. These I enclose to you together with a rough outline of the contents of other chapters.

Bill W. to Dr Bob  
(4-25-38) April 1938  
Dear Bob (Bill):

DR. BOB W. S. D.  
1000 THE A. A. MICHELLE BLDG.  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

I imagine you would see this enclosed as a sort of trial balloon, and a starting point for discussion of what you folks see there believe the book ought to contain. Although I have made the beginning, I feel that the completed book should represent the work of many people; particularly the individual stories, which I think should be as little edited as possible. They will naturally be the heart of the book and must represent the feelings, experiences, and personalities of those who write them. As you will note, the chapter outline calls for nine stories of a chapter each, of about the same length as my own. My feeling is that Anne should be the one portraying the wife of an alcoholic. We have been a very striking story in the person of Florence Rankin who is an alcoholic and also the wife of an alcoholic. She has been straight for about nine months and has a very unusual and powerful witness. It may be that like Anne, she should have a chapter to herself. Then we might, beginning with myself, take seven of us in consecutive order, writing my own last before you great. The story of a Bill W. like Anne would be omitted from this section, but could be included in the stories section or perhaps, considering his wonderful comeback, with powerful effect in the chapter on failures. It is thought each of these nine chapters should run about five thousand words. Then we might have five chapters, each consisting of five witnesses of about one thousand words each, selected mostly, I should think, unconsciously, except for some especially striking ones, and the witnesses of a couple of beginners.

The foregoing are suggestions only. We can never tell where

### Invitation To Anne S To Write The Chapter On The Wife Of An Alcoholic

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## Letter From Bill W To Dr Bob - Spring 1938

In April 1938 (possibly May/June) Bill W wrote to Dr Bob that he had written 2 chapters of the book (those were "There Is A Solution" and "Bill's Story").

Bill stated in the letter that "I feel the completed book should represent the work of many people; particularly the individual stories which I think should be as little edited as possible. They will naturally be the heart of the book and must represent the feelings, experience and personalities of those who write them. As you will note the chapter outline calls for nine stories, of about a chapter each, of about the same length as my own."

Dr Bob's wife, Anne, was invited to write the chapter "To Wives" but she declined. Bill W also entertained the idea of having the first woman NY member Florence R (Rankin) write the chapter "To Wives." Florence's Big Book story is "A Feminine Victory" and her husband was also an alcoholic. As it turned out, the chapter "To Wives" was written by Bill much to the dismay of his wife Lois.

The outline for the Big Book's basic text changed quite a bit during 1938 and the stories, which make up about 2/3 of the book, were given their own section.

Bill informed Dr Bob that nearly everyone in NY favored the book title "Alcoholics Anonymous." He asked Dr Bob how he felt about forming a charitable corporation called "Alcoholics Anonymous." This was almost a year prior to publication of the Big Book.

202-37  
 Dr. P. H.  
 75 B & E Hwy

THE JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL  
 725 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET  
 BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

ESTIMATED RECEIPT NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Baltimore, Maryland  
 July 18, 1938

Mr. William D. Silkworth,  
 222-224 Central, Park West  
 New York

Dear Mr. Silkworth:

Yesterday for the first time I had a chance to look over the prospectus of alcoholic beverages. I was glad to see higher requirements than in my last I read through the first two chapters almost straight, as gripping was the presentation of the material. If all the chapters are like these you will have a book that will help in a unique way. There are chapters on the adjustment of what makes my book great. They have something to say and start they have to say in connection with alcohol, medicine, graphic words. In several the reader is led to a point where they will have their study of real life facts. There is an attempt at diagnosis theories connected with scientific and psychological methods. What you may receive the prospectus of this. I hope that you have a great deal to take account of if you have it in the future since the book will go over fast. I wish you would get a B. S. a physician who has a wide knowledge of the alcoholic's medical and social problems to write an Introduction.

I am hoping the manuscript for a bit but will return it promptly. I should think like to have the manuscript of the succeeding chapters when they are ready. Besides to any of them is anything I can do to be of help in the presentation of this book or in the furtherance of your work I would consider it a privilege to be called upon.

With kind regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,  
 Esther L. Richards  
 Esther L. Richards, M. D.

CHARLES B. TOWNES HOSPITAL  
 222-224 CENTRAL, PARK WEST  
 NEW YORK

July 27, 1938

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN -

I have specialized in the treatment of alcoholism for many years.

About four years ago I attended a journal by the name of William D. Silkworth. Though he had been a competent business man of good earning capacity he was an alcoholic of a type I had never before experienced.

In the course of his brief treatment he acquired certain ideas concerning a possible cause of insanity. As part of his rehabilitation he commenced to present his own conclusions to other alcoholics (learning upon those that they made his ideas with still others. This has become the basis of rapidly growing fellowship of those who seek their freedom. This one and about one hundred others appear to have recovered.

I personally know thirty of these cases who were of types upon which other methods had failed completely.

These facts appear to be of serious medical importance. Because of the extraordinary possibilities of rapid growth inherent in this group these events may well be one of the most important in the annals of alcoholism. There are very few who have a solution for thousands of these alcoholics.

Do not rely absolutely on anything that may show themselves.

Very truly yours,  
 W. D. Silkworth, M.D.  
 W. D. Silkworth, M. D.

Get A Number One Physician In The Alcoholism Field

Dr Esther L Richards - Dr William D Silkworth - July 1938

On July 18, 1938 Dr Esther L Richards wrote a very favorable letter to Bill W regarding a 2-chapter book prospectus sent to her for review. She suggested getting a "number one physician" in the alcoholism field to write an introduction. Shortly after, Dr William D Silkworth wrote a July 27, 1938 letter of support for use in fundraising for the book. It was incorporated into the chapter "The Doctor's Opinion" together with extracts from a paper he wrote that was published in the Lancet medical journal in July 1939.

## The Doctor's Opinion - 1939 And 1955

ALCOHOLIC ADDICTIONS

These facts appear to be of extreme medical importance, because of the extraordinary possibilities of rapid growth inherent in this group they may mark a new epoch in the study of alcoholism. These men may well have a remedy for thousands of such situations.

You may rely absolutely on anything they say about themselves.

Very truly yours,  
(Signed) ----- M.D.

The physician who, at our request, gave us this letter, has been kind enough to enlarge upon his views in another statement which follows. In this statement he confirms what we who have suffered alcoholic wrongs must believe—that the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind. It did not rarely us to be told that we could not control our drinking just because we were unadjusted to life, that we were in full flight from reality, or were outright mental defectives. These things were true in some extent, in fact, to a considerable extent with some of us. But we are sure that our bodies were sickened as well. In our belief, any picture of the alcoholic which leaves out this physical factor is incomplete.

The doctor's theory that we have an allergy to alcohol interests us. As laymen, our opinion as to its soundness may, of course, mean little. But as ex-alcoholics, we can say that his explanation makes good sense. It explains many things for which we venture otherwise account.

Though we work out our solution on the spiritual as well as an ultimate plane, we favor hospitalization for

1<sup>st</sup> Edition - 1939



THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

greatly interested in this group they may mark a new epoch in the study of alcoholism. These men may well have a remedy for thousands of such situations.

You may rely absolutely on anything they say about themselves.

Very truly yours,  
William D. Silkworth, M.D.

The physician who, at our request, gave us this letter, has been kind enough to enlarge upon his views in another statement which follows. In this statement he confirms what we who have suffered alcoholic wrongs must believe—that the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind. It did not rarely us to be told that we could not control our drinking just because we were unadjusted to life, that we were in full flight from reality, or were outright mental defectives. These things were true in some extent, in fact, to a considerable extent with some of us. But we are sure that our bodies were sickened as well. In our belief, any picture of the alcoholic which leaves out this physical factor is incomplete.

The doctor's theory that we have an allergy to alcohol interests us. As laymen, our opinion as to its soundness may, of course, mean little. But as ex-alcoholics, we can say that his explanation makes good sense. It explains many things for which we venture otherwise account.

Though we work out our solution on the spiritual as well as an ultimate plane, we favor hospitalization for the alcoholic who is very jittery or lumpy. More often than not, it is imperative that a man's body be cleared before he is approached, as he has then a bet-

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition - 1955

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The Doctor's Opinion - 1939 and 1955

Dr Silkworth's name was not added to the "The Doctor's Opinion" until publication of the 2nd edition in 1955.

## The Alcoholic Foundation Trust - Willard S Richardson - August 5, 1938



Class A and Class B Trustees

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### The Alcoholic Foundation Trust - Willard S Richardson - August 5, 1938

On August 5, 1938 the Alcoholic Foundation was established as a charitable trust with a board of five Trustees. In a June 1947 Grapevine article (LOH pg 61) Bill W erroneously stated that the board started with seven Trustees. AA Comes of Age (pg 15) also erroneously states that the Alcoholic Foundation was formed in the Spring of 1938.

The trust indenture document specified that non-alcoholic trustees were to make up a majority of the board. The terms "Class A" and "Class B" trustees were used to make a distinction between non-alcoholic and alcoholic board members. Class A trustees were Willard Richardson (who proposed the Foundation), Frank Amos and John Wood. Class B trustees were Dr Bob and NY member Bill R (Ruddell) whose Big Book story is "A Business Man's Recovery."

An advisory committee to the board was also established. It consisted of A LeRoy Chipman, Bill W, Albert L Scott and Hank P (Parkhurst). At the board's first meeting on August 11, 1938 the Trustees elected Bill R (Ruddell) as the first board Chairman. He later returned to drinking and had to resign in February 1939.

The Foundation had a tiny 1-room borrowed office with one borrowed non-alcoholic Secretary by the name of Ruth Hock. The Foundation and office would eventually come to be known as the General Service Board and General Service Office. Ruth Hock would later become AA's first national secretary.



Offered \$1,500 Advance

### Eugene Exman - September 1938

In September 1938, board Trustee Frank Amos arranged a meeting between Bill W and Eugene Exman (the Religious Editor of Harper Brothers publishers). Exman offered Bill a \$1,500 advance (\$23,000 today) on the rights to the book.

The Alcoholic Foundation Board urged acceptance of the offer but Bill wanted ownership of the book to stay within the Fellowship. .



600 Shares Of Common Stock - 30 Shares Of Preferred

#### Hank P - Works Publishing Co - September 1938

Based on a very favorable recommendation from Eugene Exman, Hank P (Parkhurst) persuaded Bill to form Works Publishing Co. and sold stock at \$25 par value (\$380 today). 600 shares were issued: Hank and Bill received 200 shares each, 200 shares were sold to others. Later, 30 shares of preferred stock, at \$100 par value (\$1,500 today) were sold as well.

To mollify the board, it was decided that the author's royalty (which would ordinarily be Bill's) could go to the Alcoholic Foundation. The newly formed Works Publishing Co would later come to be known as AA World Services or AAWS.

Encouraged by Dr Silkworth, Charles Towns loaned Hank and Bill \$2,500 for the book. It was later increased to \$4,000 (\$61,000 today).



## Six Steps - Prior to December 1938

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### AA Comes of Age (pg 160) Pass It On (pg 197)

1. We admitted that we were licked, that we were powerless over alcohol
2. We made a moral inventory of our defects or sins
3. We confessed or shared our shortcomings with another person in confidence
4. We made restitution to all those we had harmed by our drinking
5. We tried to help other alcoholics, with no thought of reward in money or prestige
6. We prayed to whatever God we thought there was for power to practice these precepts

### July 1953 Grapevine Language of the Heart (pg 200)

1. We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol
2. We got honest with ourselves
3. We got honest with another person, in confidence
4. We made amends for harms done others
5. We worked with other alcoholics without demand for prestige or money
6. We prayed to God to help us to do these things as best we could

Widely Varying Versions

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## Six Steps - Prior to December 1938

Prior to publication of the Big Book, there were two groups in Akron and NY. The recovery program consisted of 6 Steps passed on to new members by word of mouth. The lack of any written material resulted in widely varying versions depending on who was doing the passing on.

Different versions of the 6 Steps can be found in the books "AA Comes of Age" (160), "Pass It On" (197) and "The Language of the Heart" (195).

## Six Steps - Prior to December 1938

*For Ed:*  
1. Admitted hopelessness  
2. Got honest with self  
3. Got honest with partner  
4. Made amends  
5. Helped other with same demand  
6. Prayed to God as for understanding.  
  
Ever  
Bill W.  
Apr 1953  
Original OG  
Steps

Version by Bill W in April 1953

**Big Book Story**  
**He Sold Himself Short**  
**(pg 263 - 4<sup>th</sup> edition)**

1. Complete deflation
2. Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power
3. Moral inventory
4. Confession
5. Restitution
6. Continued work with other alcoholics

Version by Earl T in April 1939

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## Six Steps - Prior to December 1938

The Big Book Pioneer Story "He Sold Himself Short" (263) also contains a version of the 6 Steps recorded by Earl T founder of AA in Chicago. Dr Bob was Earl's sponsor and this version reflects a more orthodox Oxford Group (OG) influence that prevailed in the mid-west.

It should be noted however, that the OG did not have anything that they called or considered to be "Steps." It was only the alcoholics in NY and Akron (or what was then called "the alcoholic squad") that exclusively had and practiced Steps as their spiritual program of recovery.

## Twelve Steps in 30 Minutes - December 1938

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### Pass It On (pgs 198-199)

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that **God \*** could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our **wills** and our lives over to the care **and direction** of God **\*\***
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely **willing that** God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly **on our knees** asked Him to remove **these** shortcomings - **holding back nothing**.
8. Made a **complete** list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our **contact** with **God, \*\*** praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual **experience** as the result of **this course of action** we tried to carry this message to others, especially alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

**"Power greater than ourselves"** and **\*\* "as we understood Him"** added later.

Much (Often Heated) Debate

123

## Twelve Steps in 30 Minutes - December 1938

In a July 1953 Grapevine article Bill W wrote: "Though these principles were advocated according to the whim or liking of each of us, and though in Akron and Cleveland they still stuck by the Oxford Group absolutes of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, this was the gist of our message to incoming alcoholics up to 1939, when our present 12 Steps were put to paper."

The 12 Steps were actually first put to paper in December 1938 at Bill W's home. An approximate reconstruction of the original draft is in the book "Pass It On" (198-199). Bill claimed it took him about 30 minutes to do it. Words that were changed are highlighted in red.



May 1955 Grapevine

"More Of An Umpire Than An Author"

In a May 1955 Grapevine article titled "How AA's World Services Grew" Bill W described the entire book writing project as one where fierce arguments over the drafts, and what ought to go into them, dominated the small Fellowship's activities for months on end. And that over time he became much more of an umpire than an author.

In a September 1962 Grapevine article (which is an extract from AA Comes of Age) Bill W noted that the Akron Group provided "nothing but the warmest support" but in the New York meetings the book chapters received a "real mauling" requiring them to be dictated to Ruth Hock and retyped over and over.



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"God As We Understand Him" - "Power Greater Than Ourselves"

#### Review Manuscript - Jim B - January 1939

The book text and stories were completed in January 1939. 400 mimeographed (or what was then called "photo-litho") copies were sent out for review and comments.

NY member Jim B (Burwell) suggested the phrases "God as we understood Him" and "Power greater than ourselves" be added to the Steps and basic text. Bill W later wrote "Those expressions, as we so well know today, proved lifesavers for many an alcoholic."

Jim B (whose Big Book story is "The Vicious Cycle") started AA in Philadelphia and helped start AA in Baltimore, MD together with Fitz M.



Board Increased From 5 To 7 Trustees

#### Dr Leonard V Strong - January 1939

On January 18, 1939, the Alcoholic Foundation Board increased from 5 to 7 trustees. The new trustees were Dr Leonard V Strong (Bill W's brother-in-law) and alcoholic Harry B (Brick) elected as the second Board Chairman.

Harry B (whose Big Book story is "A Different Slant") also returned to drinking and was replaced in December 1939 after serving a little under a year. After the first two alcoholic Board Chairmen returned to drinking, from 1939 on the Board Chair has been a non-alcoholic.

Robert Shaw, an attorney, replaced Harry B as AA's first non-alcoholic Board Chair.



Took Big Book Manuscript To Cornwall Press

#### Bill W, Hank P, Ruth Hock, Dorothy S - March 1939

The Big Book manuscript copies sent out for review in January were returned by March and produced very few changes. However, a major change did occur when a Montclair, NJ psychiatrist named "Dr Howard" suggested toning down the use of "you must" and changing it to "we ought" or "we should." Dr Silkworth and Dr Harry Tiebout offered similar advice.

Tom Uzzell, a friend of Hank P, an editor at Collier's and NYU faculty member, edited the manuscript. He reduced it from around 600 pages to 400 pages. The cuts mainly came from the personal stories.

After the editing, Bill W, Hank P, Ruth Hock and Dorothy S (Snyder) of Cleveland, drove to Cornwall, NY to deliver the heavily marked up manuscript to the Cornwall Press.



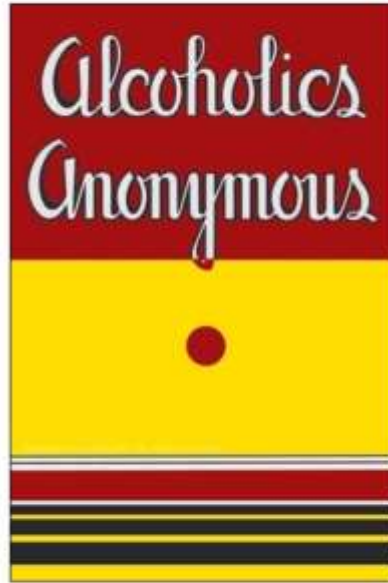
Chapter Five - How It Works

Big Book Mark-up Manuscript - March 1939

The mark-up manuscript contained hundreds of accumulated editing changes. The manager of Cornwall Press almost sent the group back to type up a clean copy. Hank P convinced the manager to accept the manuscript on condition that the group would correct galley proofs as they came off the press. They checked into a hotel and spent the next several days proofreading galleys.

The manuscript pages shown are the beginning of Chapter 5, "How It Works." Many other pages had handwritten changes from top to bottom.





Large Size To Convince The Alcoholic He Was Getting His Money's Worth

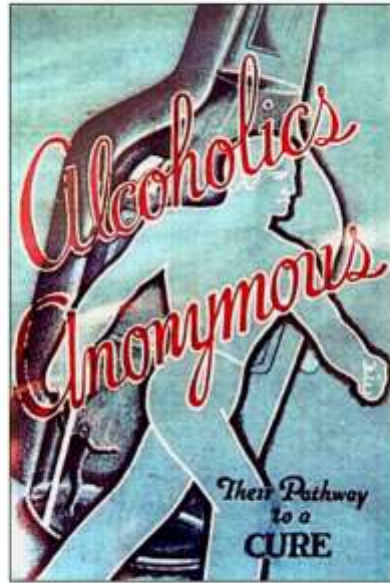
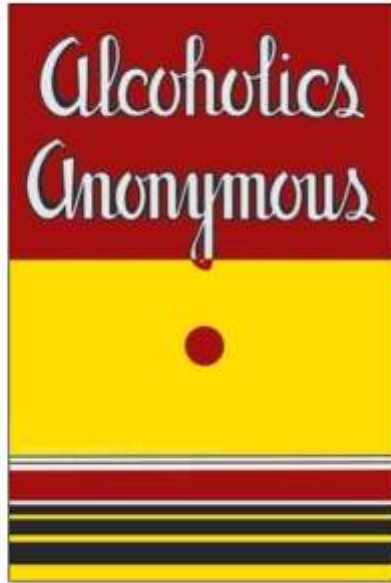
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#### First Edition Big Book - April 10, 1939

On April 10, 1939, 4,730 copies of the first edition of "Alcoholics Anonymous" were published at \$3.50 a copy (\$54 in today's dollars). The printer, Edward Blackwell of the Cornwall Press, was told to use the thickest paper in his shop.

The large, bulky volume became known as the "Big Book" and the name has stuck ever since. On page 170 of "AA Comes of Age" Bill W wrote that the idea behind the thick, large paper was to convince the alcoholic he was getting his money's worth.

The book had 8 Roman and 400 Arabic numbered pages. "The Doctor's Opinion" started as page 1 and the basic text ended at page 179 not 164. 29 stories were included: 10 from the east coast, 18 from the mid-west and one last-minute story from the west coast (which was ghost written by Ruth Hock and removed in the second printing). The Foreword to the first edition contains many of the key principles that later shaped the Traditions and the AA Preamble.



Circus Color And Art Deco Dust Jackets By Ray C

First Edition Big Book - April 10, 1939

The brightly colored dust jacket on the left was called the "circus color" dust jacket. It was designed by Ray C (Campbell) who also designed an art deco style shown on the right that was never used.

AN ARTIST'S CONCEPT

*"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which can not fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation."  
—HERBERT SPENCER*

The above quotation is descriptive of the mental attitudes of many alcoholics when the subject of religion, as a cure, is first brought to their attention. It is only when a man has tried everything else, when in utter desperation and terrific need he turns to something bigger than himself, that he gets a glimpse of the way out. It is then that contempt is replaced by hope, and hope by fulfillment.

In this personal story I have endeavored to relate something of my experience in the search for spiritual help rather than a description of the neurotic thinking that made the search necessary. After all, the pattern of most alcoholic experiences fits a pretty general mold. Experiences differ because of circumstances, environment, and temperament, but the after effect, both physical and mental, are almost identical. It makes but little difference how or why a man becomes an alcoholic once this disease transfers itself. The preventive measures adopted for alcoholic tendencies in the future will have to be found in a more progressive program of mental hygiene and medical research than is now obtainable.

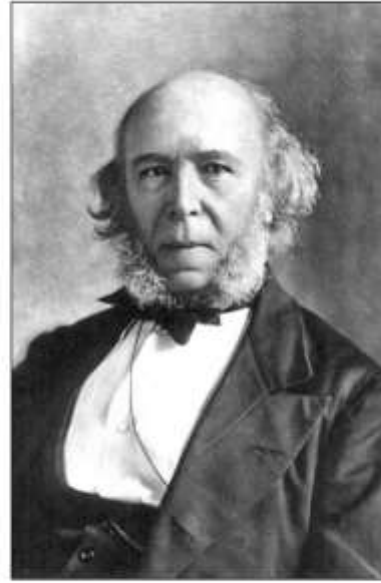
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Contempt prior to investigation

First Edition Big Book - April 10, 1939

Ray C's Big Book story is "An Artist's Concept." He began it with a quotation that he attributed to Herbert Spencer which said: "There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance - that principle is contempt prior to investigation."

Ray C's story was not included in the 2nd edition Big Book. The quotation was added to Appendix II "Spiritual Experience" in the 3rd printing of the 2nd edition Big Book in 1959.



"Contempt Prior To Investigation"

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William Paley (1743 - 1805) - Herbert Spencer (1820 - 1903)

The attribution of the quote to Spencer is in error. It should be attributed to an English clergyman, author and college lecturer by the name of William Paley who lived from 1743 to 1805.

Herbert Spencer (who lived from 1820 to 1903) was a great rival of his fellow Englishman Charles Darwin who is credited with the theory of evolution. However, it was Spencer, not Darwin, who popularized the term "evolution" and coined the term, "survival of the fittest." But Spencer did not author the quotation attributed to him in the Big Book.



20,000 Post Cards - 12 Replies

#### Gabriel Heatter - We The People - April 1939

On April 29, 1939, Morgan R (a former advertising man, asylum patient and friend of Gabriel Heatter) appeared on Heatter's 9PM radio program "We the People."

He told his story and made a pitch for the Big Book. Prior to the broadcast, Bill W and others raised \$500 (\$7,700 today) to mail out 20,000 post cards to physicians about the broadcast and to encourage them to consider purchasing the book. There were only 12 replies.

Eviction From 182 Clinton St - April 1939

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First Of 54 Moves

134

Eviction From 182 Clinton St - April 1939

In April 1939, Bill W and Lois had to vacate their home at 182 Clinton St. It began an almost two-year period of moving from house to house and staying with friends. Later, by Lois' count, it amounted to 54 moves.



Clarence S



Abby G

#### Cleveland, Ohio - AA's Third Group - May 10, 1939

On May 10, 1939 led by pioneer member Clarence S (Snyder) whose Big Book story is "Home Brewmeister" the Cleveland members announced that they would meet separately from Akron and the Oxford Group.

Their first meeting was at the home of Abby G (Goldrick) whose Big Book story is "He Thought He Could Drink Like a Gentleman." After almost 4 years, this was AA's 3rd group.

Clarence S claimed that it was the first group to call itself "Alcoholics Anonymous." However, the term was used a number of times in letters by Bill W to describe meetings held at his home almost a year prior to the founding of the Cleveland group..

Sister Ignatia - Saint Thomas Hospital - Early August 1939

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First Religious Institution To Open Its Doors To AA

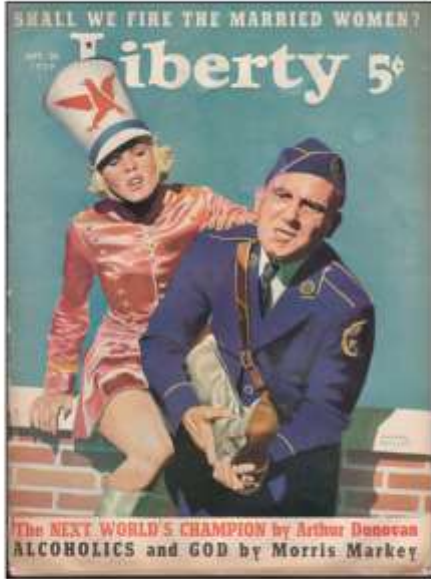
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Sister Ignatia - Saint Thomas Hospital - Early August 1939

In early August 1939, Dr Bob and Sister Ignatia, who was in charge of admissions, started working together at St Thomas Hospital in Akron, OH. Sister Ignatia arranged for the first AA admission on August 16 at the request of Dr Bob. The patient was Walter B (Bray) whose Big Book story is "The Back-Slider." His non-alcoholic wife Marie's Big Book story is "An Alcoholic's Wife."

St Thomas Hospital was the first religious institution to open its doors to AA and later had a full hospital wing dedicated to alcoholism treatment. The NY group had a similar arrangement with the Knickerbocker Hospital in NYC.





THE CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1939

Alcoholics Anonymous Makes Its Stand Here

By ELRICK B. DAVIS

Most of the men who all their lives have been members of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, as well as the members of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, are now members of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is the first of a series of articles which will be published in this magazine.

**Saves**

By now it is a rare Cleveland who does not know of some of the men in various of high school who are drinking but because a public scandal and who suddenly have straightened out "over night" as the saying goes—the liquor habit. Men who have had 12-step group have been back again. Drinkers who have taken every "step" available to the most lenient police, only to take them over again with equally opposite lack of success, suddenly have become total abstainers, apparently without anything to account for their reform. The remarkable most recent for the evening miracle. Something does. Alcoholics Anonymous has reached the town.

**Fidelity**

Every Thursday evening at the home of some no-drinker in Cleveland, 40 or 50 former regulars come to meet for a social evening during which they back each other up. Nearly every Thursday evening they and their families have a party—just as if to say that party had had evening despite the fact that there is nothing kinder to drink. From time to time they have a picnic, where everyone has a meeting good time without the aid of even one bottle of beer. Yet there are men and women who, until recently, had already been sober a day for years, and members of their families who all their lives had been emotionally distraught, social and domestic victims of another's addiction.

These conversions, as they call themselves, naturally sprung from the most ardent prayers of Jesus, are the members of the Cleveland Plain Dealer "Alcoholics Anonymous." What they are meant to hold, because the case seems exactly what it says. But one inevitable question who really means to be cured will find the members of the Cleveland Plain Dealer eager to help.

The society maintains a "head" address: The Abstinence Foundation, 104 West Church Street Annex, Postoffice, New York City. Inquiries made there are forwarded to a Cleveland branch, who in turn of the local Fellowship, or to a former big league ball player who is recruiting officer of the Akron Fellowship, which means "Wednesday meetings in a mission house for that purpose by a non-Abstinence supporter of the movement.

**Chief**

The basic point about Alcoholics Anonymous is that it is a fellowship of "sober" abstainers. And that both old-time medicine and modern psychiatry had agreed on the one point that no alcoholic could be cured. Except the amounting fact.

There are cures.

They have found each other. They have done it by adapting, with each other's aid, what they call "a spiritual way of life."

"Alcoholics Anonymous" is not a social club. It is a fellowship. Its fundamental doctrine because he wants to be sober because he can't help drinking.

He will drink when he had rather do than take a drink. That is why so many alcoholics die in prison. He will get drunk, or the way home from the hospital or maintenance that has just discharged him as "sober." He will get drunk at the wake of a friend who died of drink. He will come off for a year, and suddenly find himself laid-up over, and into another "bust." He will get drunk at the party of an inmate who has been just visited as old drunk, however victim of "wet brain."

**Prison**

There are the alcoholics that "Alcoholics Anonymous" saves. Cure is impossible until the victim is convinced that nothing but the "sober" hospital can do any help. He must know that his disease is incurable. He must be convinced that he is hopelessly sick of body and of mind—and of soul. He must be eager to accept help from any source—any God.

Alcoholics Anonymous has a simple explanation for an alcoholic's chronic illness. It was provided them by the head of one of New York City's oldest and most famous "sober" societies. The alcoholics are always in alcohol. Our drink sets up a poisonous evening that enters into the system, and message. That is why after the first drink the alcoholic cannot stop.

They have a powerful theory regarding simple and surviving. Only an alcoholic can understand another alcoholic's mental processes and state. And they have an equally simple, if somewhat, conception of God.

Cleveland Group Flooded With Appeals For Help

Liberty Magazine - Cleveland Plain Dealer - September/October 1939

In the late 1930s and early 1940s public relations had the most dramatic impact on AA growth.

A September 1939 Liberty Magazine article titled "Alcoholics and God" by Morris Markey caused many inquiries to be made to the NY office.

In October 1939, the Cleveland Plain Dealer carried a series of editorials by Elrick B Davis. The result was spectacular and the Cleveland group was flooded with appeals for help.

Cleveland membership surged from 20 to several hundred. Newcomers with just a few days of sobriety were assigned to make 12th Step calls. Cleveland membership remained the largest in AA for quite a few years leading many to think that AA began in Cleveland instead of Akron.



**Akron Separates From The Oxford Group**

138

#### T Henry and Clarace Williams - King School - Late October 1939

In late October 1939 (AACOA viii says summer) Akron members withdrew from the Oxford Group and held meetings at Dr Bob's house. It was a painful separation due to the great affection the Akron members had toward T Henry and Clarace Williams.

The founding of the Cleveland Group in May 1939 and this action by the Akron Group ended all outside affiliation between AA and the OG or anyone else. The meeting attendance at Dr Bob's house was so large that meetings moved to King School in January 1940.



Office Move From Newark, NJ To New York City - March 1940



30 Vesey St



Ruth Hock - AA's First National Secretary

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Office Move From Newark, New Jersey To New York City - April 1940

In March 1940, the Alcoholic Foundation office moved from 17 William St Newark, NJ to 30 Vesey St in NYC. Ruth Hock became AA's first National Secretary. Most of the draft yellow pages, and manuscript drafts, of the Big Book were discarded before the move.

The following month Hank P, who had objected violently to the move, got drunk after 4 years of sobriety.

Works Publishing Inc - April/May 1940

1940  
Works Pub  
P. 61, 62

APR 22 1940

To The Trustees,  
The Alcoholic Foundation,  
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

We, William G. Wilson and Henry G. Richmond,  
being desirous to make my and all interest that we have  
in the Works Publishing Company, the book "Alcoholic  
Foundation", or any other works of mine that may come  
to have publishing rights, in favor of the Alcoholic  
Foundation.

The specific number of shares of Works Publishing  
Company owned by me and by the Alcoholic Foundation  
being 100 shares each from William G. Wilson and Henry G.  
Richmond.

It is further a requirement that royalties of 10%  
on the book "Alcoholic Foundation", past and in the future,  
shall be paid to William G. Wilson and his wife Ann Wilson,  
during their lifetime, such payments to be in addition to any  
other sums that might be given or due by the Alcoholic  
Foundation. It is furthermore our desire that my books  
and royalties be not taken into consideration when liquidating  
the works publishing foundation.

William G. Wilson  
Henry G. Richmond

WORKS PUBLISHING, INC.

•••

REPORT OF  
JUNE 30, 1940

Bill W And Hank P Surrender Their Stock Shares

Works Publishing Inc - April/May 1940

In May 1940, Works Publishing Co was legally incorporated as a publishing arm of the Alcoholic Foundation. Bill W gave up his stock with a stipulation that Dr Bob and Anne would receive 10% royalties on the Big Book for life.

Hank P was persuaded to give up his shares for a \$200 payment (\$3,000 today) for office furniture he claimed belonged to him. Hank P is credited, in a number of sources, with writing all but the first paragraph of the Big Book's chapter 10 "To Employers." Ruth Hock, AA's first National secretary, later wrote, "If it wasn't for Bill W the Big Book would never have been written. If it wasn't for Hank P it never would have been published."



26 Groups Nationwide

AA Bulletin # 1 - November 14, 1940

A publication called the "AA Bulletin" was first mailed to groups by the NY Office on November 14, 1940. It was intended to inform groups of important events. The bulletin listed a number of cities that were categorized according to the type of star used to show them on a map in the office.

There were 4 Green Star cities who were described as having "isolated members who had recovered from the book alone or through brief contact with established centers."

5 Red Star cities were listed and described as having several working AA members where meetings were in what was called a "get together stage."

22 White Star cities were listed and described as well established and where weekly meetings were held."

Almost 5 1/2 years after its founding, AA had been brought to a total of 31 cities in the US.



Keeping Groups Informed

AA Bulletin # 1 - November 14, 1940

The New York Office mailed AA Bulletins to groups for 14 years. The 1954 General Service Conference later approved renaming the AA Bulletin to the "AA Exchange Bulletin."

New, 1966

## AA EXCHANGE BULLETIN

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### G.S.C. DELEGATES PLAN EARLY REPORTS

**Institutional Literature Needs To Be Listed**

Delegates of G.S.C. groups in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin have agreed to submit a list of institutional literature needs to the AA Exchange Bulletin. The list will be published in the January 1967 issue.

**General Service Briefs**

Several new titles of the AA Exchange Bulletin have been published. The first is "General Service Briefs" which will be published in the January 1967 issue. The second is "General Service Briefs" which will be published in the February 1967 issue. The third is "General Service Briefs" which will be published in the March 1967 issue.

**Special Reports Made Available As Meeting Ends**

The AA Exchange Bulletin will be published in the January 1967 issue. The second issue will be published in the February 1967 issue. The third issue will be published in the March 1967 issue.

**NEW PAMPHLETS**

The AA Exchange Bulletin will be published in the January 1967 issue. The second issue will be published in the February 1967 issue. The third issue will be published in the March 1967 issue.

**2 New A.A. Pamphlets, 2 Reports Added To G.S.M. Literature List**

The AA Exchange Bulletin will be published in the January 1967 issue. The second issue will be published in the February 1967 issue. The third issue will be published in the March 1967 issue.

**New Groups**

The AA Exchange Bulletin will be published in the January 1967 issue. The second issue will be published in the February 1967 issue. The third issue will be published in the March 1967 issue.



## BOX 4-5-9

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### Celebrating Holidays the A.A. Way

When you think of celebrating, an exciting experience is brought to you.

1. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the January 1967 issue.

2. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the February 1967 issue.

3. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the March 1967 issue.

4. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the April 1967 issue.

5. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the May 1967 issue.

6. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the June 1967 issue.

7. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the July 1967 issue.

8. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the August 1967 issue.

9. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the September 1967 issue.

10. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the October 1967 issue.

11. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the November 1967 issue.

12. We are fortunate to have the AA Exchange Bulletin published in the December 1967 issue.

**Dear A.A.**

The AA Exchange Bulletin will be published in the January 1967 issue. The second issue will be published in the February 1967 issue. The third issue will be published in the March 1967 issue.

Exchange Bulletin - Box 4-5-9 - December 1966

In December 1966, the Exchange Bulletin was renamed to "Box 4-5-9."



## Alert About Saturday Evening Post Article - January 14, 1941



Stand By For Active Duty

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### Alert About Saturday Evening Post Article - January 14, 1941

On January 14, 1941 Ruth Hock sent out AA Bulletin #2 noting that since the November 1940 bulletin, AA was beginning in 5 more cities and there was some activity in Vancouver, Canada.

The bulletin also had a "Flash!!!" lead item that the Saturday Evening Post would be publishing an article on AA by Jack Alexander. The bulletin stated that there would likely be numerous inquiries in response to the article and that members and groups should "stand by for active duty."



Readership Of Over 3,000,000

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The Saturday Evening Post - Jack Alexander - March 1, 1941

The Saturday Evening Post article by Jack Alexander was published on March 1, 1941 and went out to a readership of over 3 million. Its impact on AA growth was profound. It was AA's most notable public relations blessing.

During 1941 AA membership surged from 2,000 to over 8,000. Reprints of the article became a favored pamphlet and it is still reprinted to this day.



**NY Office Asks Groups For Donations To Hire Extra Staff**

147

#### Response to Saturday Evening Post Article - 6,000+ Letters - 1941

Over 6,000 inquiries were sent to the NY office during 1941 because of the Post article. The NY Office asked the groups for donations of \$1 (\$14 today) per member per year for support for extra staff to respond to all the inquiries. This began the practice of financing what is today called the General Service Office from group and member donations.

## New York "Headquarters" "Central Office" Or "General Office" - Early 1940s

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Central Communications Link For Members Starting Groups

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### New York "Headquarters" "Central Office" Or "General Office" - Early 1940s

In the early 1940s, the NY office was called either the Headquarters or Central Office or General Office. It had the vital job of responding to letters from groups and members. This provided a central communications link to members attempting to start groups and helping them with growing pains.

The accumulated letters sent in during the early 1940s gave firm signals of a need for guidelines to help with group problems that occurred over and over. Basic ideas for the Traditions came from these letters and the principles defined in the Foreword to the 1st edition Big Book.

From all these public relations blessings emerged the proven principle in the long form of Tradition 11 that states "There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us."



From Experience To Awakening

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#### Step 12 Wording Changed - Spiritual Experience Appendix Added - March 1941

In March 1941, almost 2 years after the 1st printing, the wording of Step 12 was changed in the 2nd printing of the Big Book. The term “spiritual experience” was changed to “spiritual awakening” and the term “as the result of these steps” was changed to “as the result of those steps.”

An appendix titled “Spiritual Experience” was added.

Many members thought they had to have a sudden, spectacular spiritual experience similar to the one Bill W describes in the chapter “Bill’s Story.” The appendix emphasized that most spiritual experiences developed slowly over time and were of the “educational variety.”

The term “educational variety” is attributed to William James in the Appendix. However, the book “The Varieties of Religious Experience” does not contain the term. What James stated in his summary of his lecture was “... The value of conversion depends not on the process, but on the fruits - These are not superior in sudden conversion ...”



First Called "Bill-Lo's" Break

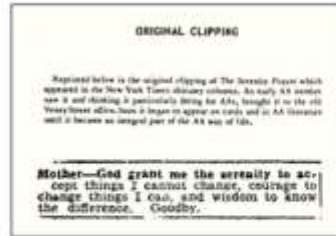
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### Stepping Stones - April 1941

On April 11, 1941, after 23 years of marriage, Bill W and Lois moved into their own home in Bedford Hills, NY. It was first named "Bill-Lo's Break" and later renamed to "Stepping Stones." The 7-room house was on 1.7 acres of land and financed at \$6,500 (\$94,000 today). The mortgage payment was \$40 a month (\$580 today).



Reinhold Niebuhr



AA in 116 Cities

AA Bulletin #3 - June 1941

Ruth Hock sent out an AA Bulletin on June 30, 1941 announcing that the NY office had received and answered over 4,400 letters since March 1st. Ruth also noted that correspondence was being maintained with 116 cities and 62 well established groups. At the end of the bulletin Ruth reported "One of our New York members clipped the following from the personal column of a New York paper, and since it seems to 'hit the spot' here it is: GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE, COURAGE TO CHANGE THINGS I CAN, AND WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE"

The office later printed the prayer on small cards which they included in outgoing mail. There is much conflicting information in AA literature as to when and from what source the Serenity Prayer originated. For years within AA it was called "The AA Prayer" instead of "The Serenity Prayer." The prayer is attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr whose version differs somewhat from the popular version.

Clarence S And Abby G - August 1941

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AA's First Central Office - Cleveland, OH

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Clarence S and Abby G - AA's First Central Office - August 1941

In August 1941 Clarence S (Snyder) founder of AA in Cleveland, joined with Cleveland pioneer Abby G (Goldrick) and several other members to help start AA's first Central Office. Bill W also credits Abby G and the Cleveland Central Office with introducing the principle of rotation to AA.





President Franklin D Roosevelt



USS Arizona - Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

#### World War II Declared - December 8, 1941

On December 8, 1941 after an attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii the US entered World War II. With the possibility of being recalled to active duty in the Army, Bill W requested that he be granted a royalty on book sales to provide financial support for his wife Lois. The board approved a 10% royalty. Prior to this, Dr Bob was voluntarily giving Bill half the 10% royalty that he and Anne were receiving.

Margaret Farrand joined the Alcoholic Foundation Board in late 1941 as the 1st woman Class A Trustee.







Ruth Hock



Bobbie B

New National Secretary - February 28, 1942

Ruth Hock left the NY office to marry on February 28, 1942 . Margaret "Bobbie" B (Burger) took her place as National Secretary.



First AA Prison Group

#### Warden Clinton T Duffy - San Quentin Penitentiary - 1942

In 1942 San Francisco members, and Warden Clinton Duffy, started the first AA prison group in San Quentin Maximum Security Penitentiary. It generated much favorable national publicity. State and federal prison groups quickly spread across the country.



Buy-back Of Works Publishing Stock

#### A LeRoy Chipman - John D Rockefeller Jr - 1942

In 1942, A LeRoy Chipman asked John D Rockefeller Jr and the 1940 dinner guests for a loan of \$8,500 (\$112,000 today) to buy back the remaining outstanding shares of Works Publishing stock. Rockefeller lent \$4,000, his son Nelson \$500 and the other dinner guests \$4,000.

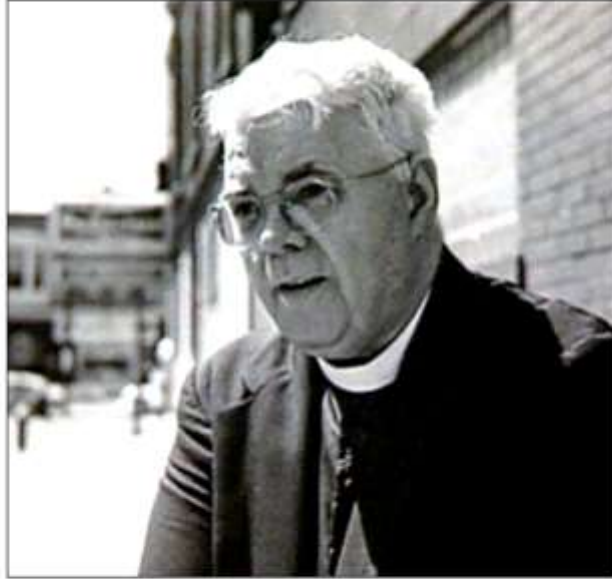
By acquiring all the outstanding shares it ensured that complete ownership of the Big Book would be held in trust for the entire AA Fellowship.



Preceded The Grapevine By Two Years

### AA's First Newsletter - October 1942

In October 1942 the Cleveland Central Office published AA's first newsletter, the Cleveland Central Bulletin. It preceded the Grapevine by almost two years.



Compensation For Special Services

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#### Clarence S - Father Edward Dowling - Royalties - October 1942

On October 1, 1942, Esther E notified the NY Office that she would be relocating to Dallas, Texas at the end of the year and it was "breaking her heart" to leave the Houston Group where she found sobriety.

Later that month, Clarence S (Snyder) stirred up a controversy after discovering that Dr Bob and Bill W were receiving royalties from Big Book sales. Bill and Dr Bob reexamined the problem of their financial status and concluded that royalties seemed to be the only answer to the problem.

Bill sought counsel from his spiritual sponsor, Father Edward Dowling who suggested that Bill and Dr Bob could certainly not accept money for 12th Step work but that they should accept royalties as compensation for special services. This later formed the basis for Tradition 8 and Concept 11.

Due to the amount of time both co-founders dedicated to the Fellowship, it was impossible for either of them to earn a living through their normal professions.





Creation Of The National Committee For Education On Alcoholism (NCEA)

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#### The Yale School - E M Jellinek - Marty M - 1943/1944

Professor E M Jellinek, along with Dr Howard W Haggard, founded the Yale University School of Alcohol Studies which had its first summer session in July 1943. Bill W and Marty M (Mann) lectured at the school.

In early 1944, Marty M moved to New Haven, CT to help create the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism (NCEA) and attended the Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies. The NCEA later became the National Committee on Alcoholism (NCA) and today is called the National Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD).



#### Dr Harry Tiebout Treats Bill W's Episodes Of Depression - 1944

In 1944, Dr Harry Tiebout published his first paper on AA titled "Therapeutic Mechanisms of Alcoholics Anonymous" in the "American Journal of Psychiatry." He later served as a Board Trustee from 1957-1966.

In mid-1944, Bill W began twice-a-week treatment with Dr Tiebout for debilitating episodes of depression. Some AA members were outraged and criticized Bill for "not working the program," "secretly drinking" and "pill taking." Bill endured the attacks in silence.

In 1945, Bill started seeing psychotherapist, Dr Frances Weeks once a week on Fridays. He continued to see her until 1949.



Six Volunteers Started It

### The AA Grapevine - June 1944

In June 1944 twelve hundred copies of Volume 1, No. 1 of the Grapevine were published. A 1-year subscription was \$1.50 (\$18 today). Six volunteers started it as an 8-page newsletter for members in the New York City area and for GIs overseas. The GIs received it for free.

It soon expanded to become the AA Fellowship's official magazine and played a critical role in the development of the Traditions and General Service Conference. It is also recognized in the long form of Tradition 9 as AA's "principal newspaper" given its newspaper format at the time.

## The Lost Weekend - 1944/1945

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First Realistic Portrayal Of Alcoholism - Wins 4 Academy Awards

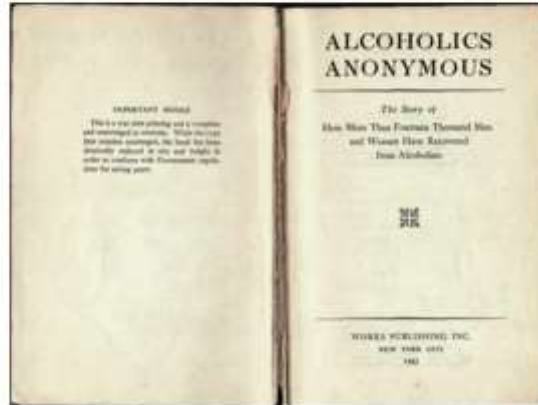
164

### The Lost Weekend - 1944/1945

In 1944, the book "The Lost Weekend" by Charles R Jackson was published to rave reviews. It described five days in the life of an alcoholic and became a favorite in AA for its realistic portrayal of alcoholism. The 1945 movie starred Ray Milland and Jane Wyman. It won four Oscars for best picture, director, screenplay and actor.

A line in the book, admittedly borrowed from AA, was a bartender's comment to its central character, alcoholic Don Birnam, about his drinking which said: "one drink is too many and a hundred not enough."

## Wartime Edition Big Book - March 1945



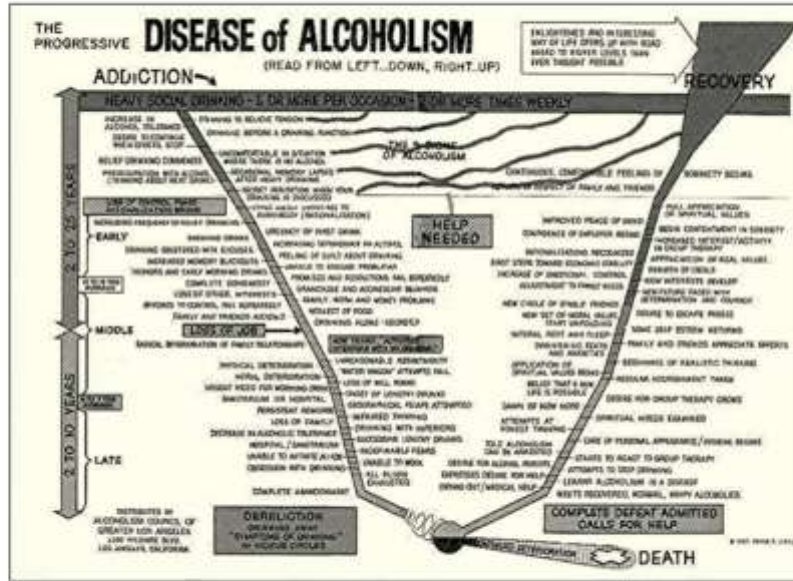
War Effort Paper Rationing

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## Wartime Edition Big Book - March 1945

On February 12, 1945 the New York office sent a letter to the groups notifying them that because of paper rationing needs for the war effort, the War Production Board reduced the weight of the paper to be used for the Big Book. Rationing reductions in paper also caused the office to sharply cut the overall size of the book by trimming margins to a minimum. There are 2 wartime editions, printed in limited quantity, which are rare editions.

The Jellinek Chart - April 1945



Survey Questionnaire In The Grapevine

The Jellinek Chart - April 1945

The April 1945 Grapevine included a questionnaire by E M Jellinek. It solicited information from the AA membership that was later used to produce a chart titled "The Progressive Disease of Alcoholism" (also popularly called the "Jellinek Chart").



Tested Solutions To Avoid Future Problems

#### Earl T - Idea For The traditions - April 1945

By the mid-1940s, the letters sent to the NY office by groups and members led to reliable conclusions on what practices worked well and those that didn't. Groups were also asked to send in all their membership rules and it provided quite a shock. If all the membership rules were applied everywhere it would be impossible for any alcoholic to join AA.

In April 1945 Earl T (Treat) founder of AA in Chicago, suggested to Bill W that the experiences sent in from group and member correspondence might be codified into a set of principles to offer tested solutions to avoid future problems. Earl had a major role in the development of the Traditions (both long and short forms). He later served as a Class B Trustee from 1951 to 1954 and helped establish the General Service Conference.

Earl is also the member described in the Big Book chapter "The Family Afterward" (pg 135) as getting drunk again after his wife nagged him about his smoking and drinking coffee.





10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Cleveland Music Hall and Akron, OH - June 1945



Dr Bob and Bill W Were Featured Speakers

10th Anniversary - Cleveland and Akron, OH - June 1945

Announcements went out through the Central Bulletin and Grapevine and over 2,500 attendees gathered in Cleveland for the celebration. Visitors came from 36 states, Canada and Mexico.

The event opened Saturday with an afternoon tea. Other activities included a dinner, a dance and open house celebrations by 4 local groups. The 10th anniversary meeting took place on Sunday afternoon at the Cleveland Music Hall with Dr Bob and Bill W as the featured speakers.

On Sunday evening the Akron groups hosted a Founder's Day Dinner at the Mayflower Hotel. Featured speakers were again Bill W and Dr Bob plus Bill D (AA#3) and Earl T , founder of AA in Chicago.



The Seed For Future Internationals

10th Anniversary - Cleveland and Akron, OH - June 1945

The July 1945 Grapevine and Cleveland Central Bulletin reported on the weekend celebration.

In Cleveland, Bill W told his story and about meeting Dr Bob and voiced a moving tribute to his co-founder "Although we have had many differences, we have never had an angry word."

Dr Bob told his story and reflected on "blindly groping for the truth" in the early AA days by trial and error. He said that although he wanted to avoid religious discussion, he had spent at least an hour a day for the past 10 years reading the Bible.

At the Akron Founders Day Dinner, Bill W described Akron as "Where the AA Beacon Was Lit."



5-Year Campaign For The Traditions

Bill W's First Traditions Essay - August 1945 Grapevine

The ending of WW II, and demobilization, marked a period of rapid growth in total AA membership as members of the armed forces returned to the US and civilian life.

The estimated counts for 1945 were 560 groups and 14,000 members. In 1946 alone, the counts surged to an estimated 1,000 group and membership more than doubled to 29,000. These were estimated numbers. The actual numbers were likely far higher.

Bill W wrote in "AA Comes of Age" (pg 208) that the period from 1945-1950 was one of immense strain and test. The three main issues were money, anonymity and what was to become of AA when its old timers and founders were gone.

Bill took on his most intensive and exhaustive work of advocating acceptance of the Traditions and establishing a service structure that included a General Service Conference.

The August 1945 Grapevine carried Bill's first Traditions article titled "Modesty One Plank for Good Public Relations." It began Bill's 5-year campaign for the Traditions and the General Service Conference.

The previous July Grapevine edition had an article by member CHK of Lansing, MI about the Washingtonians. Bill used this article to begin his essay commentaries.

## Self-Supporting - 1945



John D Rockefeller Jr



Loan Repayments

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### Self-Supporting - 1945

In 1945 the Alcoholic Foundation Board wrote to John D Rockefeller Jr and the 1940 dinner guests that AA no longer needed their financial help. Big Book royalties could look after Dr Bob and Bill and group contributions could pay the office expenses. If these were insufficient a reserve accumulated from literature sales could meet the deficit.

In total Rockefeller and the dinner guests donated \$30,700 (\$365,000 today). The donations were viewed as loans and paid back out of Big Book income. This finally led to the principle of being fully self supporting declining all further outside contributions and later formed the basis of Tradition 7.





Became AA's First Archivist

**Nell Wing - March 3, 1947**

In March 1947, Nell Wing, fresh from a 2-year tour in the Coast Guard, started work at the Alcoholic Foundation, 415 Lexington Ave, NYC. Starting as a typist earning \$32 a week (\$300 today) she stayed for 36 years. Nell served as Bill's Secretary and later became AA's first Archivist. Her relationship with Bill and Lois was far more like a daughter than an employee.

## Bill W's Report To The Foundation - April 8, 1947

### TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ALCOHOLIC FOUNDATION

Bill W. Wills  
New York  
April 8, 1947

Dear Friends:

FOLLOWING our past year of deliberating on questions touching the A.A. membership policy and structure, I have ventured to prepare the enclosed material under the title: The Alcoholic Foundation of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.

The first section, The Alcoholic Foundation of Yesterday, is purely historical. It is designed to show the evolution of our current structure since its origin in 1935. This section, published serially in the Organize, could help greatly to inform every AA about us and clear away a certain amount of misunderstanding that has quite naturally arisen for some lack of printed facts. May we have your consent to publication?

Section two, The Alcoholic Foundation of Today, is, to some degree, a critique, because it has been written as though the several suggested changes in structure and away policy still under consideration were already in effect. I hope you and I wish to place this section before the Foundation Reorganization Committee for their study and recommendations.

Section three is an attempt to structure a central structure for AA of the future -- one which might stand a better chance of survival than our present complete design. This would involve changing the name of the Foundation and the creation of a general conference. This too, is, of course, a matter first for the Reorganization Committee and then for the Board of Trustees.

Should we be able to agree on sections two and three, or some better combination of them, it might then prove desirable to incorporate all three sections into a pamphlet to be distributed to our whole membership.

Meanwhile it seems right to Dr. B.W. and me that this material be placed before all the Trustees pending the study and report of the Reorganization Committee.

Appreciatively yours,

William W. Wills

**Seeds Of The Concepts**

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### Bill W's Report To The Foundation - April 8, 1947

On April 8, 1947 after a difficult year of talks on policy and structure, Bill wrote a paper titled "Our AA General Service Center - The Alcoholic Foundation of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." It outlined a history of the Foundation and recommended a General Service Conference and renaming the Alcoholic Foundation to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Trustee's reaction was at first defensive and then outright negative. They saw no need for change.

Most members would not associate the seeds of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts with the years 1946 and 1947 respectively. AA was on the verge of its teenage years and a visionary Bill W was laying the groundwork for the membership's coming of age.



Based On The Foreword To The 1st Edition Big Book

The AA Preamble - June 1947

In June 1947, what is today called the "AA Preamble" first appeared in the Grapevine. Written by Tom Y, Grapevine's first editor, it was based on the Foreword to the first edition Big Book. Today, it is a common reading at the beginning of AA meetings. That's how, over time, it came to be called the "AA Preamble."



## Early Recording Media - June 1947 Grapevine

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Recordings Of Bill W And Dr Bob

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### Early Recording Media - June 1947 Grapevine

The June 1947 Grapevine also announced the availability of a set of two 12-inch phonograph records of a general talk on AA by Bill W at \$3.30 per set (\$31 today).

In the 1950's Dr Bob's last talk was also released on 78 RPM phonograph records.



Each Member To Have One Free Of Charge

First Traditions Pamphlet - December 1947

The December 1947 Grapevine reported that a new 48-page pamphlet titled "AA Tradition" was sent to each group and that enough copies were available for each member to have one free of charge. It was AA's first piece of literature dedicated totally to the Traditions.

## Dr Bob's Dream Convertible - Summer 1948

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Buick Road-Master

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### Dr Bob's Dream Convertible - Summer 1948

A sad and gloomy cloud emerged in 1947. Dr Bob was stricken with cancer. In June 1948 his cancer was diagnosed as terminal. Dr Bob closed his office and retired from practice so that he and his wife Anne could live their last days together quietly. In his last year, Dr Bob fulfilled a life-long dream of obtaining a convertible automobile (a Buick Road-master).

Bill W was spurred into greater urgency as Dr Bob's illness progressed and he pressed harder for a General Service Conference to take the place of the AA founders.

It resulted in hot debates and a serious rift developed between Bill and the Class B trustees over Bill's use of "sledge-hammer tactics." In "AA Comes of Age" (pgs 210-211) Bill admits to writing a sizzling memo that nearly blew the Foundation apart." It caused 4 trustees to submit letters of resignation. Bill wrote each of them a letter of apology and the resignations were either withdrawn or not accepted at the next Board meeting.



32-page Pocket Size

### The Last Newsletter Format - August 1948 Grapevine

The August 1948 Grapevine announced that beginning September 1948, its format would be 5 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches and it would contain 32 pages. The change was based on a vote of subscribers.

An early example of the Grapevine published in its new pocket size format is shown on the right and is the November 1948 issue. Early covers were kept simple, usually consisting of a grapevine sprig and a color background.

Anne Ripley Smith - June 1, 1949



Anne S.

**A**NNE S. has taken her leave of us. She died on Wednesday June 1. To the friends who really knew her, this was a meaningful and moving event. With those who knew her not, I wish to share the inspiration which she gave to Lois and me. Anne was the wife of Dr. Bob, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. She was, quite literally, the mother of our first Group, Akron No. One.

**H**ER wise and beautiful counsel to all, her insistence that the spiritual come before anything else, her unwavering support of Dr. Bob in all his works; all these were virtues which watered the uncertain seed that was to become A.A. Who but God could assess such a contribution? We can only say that it was priceless and magnificent. In the full sense of the word, she was one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Not a soul who knew Anne will say that she is really gone. Each knows that her abiding love and influence will live forever. And none knows better than Dr. Bob, Lois and I, who saw these things from the beginning. Nor do we think we shall ever see her again. For, like nearly all our fellow A.A. members, we believe there is no death. She is only out of our sight and hearing for a little while.—Bill

Mother Of Our First Group ... Founder Of AA

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Anne Ripley Smith - June 1, 1949

On June 1, 1949, Anne Ripley Smith (age 69) died at Akron's St Thomas Hospital. She was loved and revered by the Akron members and by Bill and Lois. Her last years were spent nearly blind due to severe cataracts. In a July 1949 Grapevine memorial, Bill W wrote that Anne was "quite literally, the mother of our first group, Akron #1 and in the full sense of the word she was one of the founders of AA."

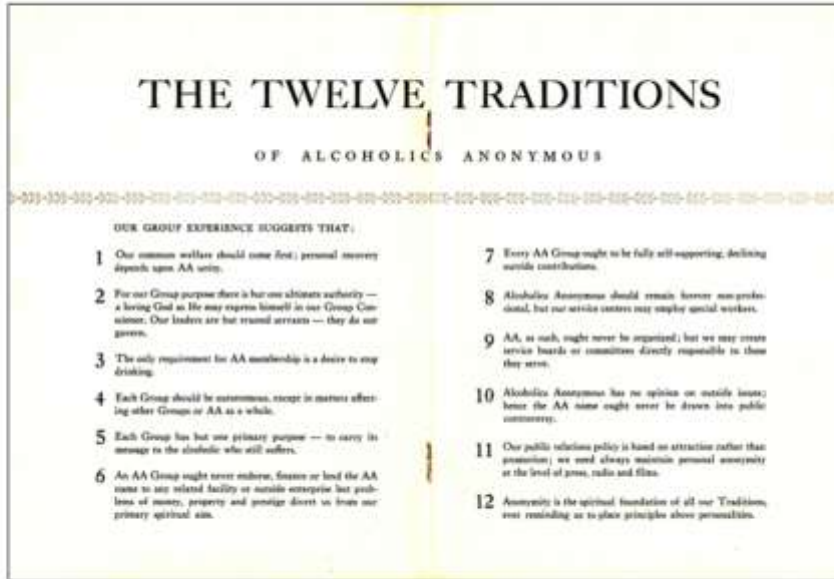


Influence Of The Oxford Group

#### Rev Sam Shoemaker - July 1949

In a July 1949 letter to the Rev Sam Shoemaker, Bill W wrote: "So far as I am concerned, and Dr Smith too, the Oxford Group seeded AA. It was our spiritual wellspring at the beginning." Bill later expressed regret that he did not write to Frank Buchman as well.

In "AA Comes of Age" (pg 29) Bill wrote: "Early AA got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done and working with others straight from the Oxford Groups and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else."



### Short Form Of The Traditions - November 1949

As plans for the 1st International Convention in Cleveland were under way, Earl T of Chicago suggested to Bill W that the “Twelve Suggested Points for AA Tradition” would benefit from revision and shortening.

Bill, with Earl’s help, developed the short form of the Traditions which were first published in the center-fold of the November 1949 Grapevine.

The entire November issue was dedicated to the Traditions for the coming Cleveland Convention in 1950. The issue also asked the members if the Thanksgiving Holiday week should be dedicated to discussion of the Traditions. The replies were overwhelmingly in favor of the idea. Later the entire month of November became Traditions month.

When the 12&12 was published in 1953, two wording changes were made to the 1949 version. The term “primary spiritual aim” in Tradition 6 was changed to “primary purpose.” The term “principles above personalities” in Tradition 12 was changed to “principles before personalities.”



A Precedent Is Set

### 15th Anniversary - 1st International - Cleveland, OH - April 1950

Given the success of the 1945 10th anniversary celebration in Cleveland and Akron, the Cleveland groups proposed celebrating AA's 15th Anniversary with an international conference. A number of locations throughout the country had expressed interest in having an international conference as well.

Bill W in a letter to Dick S, Chairman of the organizing committee, indicated he was a bit skeptical of setting a precedent for large international gatherings unless they were for a good reason. He then went on to specify two "good reasons" for the 1950 event: 1st, honoring Dr Bob (obviously the last opportunity to do so given his illness) and 2nd, acceptance of the Twelve Traditions.

The April 1950 Grapevine announced the event. The Alcoholic Foundation Trustees thought well enough of the idea that they agreed to contribute \$3,000 to an underwriting fund (the equivalent of \$27,000 today).



15th Anniversary - 1st International - Cleveland, OH - July 1950



Approximately 3,000 In Attendance

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15th Anniversary - 1st International - Cleveland, OH - July 1950

On Friday, July 28, 1950, AA's 1st International Convention opened in Cleveland, OH with approximately 3,000 people in attendance. Registration was \$1.50 per person (equivalent to \$13 today).

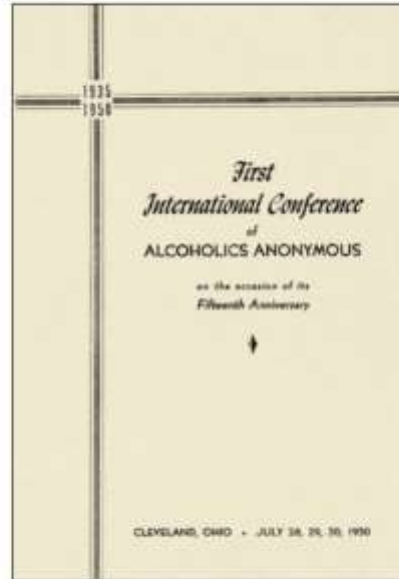
Bill W chronicled the proceedings in a September 1950 Grapevine article titled "We Come of Age" which can be found in the book "The Language of the Heart." This was the only International Convention attended by Dr Bob who was very determined to be there despite the progression of his terminal cancer.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

This report is being prepared for you, the members of the committee, and for the members of the conference. It is the hope of the committee that this report will be of some help to you in your preparation for the conference.

The committee has been very busy since we last met in New York City in 1949. We have held many meetings and have received many suggestions from you. We have also been very busy with the preparation of the program for the conference. We have held many meetings and have received many suggestions from you. We have also been very busy with the preparation of the program for the conference.

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Draft and Final Programs of Planned Events

### 15th Anniversary - 1st International - Cleveland, OH - July 1950

The program of the Cleveland International consisted of a series of meetings, held from Friday through Sunday at various hotels. The Cleveland Auditorium Music Hall was reserved for Saturday afternoon to offer the Traditions for approval.

The 1950 International set a pattern for future conventions with its sessions on Hospitalization; Industry, Women members and Young People. A banquet, followed by entertainment and dancing took place on Saturday night. On Sunday morning, a meeting on "The Spiritual Significance of AA" set the pattern for Sunday morning "spiritual meetings" at International Conventions ever since.

## The Traditions As Recited by Bill - July 1950

### Language of the Heart (pg 121)

That, touching all matters affecting AA unity, our common welfare should come first; that AA has no human authority - only God as he may speak in our Group Conscience;

that our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern; that any alcoholic may become an AA member if he says so - we exclude no one;

that every AA Group may manage its own affairs as it likes, provided surrounding groups are not harmed thereby;

that we AAs have but a single aim, the carrying of our message to the alcoholic who still suffers; that in consequence we cannot finance, endorse or otherwise lend the name 'Alcoholics Anonymous' to any other enterprise, however worthy;

that AA, as such, ought to remain poor, lest problems of property, management and money divert us from our sole aim;

that we ought to be self-supporting, gladly paying our small expenses ourselves;

that AA should remain forever non-professional, ordinary 12th Step work never to be paid for;

that, as a Fellowship, we should never be organized but may nevertheless create responsible Service Boards or Committees to insure us better propagation and sponsorship and that these agencies may engage fulltime workers for special tasks;

that our public relations ought to proceed upon the principle of attraction rather than promotion, it being better to let our friends recommend us;

that personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and pictures ought to be strictly maintained as our best protection, against the temptations of power or personal ambition;

and finally, that anonymity before the general public is the spiritual key to all our Traditions, ever reminding us we are always to place principles before personalities, that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

### Missing Tradition 10

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## The Traditions As Recited by Bill - July 1950

Contrary to popular belief, the short form of the Traditions were not approved at the 1950 Convention. What was recited to the attendees and approved by them was quite different than either the long or short form of the Traditions we know today.

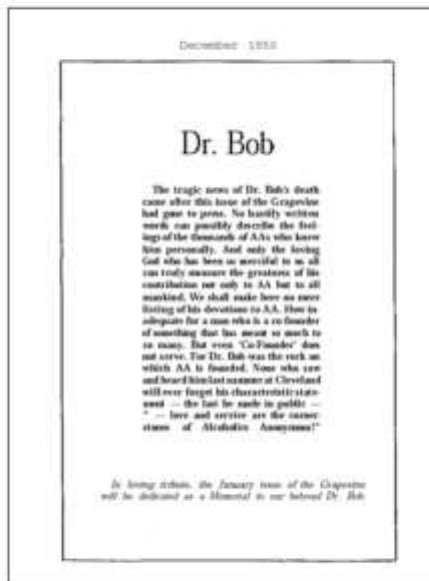
Following talks on the Traditions by 6 old-timers (one of which was Olin L of Dallas) Bill W was asked to sum up the Traditions for the attendees. In his summation, he paraphrased a variation of the Tradition the text of which is in the book "The Language of the Heart" (p 121) and shown in the slide.

Notably missing from what Bill recited to the attendees were the principles embodied in Tradition 10 of AA having no opinion on outside issues and not drawing the AA name into public controversy. Nevertheless, the Traditions as recited by Bill were approved unanimously. A gravely ill Dr Bob made a brief appearance at the Sunday "big meeting" for what would be his last talk

## Prince of the Twelfth Steppers - November 16, 1950



Dr Bob In 1950 Shortly Before His Death



Helped More Than 5,000 Alcoholics

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### "Prince of the Twelfth Steppers" - November 16, 1950

On July 30, 1950 a gravely ill Dr Bob made a brief appearance at the 1st International Convention for what would be his last talk. Part of his now famous short statement was "There are two or three things that flashed into my mind on which it would be fitting to lay a little emphasis. One is the simplicity of our program. Let's not louse it all up with Freudian complexes and things that are interesting to the scientific mind but have very little to do with our actual AA work. Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the words love and service."

After the Convention, Bill W visited Dr Bob in Akron, OH for their last visit together. Bill advised Bob that the board would likely give its consent to a multi-year trial period for the General Service Conference. Dr Bob gave Bill his endorsement as well.

Dr Robert Holbrook Smith (age 70) co-founder of AA, and 15 years sober, died on November 16, 1950 at City Hospital in Akron, OH. He was buried in Mt Peace Cemetery beside his wife Anne. The Rev Walter Tunks conducted the funeral service.

In his 15 years of sobriety, Dr Bob helped more than 5,000 alcoholics and never took any fee for his professional services. In his eulogy, Bill W described Dr Bob as "the prince of the Twelfth Steppers." Dr Bob served as a Class B Trustee on the Alcoholic Foundation Board from its inception in 1938 up to 1944 and again from 1949 to the time of his death.



#### Dr Bob's Grapevine Memorial Edition - January 1951

The January 1951 issue of the Grapevine was published as a memorial to Dr Bob. Al S (Steckman) the Grapevine Editor the Grapevine at that time, had much to do with the memorial issue for Dr. Bob In an assessment of the founders in later years AL stated, "Without Bill's drive, there wouldn't be any AA Without Bob's balance, who knows what it would be like?"

Al S was also the member who drove Dr Bob back and forth between Akron and Cleveland for Dr Bob's last talk at AA's 15th anniversary and first International Convention.



Trial Conferences

#### Leonard Harrison - Bernard B Smith - Fall 1950

Class A board trustees Leonard Harrison and Bernard B Smith resolved a 5-year conflict between Bill W and the Board on having a Conference.

Smith, who Bill would later call “the architect of the service structure” chaired a trustee’s committee that recommended that Conferences be held on an experimental basis from 1951-1954, and that in 1955 it would be evaluated and a final decision made.

The recommendation was approved at the Board’s Fall 1950 meeting.



Conference Plans And Procedures

### Your Third Legacy - November/December 1950

50,000 copies of a pamphlet titled "Your Third Legacy Will You Accept It?" were distributed, in November 1950 to explain the Conference plans and procedures. Bill also wrote a December 1950 Grapevine article titled "Your Third Legacy."

The Alcoholic Foundation invited 1 Conference delegate from each of the then 48 States and from the Canadian Provinces. Seven states with large AA populations were assigned additional delegates. Texas was assigned 2r delegates.

Delegates were divided into 2 Panels so that half would be elected and half would rotate in odd and even numbered years. Based on their large AA population, Panel 1 areas for Texas were the combined cities of Dallas and Fort Worth as one area and Houston as the 2nd area. Panel 2 areas for Texas were Lubbock and San Antonio.

Panel 1 areas were asked to form a temporary committee to organize an election assembly no later than March 1951. Bill W traveled across the country attending over 2 dozen assemblies electing area committees and Conference Delegates.

## Temporary Conference Charter - 12 Suggested Principles - November 1950



### Election Assembly Guidelines

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## Temporary Conference Charter - 12 Suggested Principles - November 1950

In the early years of the Conference Structure, area assemblies were held only to elect new area officers and a new delegate. The Third Legacy pamphlet offered guidelines for the first election assembly. You might find them amusing.

Each group could select one Group Representative to attend an assembly that was closest to the group's location. Group Representatives later came to be called General Service Representatives or GSRs. Group Representatives placed an "A" next to their name on the assembly registration forms to indicate that they were available to serve on the area committee. This determined the pool of nominees for elections. Nominations were not allowed from the floor and all voting was by written ballot.

The first item of assembly business was to create an area map divided into districts. This determined the number of Committeemen to be elected - one for each district. Committeemen later came to be called Committee Members and then District Committee Members or DCMs.

The entire assembly voted in the election of Committeemen. Elections were by plurality and ended when a nominee received at least 25% of the total votes cast. The first three Committeemen elected automatically became the Area Chair, Treasurer and Secretary in that order.

The delegate election required a 2/3 majority of the total votes cast. If a 2/3 majority could not be obtained, the delegate was chosen by lot from among all the Committeemen whether they were standing for the delegate election or not. Each area determined the number of times to vote prior to settling the election by lot. Needless to say, much has changed since then.



## First General Service Conference - April 20-22, 1951



Panel 1 - 37 US And Canadian Delegates

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### First General Service Conference - April 20-22, 1951

On April 19, 1951 - 37 US and Canadian delegates (half the planned number) convened at the Commodore Hotel in NYC as the first Panel of the General Service Conference. Bernard B Smith presided. 15 Trustees and various staff members from the NY Office and Grapevine joined the Conference as voting members.

The Conference unanimously recommended several advisory actions. Among them that Bill W's royalty from his books should be increased to 15% and continue for his lifetime. It was also recommended that nonalcoholic Board members should continue in office and that alcoholic Board members should have fixed terms of office. It was further recommended that AA literature should have Conference-approval.

The Conference also suggested that the Alcoholic Foundation ought to be renamed the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. This suggestion was brought up repeatedly over the next 3 years and was finally adopted in 1954.



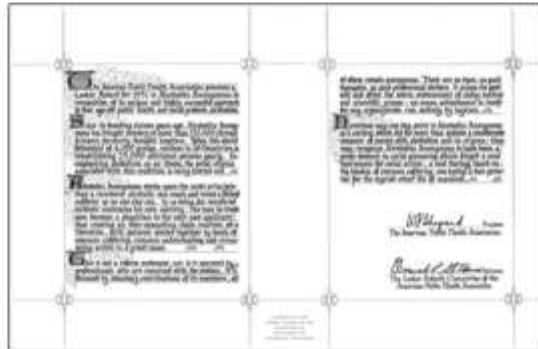
AA Family Groups

### Anne B - Lois W - April 1951

The 1951 Conference also affirmed that the subject of AA auxiliaries, or family groups, should be taken back to local groups for further discussion and be considered at the 1952 Conference.

At the close of the 1951 Conference, Lois W (Wilson) with her close friend and neighbor Anne B (Bingham) invited the delegates' wives and local family group members to meet at her home (Stepping Stones). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ideas for an organization that was then being called "AA Family Groups." It was the beginning of the formation of the Al-Anon Family Groups Fellowship.

## The Lasker Award - October 30, 1951



Declined The \$1,000 Cash Grant

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### The Lasker Award - October 30, 1951

In the summer of 1951, the Lasker Award was offered to Bill W by the American Public Health Association. Bill refused the award for himself but suggested it be given to AA as a whole and the Lasker Foundation replied favorably. The trustees voted to accept the award (subject to Conference approval by mail poll of the Delegates). However, they declined a cash grant of \$1,000 (\$8,000 in today's dollars).



Family Groups Clearing-house Committee

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#### 24th Street Club House - January/March 1952

The first family groups office, called the “Clearing-house Committee,” started at the 24th St Clubhouse in NYC on January 9, 1952. In March 1952, non-alcoholic groups using various names such as AA Helpmates, AA Auxiliary, Triple A, Non-AA and AA Associates adopted the name “Al-Anon Family Groups” for their Fellowship.

Al-Anon wrote to AA asking to use its 12 Steps. AA agreed unofficially and later, through the Conference, recommended that Al-Anon should be a separate Fellowship and not a subsidiary of AA.

In September 1952, Al-Anon adopted and adapted AA’s 12 Traditions using the version that was first published in the November 1949 Grapevine (this is why the AFG version of Traditions 6 and 12 differ in wording from AA’s version).

## Conference-Approved Literature - April 1952



Panel 2 - All Delegates Attending

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## Conference-Approved Literature - April 1952

On April 23, 1952, Panel 2 (consisting of 38 additional delegates) joined with Panel 1 for the first Conference of all Delegates attending. The first women Delegates joined Panel 2. They were Lois A (Abare) of Barre, VT and Fay B (Brown) of Bismarck, ND.

Based on a 1951 Conference advisory action recommending that AA literature should have Conference approval, the Board formed a special Trustees' committee on literature to recommend literature items that should be retained and future literature items that would be needed. Bill W also reported on the many literature projects he was engaged in.

The 1952 Conference unanimously approved the Board proposals and Bill's projects. There are not specific advisory actions but by approving existing literature to be retained, the Conference retroactively approved the Big Book and several existing pamphlets, which included the long form of the Traditions. (1952 GSC-FR 4) Bill's book projects later resulted in six Conference-approved books.

Note on Bill's books:

"The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" published in 1953;

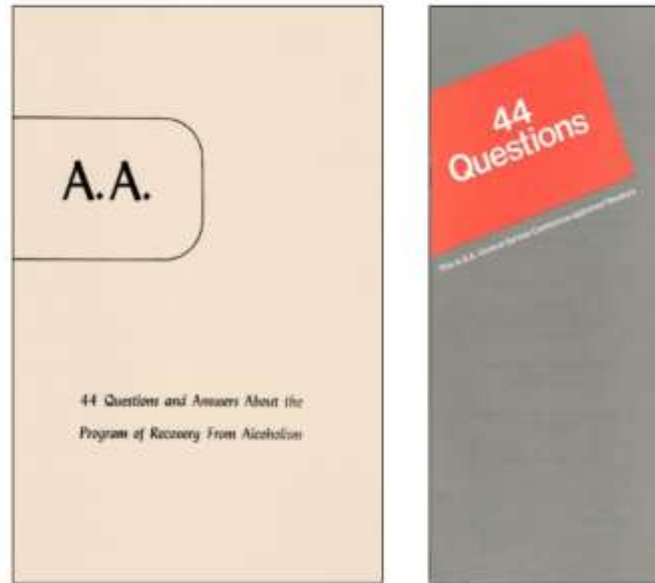
"The Third Legacy Manual" published in 1955 (renamed "The AA Service Manual" in 1969);

The 2nd edition Big Book published in 1955;

"AA Comes of Age" published in 1957;

"The Twelve Concepts for World Service" published in 1962; and

"The AA way of Life" published in 1966 (later renamed to "As Bill Sees It" in 1975).

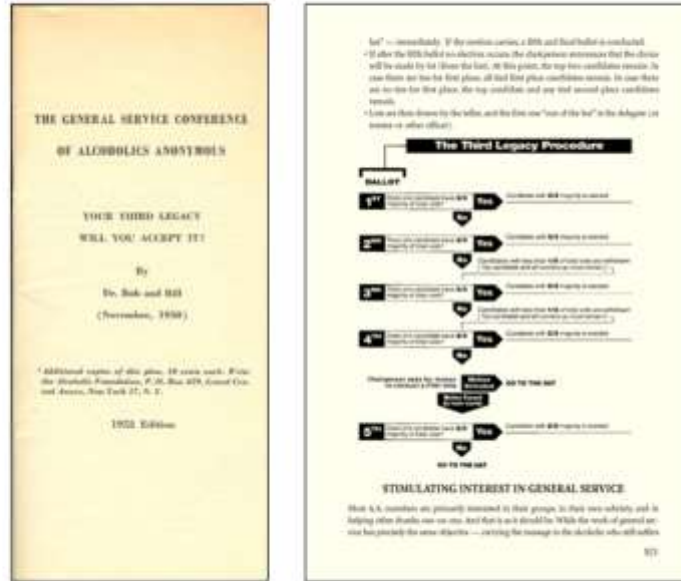


Many Pamphlets Were Booklet Size

#### Conference Approve Literature - April 1952

Many early AA pamphlets were actually booklets similar in size to today's AA Grapevine. One of the earliest had the title "44 Questions and Answers About the Program of Recovery from Alcoholism." Over a half century later, it still is one of the most widely distributed pamphlets. It's title has been shortened to just "44 Questions."

## Third Legacy Method of Elections - 1952



Later Called "Third Legacy Procedure"

### Third Legacy Method of Elections - 1952

The 1952 Conference approved a new edition of the Third Legacy pamphlet. It began to call the election guidelines the "Third Legacy Method of Elections." Later a much changed version came to be called the "Third Legacy Procedure."

## Congressional Incorporation - April 1952



Rejected in 1953

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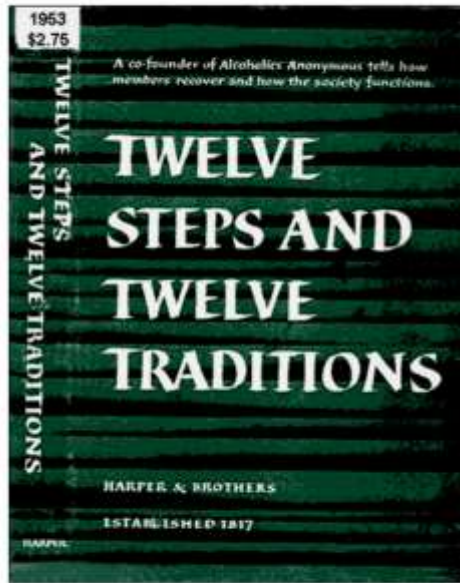
### Congressional Incorporation - April 1952

At the 1952 Conference a motion was made and seconded that, subject to consideration of the Trustees, steps be taken to incorporate the Society of AA by an Act of Congress. After extended discussion of both sides of the question the motion was tabled.

A subsequent motion requested that the Trustees appoint a Special Committee of 5 Delegates to study the matter and submit their recommendations at the 1953 Conference.

The 1953 Conference rejected the idea of incorporating the AA name in the US and foreign countries as a means of protecting against misuse of the name by AA members and outside groups. One of the incidents that stimulated discussion on the matter in 1952, was a Houston Texas group which had incorporated itself as "The Alcoholic Foundation of Texas."





12&12

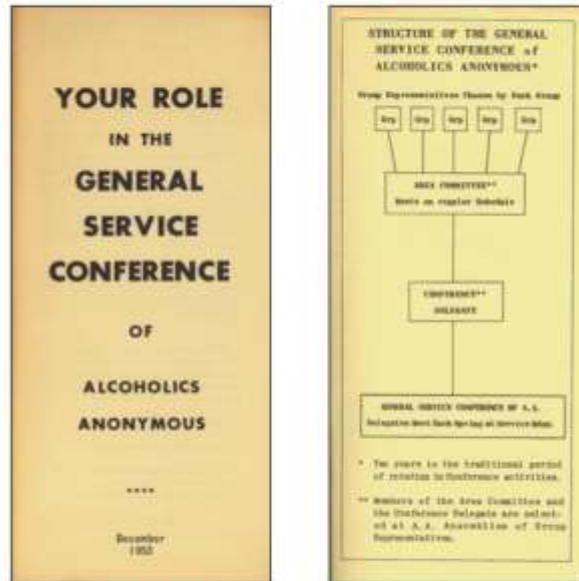
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#### First Book By AA Publishing - 1953

Board Chairman, Bernard B Smith, reported to the 1953 Conference that the corporate name of "Works Publishing" had been changed to "Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing."

The first Conference-approved book to be distributed under the new publishing name was the "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions." It contains the final wording of the short form of the Traditions as we know them today. This is where and when the short form of the Traditions were Conference-approved.

## First Service Structure Diagram - December 1953



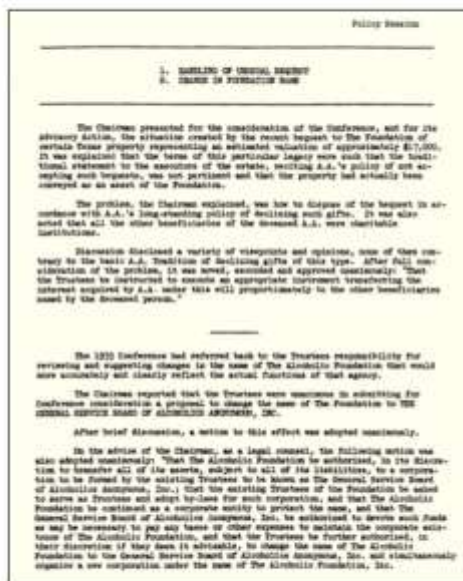
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### First Service Structure Diagram - December 1953

The 1953 Conference also recommended that a pamphlet be developed to clarify the duties and responsibilities related to General Services. It was published in December 1953 under the title "Your Role in the General Service Conference."

The pamphlet explained the duties and responsibilities of Group Members, Group Representatives, Area Committeemen and Conference Delegates. It also contained the first structure diagram of the General Service Conference.

## The General Service Board and the GSR- April 1954



### General Service Representative Plan

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## The General Service Board and the GSR- April 1954

The 1954 Conference unanimously approved the renaming of the Alcoholic Foundation to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. The renaming took place in October 1954.

Two parts of a 3-part proposal for a "General Service Representative Plan" were adopted by the Conference. They were:

"That the Group Representative described in the Third Legacy Pamphlet be designated the "General Service Representative."

"That the 'General Service Representative' in addition to electing his Area Committeeman and Regional Delegate to the General Service Conference, should act as the representative of the group in General Service activities and as the representative of AA's General Services in the group."

Under the plan, the Group Representative was to be listed in the AA Directory instead of the Group Secretary.

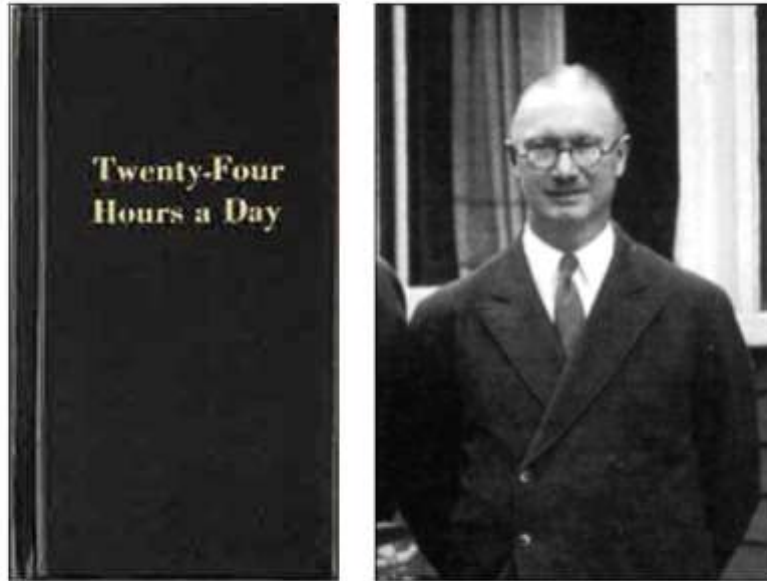


Why Do We Need A Conference?

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The Lost Commandment, The Dictionary And AA - Bernard B Smith - April 1954

Board Chairman Bernard B Smith delivered an eloquent talk at the 1954 Conference. Its next to last paragraph is today highlighted in Chapter 1 of the AA Service Manual with the title "Why Do We Need A Conference?." The actual title of his talk was "The Lost Commandment, The Dictionary and AA." He, left no doubt whatsoever that he was firmly in favor of continuing the Conference on a permanent basis.



1954 and 1972 Conferences Declined To Accept Publication Rights

#### Twenty-Four Hours A Day - Richmond W - 1953, 1954 and 1972

The 1953 and 1954 Conferences faced the question of accepting publication rights on the book "Twenty-Four Hours a Day" written by AA member Richmond W (Walker).

The 1953 Conference tabled the matter to allow for a year of discussion. The 1954 Conferences declined to approve the book or accept publication rights. The decision of the 1954 Conference was reaffirmed 18 years later by the 1972 Conference.

## 1954 Anonymity Breaks - Lillian R

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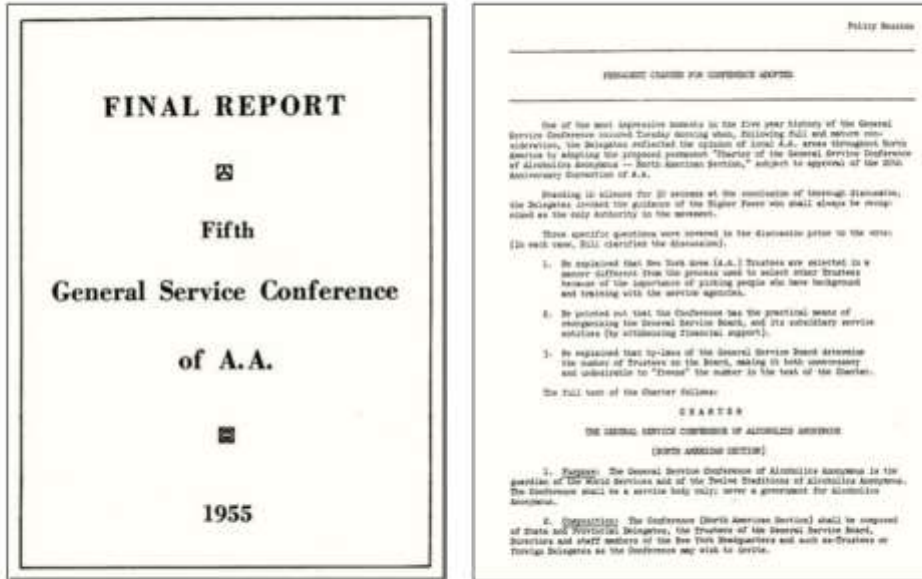
Generated Bad Publicity

206

## 1954 Anonymity Breaks - Lillian R

In 1954, Lillian R (Roth), an actress and nightclub singer, became the first of many celebrities to break their anonymity and announce their membership in AA. Her book (later movie) "I'll Cry Tomorrow" was a national sensation. In 1955, Susan Hayward's performance as Lillian won her an Academy Award nomination. Sadly, Lillian went on to drink again and it generated bad publicity for AA.

## Permanent Conference Charter - 1955



1955 Conference Convened In St Louis, MO

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### Permanent Conference Charter - 1955

The 1955 Conference convened in St Louis, MO on June 26-29 and again on July 3. Texas Delegates to this historic Conference were Jack H (Henry) from Fort Worth, Gilbert L (Lamb) from Muleshoe, Ira P (Phelps) from Corpus Christi and Bob S (Sawyer) from Galena Park.

75 Delegates unanimously recommended adoption of a permanent Conference Charter subject to the approval of the 2d International Convention that would convene in St Louis on July 1. The Conference also recommended that future Conferences not be combined with International Conventions.

Bill W brought up the first Conference discussion to change the Board ratio to a 2/3 majority of alcoholics. After much debate the matter was tabled for the agenda of the 1956 Conference. The board ratio issue would be debated endlessly by Bill, the Board and ten more Conferences before it was finally resolved in 1966.

The final Conference session was scheduled to be held on the afternoon of July 3 in conjunction with the international convention.



Theme: Coming of Age

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20th Anniversary - 2nd International - St Louis, MO - July 1955

AA's 20th anniversary and 2nd International Convention was held in St Louis' Kiel Auditorium July 1-3, 1955. Estimated attendance was 3,800. Its theme was "Coming of Age."

The historic convention introduced a new circle and triangle symbol prominently displayed on a large banner draping the back of the stage. Bill W later wrote that the circle represented the whole of AA and the triangle represented AA's 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

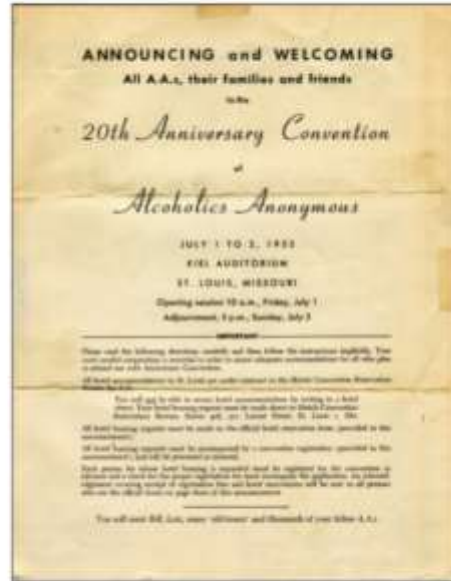
Bill gave major talks on each of the 3 Legacies they were titled:

How We Learned To Recover

How We Learned To Stay Together and

How We Learned To Serve





Sunday Morning Spiritual Meeting

20th Anniversary - 2nd International - St Louis, MO - July 1955

On Sunday, the morning spiritual meeting had the theme "God As We Understand Him" and the speakers were Father Edward Dowling and the Rev Sam Shoemaker. Their talks can be found in the book "AA Comes of Age" (253).



Program

20th Anniversary - 2nd International - St Louis, MO - July 1955

An enormous amount of work went into organizing the 1955 International Convention and its program became a model for the conventions that followed. A mix of workshops, panel meetings, talks by AA pioneers, Big Meetings and entertainment provided vehicles for hearing from and honoring non-alcoholics in medicine, religion, and other fields who had helped AA over the years.

Many important names in AA history were present, among them were Ebby T, Rev Sam Shoemaker, Father Ed Dowling, Dr Harry Tiebout, Bernard B Smith, Leonard V Harrison and "Dr Jack" Norris.

## AA's Co-founder Asks Fellowship to "Take Over"

STANDING before several thousand AA's and their families at the last session of a three-day meeting celebrating the Twentieth Anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous in St. Louis July 1-3, Bill W., serving co-founder of AA, asked the membership to "take its destiny by the hand." With a rousing "aye!" these present—including AA's from Bermuda, Brazil, England, France, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, as well as the U.S. and Canada—adopted the following resolution offered by Bill:

### THIRD LEGACY RESOLUTION

Adopted by the 20th Anniversary Convention of AA

(This Resolution Authorizes the General Service Conference to Act for Alcoholics Anonymous and to Become the Successor to Its Co-Founders.)

We, members of the 20th Anniversary Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous, here assembled at St. Louis in July of the year 1955, declare our belief that our Fellowship has now come of age and is entirely ready to assume full and permanent possession of the Three Legacies of our AA inheritance—the Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. We believe that the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous,

as created in 1951 by our co-founders, Dr. Bob S. and Bill W. and authorized by Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, has now become entirely capable of assuming the guardianship of AA's Twelve Traditions and of taking over full guidance and control of the World Service of our Society, as provided in the Third Legacy Manual of World Service recently revised by our surviving co-founder, Bill W.

and the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We have also heard with approval Bill W.'s proposal that AA's General Service Conference should now become the permanent successor to the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, inheriting from them all their former duties and special responsibilities, thus avoiding in future time all possible strivings for individual prestige or personal power; and also providing our Society with the means of functioning on a permanent basis.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:** That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous should become, as of this date, July 3rd, 1955, the guardian of Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, the perpetuator of the World Services of our Society, the voice of the Group Conscience of our entire Fellowship and the sole successors to its co-founders, Dr. Bob and Bill.

**AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD:** That within the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and the warranties of Article XII of the Conference Charter shall ever be changed or amended by the General Service Conference except by first asking the consent of the registered AA groups of the world. These Groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for full consideration thereof. And before any such Conference action may be taken, there must first be received

in writing within the time allowed the consent of at least three-quarters of all those registered Groups who respond to such proposal.

**WE FURTHER UNDERSTAND:** That, as provided in Article XII of the Conference Charter, the Conference holds itself to the motto of Alcoholics Anonymous by the following means:

That in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the AA Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never become the seat of political wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive, or an incitement to public censure; that though the Conference may act in the service of Alcoholics Anonymous and may traditionally assist its World Services, it shall never seek laws or regulations binding on AA as a whole or upon any AA Group as members thereof, nor shall it perform any other such acts of government; and that, like the society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

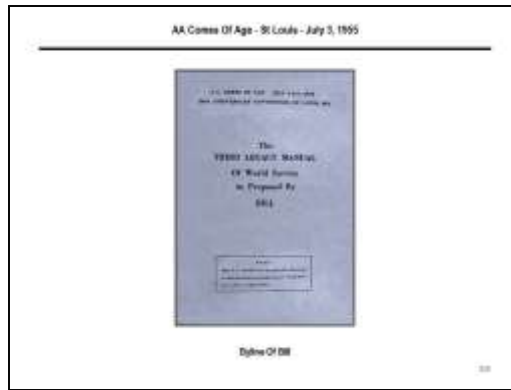
Permanent Conference Charter Approved

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20th Anniversary - 2nd International - St Louis, MO - July 1955

The 2pm Sunday afternoon meeting was designated as the "Last Session of the General Service Conference." It is the only time in the history of the Conference that it has been opened to AA members.

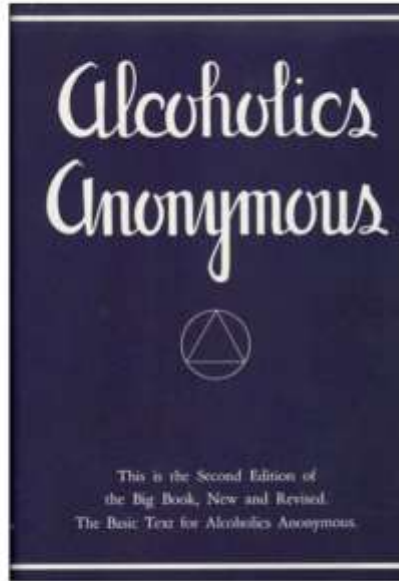
At the invitation of Chairman Bernard B Smith, Bill W made some introductory remarks and presented a resolution to the attendees, the heart of which read: **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:** That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous should become, as of this date July 3, 1955, the guardian of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, the perpetuator of the World Services of our Society, the voice of the group conscience of our entire Fellowship and the sole successors to its co-founders, Dr Bob and Bill. - The resolution was unanimously approved.



#### AA Comes Of Age - St Louis - July 3, 1955

Approval of the Permanent Conference Charter also resulted in approval of a new publication titled "The Third Legacy Manual of World Service as Proposed by Bill." It was the forerunner of today's Service Manual, both of which contain the Conference Charter.

The Conference Charter has 12 Articles, the 12th of which is also called "The General Warranties of the Conference" or just "Warrantees" for short. The six Warrantees in Article 12 are a condensed version of the Traditions to ensure that the Conference always functions in the spirit of the Traditions. In 1962, the General Warranties of the Conference formed Concept 12 of the Twelve Concepts for World Service.



Basic Text Pages Renumbered - 30 New Personal Stories

Second Edition Big Book - 1955

The second edition Big Book was introduced at the 1955 international Convention at a retail price of \$4.50 (\$36 in today's dollars). It contained 30 new personal stories. In the introduction to the story section Bill W wrote that 22 of the original 29 case histories (or 76% of those who had their stories published in the first edition) had made full recovery as of 1955.

Bill renumbered the pages of the 2nd edition so that page 1 began with "Bill's Story" instead of "The Doctor's Opinion." It's not known why he did this but there has been some very creative and entertaining speculation on the matter.

The second edition had a new appendix containing the short and long form of the Traditions. However, it mistakenly listed the short form version published in the November 1949 Grapevine instead of the version published in the 12&12 in 1953. The error was not fully corrected until the 6th printing in 1963.



A note on reprints of

*"Came To Believe . . ."*

In AA, we carry the message in many ways, among them your required exchange of thought and experience which is The Grapevine.

Many traditionally give a Grapevine subscription to a friend for Christmas, to mark an AA anniversary—or as a gesture of fellowship to a newcomer.

We felt that our Christmas painting—"Came to Believe . . ."—should be made available in reproduction form, suitable for framing, for those who may want it. We also decided that we should bear the expense of such a venture as a contribution to AA unity. The 19th Tradition reminds us that "personal money depends upon AA unity." A widely circulated Grapevine is an instrument for building greater unity in worldwide AA.

So, we are making reprints of this painting a part of our effort to get more Grapevines into more AA hands. Our aim is not higher income but wider usage.

Reprints will be sent, unframed in mailing tubes:

- To those ordering Christmas Gift Subscriptions and to those in whose names they are ordered.

- To all who, in December and January, enter a new subscription or a renewal of an existing subscription. It doesn't matter when the subscription is due to expire; if the renewal is sent during December or January a reprint of "Came To Believe . . ." will be mailed.

♦♦

Renamed "Man On The Bed" in 1973

"Came to Believe" - December 1955

The December 1955 Grapevine carried a painting by volunteer illustrator Robert M of a man on a bed being 12th Stepped by 2 members. The painting's title originally was "Came To Believe."

In 1973, when the book "Came To Believe" was published, Grapevine editors changed the painting's name to "The Man On The Bed" to avoid confusion. It is probably the most popular image in AA today.



Aldous Huxley



Drs Osmond And Hoffer

### The LSD Experiment - 1956

British radio commentator Gerald Heard introduced Bill W to Aldous Huxley and British psychiatrists Humphrey Osmond and Abram Hoffer. Humphrey and Osmond were working with schizophrenic and alcoholic patients at a Canadian hospital.

Bill joined with Heard and Huxley and first took LSD in CA on August 29, 1956. At the time, LSD was thought to have psychotherapeutic potential (research was also being funded by the National Institutes of Health and National Academy of Sciences). The intent of Osmond and Hoffer was to induce an experience similar to the DTs in hopes that it might shock alcoholics away from alcohol.

Among those invited to experiment with LSD (and who accepted) were Nell Wing, Father Ed Dowling, Sam Shoemaker and Lois Wilson. Marty M and other AA members participated in NY (under medical supervision by a psychiatrist from Roosevelt Hospital).

The book *Pass It On* (on pgs 368 to 377) reports the full LSD story and notes that there were repercussions within AA over these activities. Lois was a reluctant participant and claimed to have had no response to the chemical.

Hoffer and Osmond did research that later influenced Bill, in December 1966, to enthusiastically embrace a campaign to promote vitamin B3 (niacin) therapy. It also created Traditions issues within the Fellowship and caused a bit of an uproar.



From 5 Issues Of The Grapevine

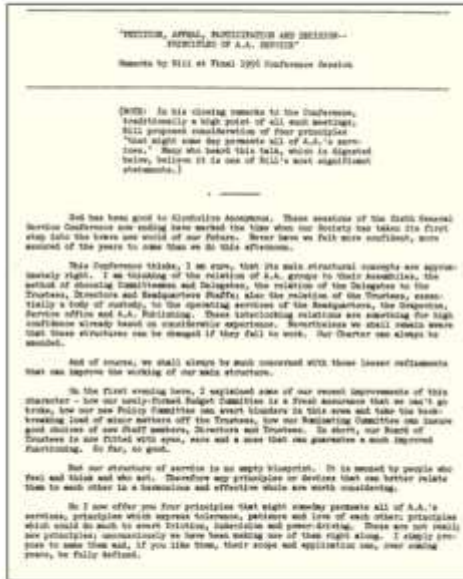
#### Grapevine Slogan Plaques - 1956 and 1957

AA's popular slogan plaques were first published in five Grapevine issues from September-December 1956 and February 1957. 4 slogans are from the Big Book: "But for the Grace of God" is from the chapter "There Is A Solution" (25). "Easy Does It," "First Things First" and "Live and Let Live" are from the chapter "The Family Afterward" (135).

The slogan "Think, Think, Think" is a bit of a mystery. Some say it originated in Cleveland, OH in the mid-1940s, however, its actual source is unknown.



## Principles of Service - April 1956



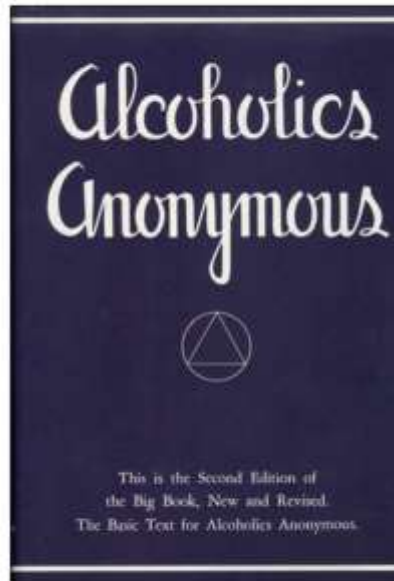
### Petition, Appeal, Participation and Decision

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## Principles of Service - April 1956

The 1956 Conference voted to continue the structure of the General Service Board as 8 Class A and 7 Class B trustees. It marked the beginning of a 10-year campaign by Bill W to change the board ratio to a 2/3 majority of alcoholics.

Bill W gave a talk at the 1956 Conference on the rights of petition, appeal, participation and decision describing them as 4 principles that might someday permeate all of AA's services. They later became key principles of the 12 Concepts for World Service, specifically Concepts 3, 4, 5 and 6.



2<sup>nd</sup> Printing Of 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

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### Step Twelve Wording Changed Again - 1956

In 1956, the wording of Step 12 changed again in the 2nd printing of the 2nd edition Big Book. The term "as the result of those steps" was restored to its original form of "as the result of these steps."

## General Service Conference - April 1957

### NEW BY-LAWS FOR U.S. BOARD APPROVED

One of the most important and significant headquarters policy actions the past year was initiated by the Conference when the Delegates approved unanimously a unique new set of by-laws which had earlier been adopted by the Board itself on a contingent basis.

The distinctive feature of the by-laws is that they prescribe certain "ground rules" for the operation of the Board while avoiding "legalistic" and/or characteristics of such agencies. The by-laws were drafted by Bernard B. Smith, distinguished international lawyer and a member of the Board. Mr. Smith had been chairman of the Board during the first six Conference years.

Outlining the "philosophy of approach" that underlies the new by-laws, Mr. Smith told the Delegates:

"We start with certain basic premises. Alcoholism Anonymous, in my view, is a spiritual way of life. It operates basically by traditions and principles. It has an uninterpreted organization known as the General Service Conference of A.A., functioning under an 'extra-legal' document known as the Charter. On the other side we have the stark problem of complying with the laws of the State of New York, as a membership corporation.

"A Board of Trustees and the members of a membership corporation are unable to delegate their power to people outside the organization. They must, in compliance with the law, exercise the authority vested in them by law. Now the problem was how to write a set of by-laws that would recognize the fact that basic power lies in the Conference, that would recognize that this is a spiritual movement, that would nevertheless comply with the laws of the State of New York and that would avoid, at all costs, specifications that might result from a document as defective in nature that should the need for change arise, the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions would be unimpaired."

Mr. Smith said that, generally, he was unable to devise a document that did not recognize that A.A. was a spiritual movement. He noted that the draft presented for the approval of Delegates was the third since he had first attempted to apply this "philosophy of approach" to the problem of enacting the suggested document first written in 1955, when the Board was formed (as the Alcoholics Foundation.)

### Conference Advisory Actions

#### COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE REPORT AND CHARTER COMPLETED IN JULY

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE REPORT AND CHARTER

The Committee recommends that the first draft of the Conference report be reviewed by all Conference Delegates and that suggestions and comments be sent to the Conference Secretary before the deadline for the Final Report.

It is suggested that the third article of the Conference Charter, i.e., Conference Delegates to A.A. (second paragraph page 26 of the Third Legacy Manual), be amended to read: "All changes in Article 12 of the Charter or in A.A. Tradition or in the Twelve Steps of A.A. may be made with less than the written consent of three-fourths of the A.A. groups, as specified in the resolution adopted by the 1955 Conference and Convention". If this amendment is made, the seventh paragraph on page 27 of the Third Legacy Manual must also be amended to read: "Nevertheless, however, the written consent of Article 12 of the Charter or of A.A.'s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions must have the consent of A.A. groups as provided in Article 1 of the Charter". It was recommended that these amendments be made.

#### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON POLICY

The Policy Committee reviews in the resolution of the Conference that General Service Headquarters continue to request to groups that they write to individuals and companies involved in the misuse of the literature, requesting that they be removed from the mailing list and further:

Recommend that a study be carried to the "Exchange Bulletin" about mis-use of the literature, prepared in such a way that it will help to define the A.A. purposes for which the literature is intended.

Recommend that an explanation of what is entitled in serving as specific Conference Committees be made before each Committee is selected.

Writes to remind Delegates to send proposals for Conference constitution to General Service Headquarters before January 1958, earlier if possible.

Suggests that Conference Committees members please convey, with consent, any questions or proposals sent them during the year.

Suggests that a president be established whereby the Chairman of the Area Delegates meeting, at the opening of the meeting, ask each new Delegate to stand, be recognized and given an opportunity to speak. (Suggested time, not more than ten minutes.)

### Bylaws For The General Service Board

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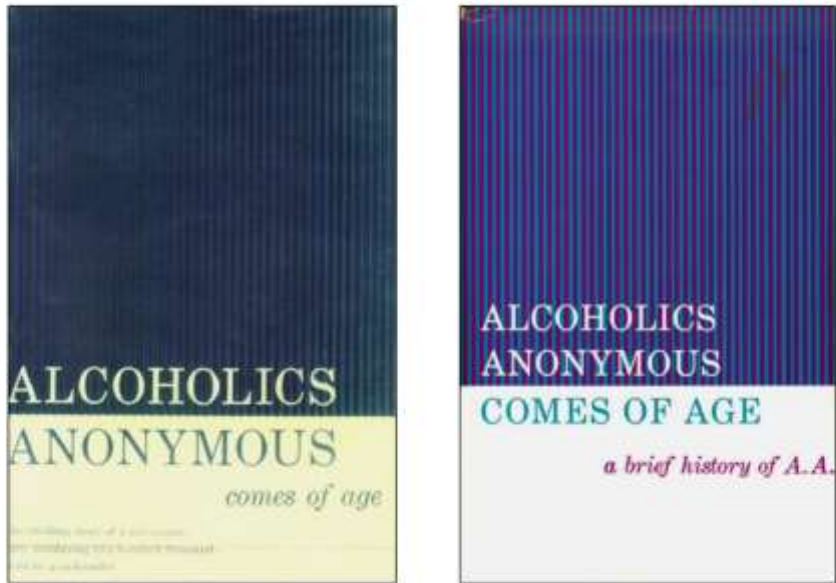
## General Service Conference - April 1957

The 1957 Conference approved a new set of "BYLAWS of the General Service Board." written by Bernard B Smith. They are today contained in the AA Service Manual as Appendix E.

The 1957 Conference further recommended that no change in Article 12 of the Conference Charter or in AA Tradition or in the 12 Steps may be made with less than the written consent of three fourths (or 75%) of AA groups.

AA Comes of Age - April 1957

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Harper Version Sold In Commercial Book stores

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AA Comes of Age - April 1957

The 1957 Conference also approved publication of "AA Comes of Age." Guised as a 3-day diary of the 1955 Convention, it is in fact a definitive history of AA up to 1955. One version printed by Harper & Brothers was sold in commercial book stores. The other version was sold at a discounted price within AA.

FRIGHT REGION

**1960 Convention**

Long Beach, California, was approved by the Conference as the site for the International A.A. Convention in the fall of 1960. This decision is subject to final approval by the Board of Trustees in Long Beach, or to withdrawal by the Board of Trustees in Long Beach, or to withdrawal by the Board of Trustees in Long Beach, or to withdrawal by the Board of Trustees in Long Beach.

**Institutional Groups**

One of the most important items to come before the 1958 Conference was the problem of institutional groups. The Board of Trustees has approved the following guidelines for institutional groups:

1. Institutional groups should be organized as an integral part of the conference, and should not be organized as a separate entity.
2. Institutional groups should be organized as an integral part of the conference, and should not be organized as a separate entity.
3. Institutional groups should be organized as an integral part of the conference, and should not be organized as a separate entity.

**Delegates' Term, Numbers**

The Board of Trustees has approved the following guidelines for delegates:

1. Delegates should be elected for a term of one year.
2. Delegates should be elected by a vote of the members of the conference.
3. Delegates should be elected by a vote of the members of the conference.

SOUTHWEST REGION

**Policy**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON POLICY:**

1. The Conference recommends that the Board of Trustees should be authorized to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the policy of the Conference.
2. The Conference recommends that the Board of Trustees should be authorized to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the policy of the Conference.
3. The Conference recommends that the Board of Trustees should be authorized to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the policy of the Conference.

**Finance**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE:**

1. The Conference recommends that the Board of Trustees should be authorized to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the policy of the Conference.
2. The Conference recommends that the Board of Trustees should be authorized to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the policy of the Conference.
3. The Conference recommends that the Board of Trustees should be authorized to take such action as may be necessary to carry out the policy of the Conference.

**Agenda**

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:**

1. The Board of Trustees has approved the following agenda for the 1958 Conference:
2. The Board of Trustees has approved the following agenda for the 1958 Conference:
3. The Board of Trustees has approved the following agenda for the 1958 Conference:

International Conventions To Continue

General Service Conference - April 1958

Although the "official" estimated attendance of the 1955 Convention was 5,000, there were only 3,800 actual paid registrations which led to a \$25,000 deficit - a huge sum in 1955 (equivalent to almost \$200,000 today). Greatly concerned, the Board Trustees agreed that the 2nd international convention of 1955 should be AA's last international convention.

The 1958 Conference decided otherwise and authorized a 25th Anniversary and 3rd International Convention to be held in 1960. Long Beach and San Francisco both wanted the event. The Delegates from Southern and Northern California flipped a coin and Long Beach won.

The 1958 Conference also recommended that the name "General Service HQ" be changed to "General Service Office."

## AA Preamble Changed - April 1958

**ADVISORY ACTIONS**

**Literature**

**REPORT OF CONFERENCE LITERATURE COMMITTEE:**

The following recommendations are presented to the Conference by the Literature Committee.

1. Consider the feasibility of a possible to include the literature for the next year situation, a complete list might be available to you, and considered that there is no need for such a possible in the present year report.
2. In general, A.A. groups require such kind of information through a sponsoring organization or the meetings.
3. The responsibility for sending information about A.A. in local and to various for local A.A. groups and services.
4. Have the use of copies of literature in a number of local areas and centers, this may be an organized need of the present time for a national office of material and to send for A.A. Publishing, Inc. or many such as now.
5. Approved the recommendations for A.A. Publishing, Inc. for a new book, book of foreign language or words.
6. Reorganized the report use of the word "honest" before "honest to stop drinking" and to include that the "honest to stop" of the members of the A.A. members, that change to be set in the literature of A.A. Publishing, Inc.
7. Have these items on hand for a possible in the A.A. literature, recommend that the list to prepare. They are, suggest that in the A.A. Publishing, Inc. "honest" Committee might be set in the A.A. Publishing, Inc. and to use. That the present the "honest" word should be a general meeting where a list can be made with each of members, to distribute.
8. Think the present arrangements of literature on the the front of the the "honest" booklets to distribute, and that a committee that would send each copy to each area.
9. Recommend the word "honest" in the "Third Layer" that set in the year a letter of A.A. in possible form.
10. Do not think there is sufficient need for A.A. Publishing, Inc. to distribute such kind of literature, and that the "honest" word should be set in the year a letter of A.A. in possible form.
11. Refer to A.A. Publishing, Inc. the suggestion that the "honest" word should be set in the year a letter of A.A. in possible form, and that a committee that would send each copy to each area.
12. Approve the request for A.A. Publishing, Inc. that they set in the year a letter of A.A. in possible form, and that a committee that would send each copy to each area.

*Report adopted unanimously.*

**Grapevine**

**THE 1958 GRAPPEVINE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Considered use of 48 pages when feasible and consistent in the judgment of the Grapevine Board of Trustees.
2. That a national office of the Grapevine Committee be followed with the Grapevine and to prepare recommendations concerning the main portion of the office.
3. That the national office be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Literature Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Grapevine Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine.
4. That the national office be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Literature Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine.
5. That the national office be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Literature Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine.
6. That the national office be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Literature Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine.
7. That the national office be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Literature Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine.
8. That the national office be established in the year one with the Grapevine and that the Literature Committee be established in the year one with the Grapevine.

*Report adopted unanimously.*

**Word "Honest" Removed**

### AA Preamble Changed - April 1958

The 1958 Conference also approved removing the word "honest" from the term "honest desire to stop drinking" in the AA Preamble. AA legend sometimes erroneously states that the word "honest" was removed from Tradition 3. Neither the long nor short form of Tradition 3 ever contained the word "honest." The term "honest desire to stop drinking" is from the Foreword to the first edition Big Book.

In the continuing debate over the trustee ratio (which was to go on for 6 more years) the 1958 Conference proposed that the Board be changed from 8 nonalcoholic and 7 AA trustees to 9 of each and that this proposal be taken back to the areas and be decided upon at the 1959 Conference.

## Partners In AA - 1958

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1958

1980

2006

2007

Goldmine Of Information To Help Groups Practice The Traditions And Concepts

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### Partners In AA - 1958

The 1958 Conference approved a pamphlet titled "Partners In AA" as an informal handbook for members and groups. In 1980 it was renamed to "The AA Group" pamphlet. The pamphlet is a goldmine of information for helping groups practice the Traditions and Concepts.

## Days of Wine and Roses - 1958 and 1962



AA Actively Cooperated In Its Production

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### Days of Wine and Roses - 1958/1962

J P Miller's "Days of Wine and Roses" premiered in 1958 on CBS-TV's Playhouse 90. It starred Cliff Robertson (as Joe Clay) and Piper Laurie (as Joe's wife Kirsten). AA actively cooperated in its production. The story centered on Joe's testimony at an AA meeting. The ending found him in recovery but his wife continued to drink and abandoned Joe and their daughter.

The Warner Brothers movie premiered in 1962 starring Jack Lemmon and Lee Remick. The TV version portrayed the story as occurring in NY. The film version was set in San Francisco. Nominated for several Academy Awards, it won for Best Song



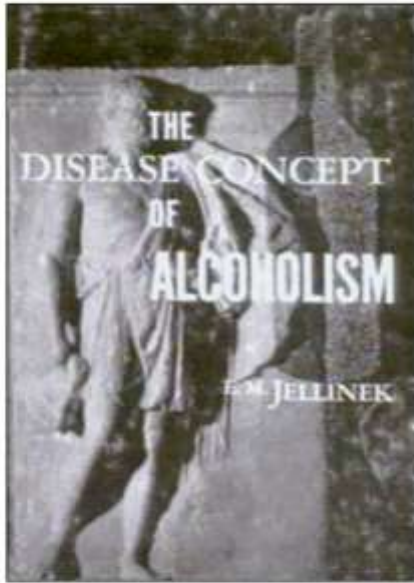




Board Approved The Change In October 1960

AAWS - April 1959

The 1959 Conference also voted to change the corporate name "Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing" to "Alcoholics Anonymous World Services." The board approved the change in October 1960. The Conference also voted not to change the trustee ratio as proposed by the 1958 Conference.



E M Jellinek and Bill W

Myth: Dr Silkworth was the first US physician to call alcoholism a “disease”

Professor E M Jellinek was not a physician - he was a biostatistician and the first editor of the “Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol.” He later was an alcoholism consultant to the World Health Organization.

In 1960, he wrote a book titled “The Disease Concept of Alcoholism” which advanced the concept among the medical community.

Neither Dr Silkworth nor Bill W ever used the term “disease” to describe alcoholism. They both preferred to use terms such as “malady” or “illness” and deliberately avoided the use of the word “disease.”

Alcoholism is not described as a disease in either the basic text of the Big Book (including the forewords) or in the 12&12.



Theme: Recovery, Unit, Service

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### 25th Anniversary - 3rd International - Long Beach, CA - July 1-3, 1960

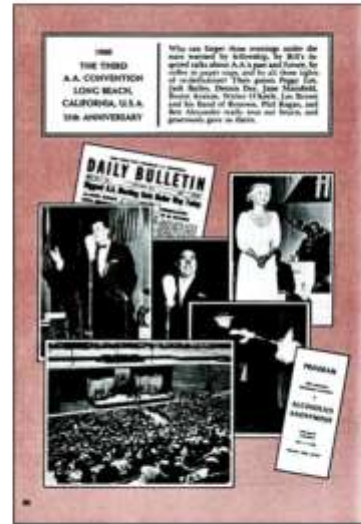
AA's 25th Anniversary and 3rd International Convention was held at the Long Beach, CA Veterans Memorial Stadium from July 1-3, 1960. There were nearly 8,900 attendees (more than twice that at St. Louis) but major problems persisted prior to and during the Convention.

A record cold spell hit Long Beach and nobody had brought any warm clothes. In contrast to St. Louis where Nell Wing wrote that they almost melted, in Long Beach they almost froze in the open-air stadium.

Bill W was a bit long winded and his talk went on for over 2 hours. To make matters worse, the PA system did not work well and anyone seated on the stage couldn't hear a word for the entire two hours. Bill later was teased about his "Deep-freeze Talk" as he himself described it. Amazingly, according to Nell Wing, almost everyone stayed until the end, shivering and shaking.

The other memorable feature of the Convention was that Long Beach ran out of coffee.





Grapevine Memento

### 25th Anniversary - 3rd International - Long Beach, CA - July 1960

The AA Grapevine published a large, hard-cover souvenir book of the 25th Anniversary titled "AA Today." It became so popular that it was later reprinted.

The entertainment produced by the California members was an all-star show. Some of Hollywood's brightest stars performed and all donated their talent without charge.

## Twelve Concepts For World Service Manuscript - April 1962



Unanimously Approved

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Twelve Concepts for World Service Manuscript - April 1962

Grapevine Director Mary B (Bernson) from Chappaqua, NY joined the General Service Board in 1962 as the first woman Class B Trustee.

The 1962 Conference unanimously approved Bill W's manuscript titled "Twelve Concepts for World Service." With the publication of this book all the spiritual principles of AA's Three Legacies were defined and explained in detail.

The Conference also reaffirmed that a majority of non-alcoholics be retained on the General Service Board and voted to enlarge the Board from 15 to 19 trustees. It was proposed that, after a 1-year review, the 1963 Conference consider a 6-region zoning plan to elect Class B trustees at 6-year intervals.

September 1962

## How The Twelve Steps Were Born

*By Bill*

**A**t 17 William Street, Newark, New Jersey, Henry had an office which was the headquarters for a rapidly failing business. He also had a secretary named Ruth. The other guests consisted of a huge desk and some plush furniture.

Each morning I traveled all the way from Brooklyn to Newark where, peeing up and down at Henry's office, I began to dictate rough drafts of the chapters of the coming book. I worked from a hastily drawn-up list of possible chapter headings. Work after work, Henry moved around among the stack subscribers, grading them for money. Much of their funds had to be devoted to office expenses and groceries for Henry, Ruth, Lois, and myself, and we kept going on this basis until April, 1936, the publication date of the book *Alcoholic Awareness*.

As the chapters were slowly roughed out I read those to the New York group at its weekly meeting in our parlor at Clinton Street. Copies were sent to Dr. Sells for checking and criticism in Akron, where we had nothing but the support. But in the New York meeting the chapters got a real working. I indicated them and Ruth scribbled them over and over.

So the job went until we reached the famous Chapter 5. Up to that time I had done my own story and had drafted three more chapters with the titles "There Is a Solution," "More About Alcoholism," and "We Agnostics." It was now realized that we had enough background and wisdom-sharing material, and that at this point we would have to sell how our program for recovery from alcoholism really worked. The backbone of the book would have to be fitted in right here. This problem had severely worried the life out of me. I had never written anything before and neither had any other members of the New York group. The handling over the four chapters already finished had really been terrific. I was exhausted. On more a day I felt like throwing the book and the window.

I was in this anything-but-spiritual mood on the night when the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous were written. I was new and tried clear through. I lit a bed at 192 Clinton Street with pencil in hand and with a tablet of scratch paper on my knee. I could not get my mind on the job, much less get my heart in it. But here was one of those things that had to be done. Slowly my mind came into some kind of focus.

Since Elby's visit to me in the fall of 1934 we had gradually evolved what we called "the seven-of-month program." Most of the basic ideas had come from the Oxford Group, William James, and Dr. Schweitzer. Though subject to considerable variation, it all boiled down into a pretty consistent procedure which encompassed six steps. These were approximately as follows:

1. We admitted that we were licked, that we were powerless over alcohol.
2. We made a moral inventory of our defects or sins.
3. We confessed or shared our shortcomings with another person in confidence.
4. We made restitution to all those we had harmed by our drinking.
5. We tried to help other alcoholics, with no thought of reward or prestige.
6. We prayed to whatever God we thought there was for power to practice these precepts.

This was the substance of what, by the fall of 1939, we were telling newcomers. Several of the Oxford Group's other ideas and attitudes had been definitely rejected, including any which could involve us in theological controversy. An important feature there was still considerable disagreement between the Emory and the Malvern supporters. Our people and there were still active Oxford Group members, while we in New York had withdrawn a year before. In Akron and vicinity they still talked about the Oxford Group's absolute, absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love. This awe was found to be too rich for New Yorkers and we had abandoned the expression. But all of us, East and West, were placing increasing emphasis on Dr. Schweitzer's expression describing the alcoholic's dilemma: the obsession plus the ability. By now we knew from experience that the new program had to accept Step One or get no place.

This particular evening, as my mind ran over these developments, it



Extract From AA Comes Of Age

### How the Steps Were Born - September 1962

The September 1962 Grapevine carried an extract from the book "AA Comes of Age" in which Bill W explains the origin of the 12 Steps. The title of the article is "How the Steps Were Born."







Theme: Responsibility

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### 30th Anniversary - 4th International - Toronto, Canada - July 1965

AA's 30th anniversary and 4th International Convention took place at Toronto, Ontario, Canada from July 2-4, 1965. Over 10,000 people gathered at the Royal York Hotel and the Maple Leaf Gardens Arena to celebrate. The theme was "Responsibility."

It was truly "International" as it was held in Canada and was the first to attract planeloads of AA members from 30 foreign countries.



Souvenir Book

### 30th Anniversary - 4th International - Toronto, Canada - July 1965

A 30th Anniversary souvenir book was produced which captured in words and pictures the growth of AA up to 1965. Emphasizing its international nature, the book contained the Steps and Traditions in 11 languages. It was not only a success at the Convention, but its format was closely followed 20 years later in the 50th Anniversary souvenir book.

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - 4<sup>th</sup> International - Toronto, Canada - July 1965

JUNE 1965

**An outline of the program for the 30th Anniversary International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous**  
TORONTO, CANADA - JULY 24, 1965

**THURSDAY - JULY 1**

Registration on the Convention Message from 10 a.m.  
The Convention Opens in a dance at the Royal York, beginning at 9 p.m. There will be four bands in different ballrooms so that you can pick your tempo, enjoy dancing, various kinds of ballroom dancing, and for the bandy, rock and roll.

**FRIDAY - JULY 2**

9 a.m. Six different workshops in panel discussions. Topics will be as follows: 1) International AA, 2) Public Information, 3) Special Purpose Groups within AA, 4) AA's General Service Conference, 5) Young People in AA, 6) Communication within AA, 7) AA's Cooperation with Others, 8) AA Groups in Prisons and Hospitals, 9) The AA Group, 10) General Office and Supervisors, 11) Group Experience, 12) Internationalists, Leaders and Founding AAs.

10:30 a.m. Two Panel Meetings: 1) AA and Industry, with non-AA speakers Nigel M. Smart and Luther Cloud, M.D., plus an AA speaker, 2) AA and The Courts, with non-AA speakers Judge John M. Sturough and Judge Edward Daly, plus an AA speaker.

10:30 a.m. A Panel AA Meeting.

1:30 p.m. Two Panel Meetings: 1) AA and the Clergy, with non-AA speakers the Rev. Earl S. Lammochlager and the Rev. Dr. Howard Chambliss, Jr., plus an AA speaker, 2) AA and Public Information, with non-AA speakers Herbert Corliss, J. P. Miller, and George H. Collins.

2:30 p.m. First General Session of the Convention at the Maple Leaf Gardens. Bill W. plans to tell his story at this meeting, and there will be other speakers.

**ALSO NOTICED**

In addition to the program listed, there will be altitudes—conducted only by AAs—in Public and Seminars at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 12 noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m., and again at multiple. Check your local program for the exact schedule for each altitude.

**AA's fourth Quinquennial Convention**

**HEADQUARTERS: AA Royal York Hotel 43-43RD King Edward Hotel**

**SATURDAY - JULY 3**

9 a.m. Six different workshops in panel discussions for AAs. Topics will be as follows listed above under "9 a.m. Friday."

10:30 a.m. Three Panel Meetings: 1) AA and Education, with non-AA speakers Robert Robinson, Sister Mary Andrew, and Selma Bacon, 2) Hospital Work in the Field of Alcoholism, with non-AA speakers Ralph Davis, Mary E. (Al-Anon), and Philip M. Morgan, 3) A panel on AA in Hospitals and Rehabilitation Facilities with non-AA speakers Robert Wagner, M.D., Jerome Morris, and Phyllis E. Seyler.

2:30 p.m. Two Panel Meetings: 1) AA and the Medical Profession, with non-AA speakers A. S. MacPherson, M.D., Marvin A. Beck, M.D., and a doctor in AA, 2) AA in Prisons, with non-AA speakers F. F. Miller, Myrl E. Alexander, and an AA speaker.

2:30 p.m. An AA Meeting on AA "Round the World."

8 p.m. Second General Convention Session in the Maple Leaf Gardens. Bill W. will speak on the Convention theme: Responsibility. There will be other speakers.

**SUNDAY - JULY 4**

11 a.m. Sunday Morning Meeting on God as We Understand Him, with non-AA speakers the Rev. Roland Boyd S.J., and the Rev. Gene Robinson, plus Bill W. and another AA speaker.

8 p.m. All-Star Show at the Maple Leaf Gardens. Entertainment by a big cast of professionals. You won't want to miss this last session of AA's biggest jam-together ever!

**PROGRAMS**

Private, Alcohol Programs going strong and the names assigned for the various sessions of the Convention will be available when the notice is received. We hope that this outline will help you in your drinking which sessions you may want to attend.—The Editors.

**Our first International Convention outside the U.S.**

### Program

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## 30th Anniversary - 4th International - Toronto, Canada - July 1965

Some 250 members of AA, Al-Anon and Alateen, plus 24 internationally known nonalcoholic authorities on alcoholism, were featured speakers at 69 jam-packed sessions.

Bill W and Lois were, of course, prominent on the program and many pioneer old-timers were still active and at the convention. The crowd filled the Maple Leaf Gardens arena Friday night to hear Bill W speak about AA's history and to hear Lois W tell the Al-Anon story.



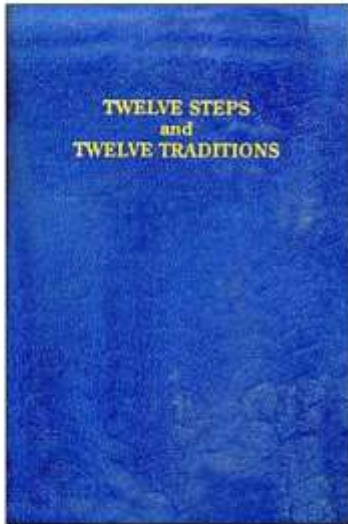
Responsibility Pledge or Responsibility Declaration

30th Anniversary - 4th International - Toronto, Canada - July 1965

The crowd returned Saturday night for a program built around the Convention theme of "Responsibility." From behind an immense banner at the rear of the stage, 90 General Service Conference Delegates and members from all over the world joined the Trustees already seated there.

All attendees rose, clasped hands, and led by Bill and Lois recited the Responsibility Declaration in unison saying: "I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that, I am responsible."

The Declaration was written for the occasion by Board Trustee and past Grapevine Editor Al S.



Pocket Size 12&12



Video Scene - Bill's Own Story

30th Anniversary - 4th International - Toronto, Canada - July 1965

The pocket-sized gift edition of the 12&12 was introduced at the Convention and the film, "Bill's Own Story" was shown for the first time.

The city of Toronto got into the AA spirit as well. Harrison Trice, a nonalcoholic Trustee, walked into the bar at the Royal York Hotel and ordered a drink. Noticing his customer's AA badge, the bartender refused him. "No slips in here" he said.

Another historic precedent occurred when Bill W suggested for the first time that the crowd join hands as they said the Lord's Prayer to close the Big Meeting.



*In Remembrance of "Ebby"*

*By Bill*

**I**n his seventieth year, and on the twenty-first of March, my friend and sponsor "Ebby" passed beyond our sight and hearing.

On a dull November afternoon in 1934 it was Ebby who had brought me the message that saved my life. Still more importantly, he was the bearer of the Gospel and of the principles that shortly afterward led to my spiritual awakening. This was truly a call to new life in the Spirit. It was the kind of rebirth that has since become the most precious possession of each and all of us.

As I looked upon him whose he by no means equal, I was amazed by poignant reminders of all the years I had known and loved him.

There were manifestations of those years days in a Vermont boarding school. After the war years we were sometimes together, then drinking of course. Alcohol, we thought, was the answer for all difficulties, a

variable alibi for good living.

Then there was that absurd episode of 1925. Ebby and I went up an airplane again in Albany. Each day we remembered that a new airfield had been constructed in Vermont, on a pasture near my own home town. The opening day was close at hand. Then came the intoxicating thought: If only we could hire a plane we'd beat the opening by several days, thus making aviation history ourselves! Fortunately, Ebby rented a pilot friend out of bed, and for a stiff price we engaged him and his small craft. We saw the very father a wire announcing the time of our arrival. In enthusiasm, we took to the air, greatly elated—and very high.

Somewhere our rather light plane set us down on the field. A large crowd, including the village head and a welcoming committee, hastily alerted his fist. The pilot then dis-

**Sober For 2 ½ Years When He Passed Away**

Ebby T - March 21, 1966

On March 21, 1966 Ebby T (Thacher) died of emphysema. Some members believe that he died drunk. It's not true. He was 2 ½ years sober when he died. Bill W loyally referred to Ebby as his sponsor throughout his life.

In Ebby's last years, when he was gravely ill, Bill W made an appeal to the General Service Board and General Service Conference for financial help for Ebby.

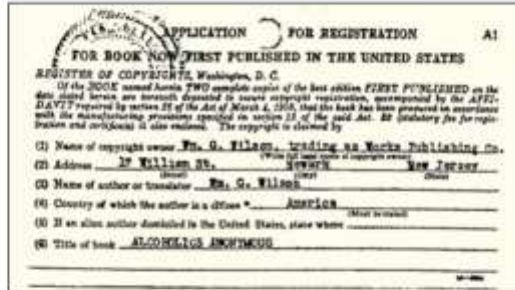
In 1963, the Conference approved the GSB Trustees' action in making a special monthly grant to Ebby of \$200 per month (\$1,300 today). (the book Pass It On, pg 393, says this occurred in 1961)

The 1963 Conference advisory action cited Ebby as "the man who helped co-founder Bill W achieve sobriety and who was indirectly responsible for creation of the AA Fellowship."





Big Book Copyright Lapses - April 1967



Only Expired in US - Still in Force Outside The US By Treaty Agreement

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Big Book Copyright Lapses - April 1967

In April 1967 the US copyright to the first edition Big Book expired and was not renewed. The oversight was not discovered until nearly 20 years later in 1985. It was also discovered in 1985 that the US copyright to new material in the second edition had lapsed in 1983.

It should be noted however that the Big Book copyright has expired only in the US. It is still in force outside the US under international treaty agreements.

## The Serenity Prayer In The Grapevine - April 1967

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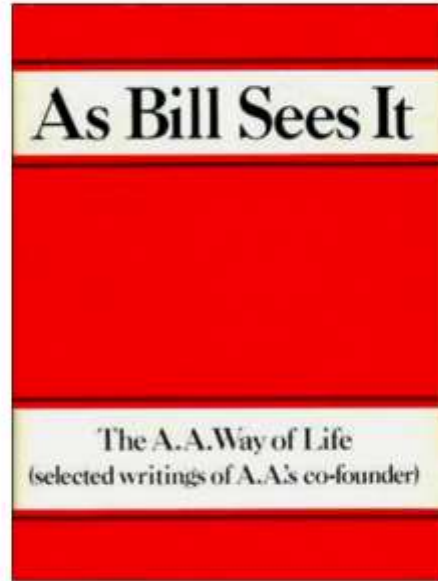
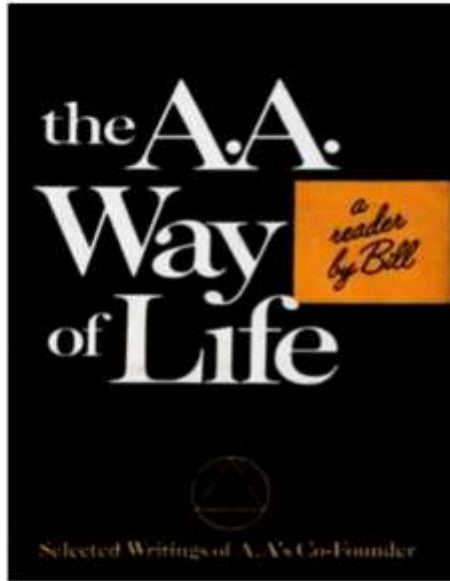


Most Often Repeated Grapevine Cover

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### The Serenity Prayer in the Grapevine - 1967

The 1967 General Service Conference adopted an advisory action that "The Serenity Prayer be incorporated into the Grapevine's regular monthly format." The Grapevine covers shown are the most often repeated cover in Grapevine publication history and frequently appears in April.



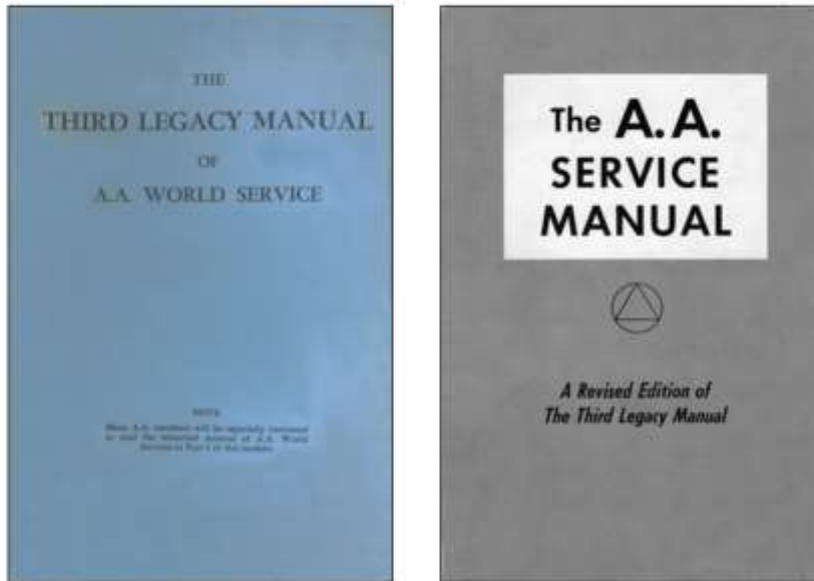
6<sup>th</sup> And Last Book Written By Bill W

The AA Way of Life - April 1967

The 1967 Conference approved publication of "The AA Way of Life." In 1975 the book was renamed to "As Bill Sees It." This was the 6th and last book written by Bill W.

The AA Service Manual - April 1969

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The AA Service Manual - April 1969

The 1969 Conference approved the revision of "The Third Legacy Manual of AA World Service" and renaming it to "The AA Service Manual."

## First World Service Meeting - October 9-11, 1969

October 1969

A memo from *Bill*

### The First World Service Meeting

**S**URELY the time will come when our vast AA population may well exceed that of the United States and Canada. In *The Third Degree Manual* and in other writings, the principle has already been enunciated that the General Service Office in New York should one day become the "center service center" among a number of national and regional offices around the globe. This attitude has already been of immense value in forwarding our effort overseas. It has banished all possible suspicion that GSO in New York is going to run the whole world of AA.

It is obvious that we cannot actually manage and conduct public information and relations with medicine and religion in South Africa, Australia, the British Isles, or anywhere else for that matter. In the area of business, distribution centers are needed that take into account both language and shipping problems. We are too remote to do these jobs, and for psychological reasons we should never make the attempt.

But we can help by sharing with other countries the story—our history and experience of GSO. AA is taking a giant step toward

worldwide AA unity in New York, October 9-11, 1969.

The first World Service Meeting will be held for three days, bringing twenty-six Delegates from twelve countries overseas, the area of Central America, and the North American Conference. These Delegates will sit in sharing conferences in New York with Trustees on the General Service Board and the staffs of GSO and the Grapevine.

This meeting is of course undertaken with the approval of our General Service Board, the North American Conference, and the Boards or Committees of all participating countries.

The objectives of the World Service Meeting are: (1) to consider the future development of World Services; (2) to strengthen general-service work already existing abroad; (3) to increase the number of service centers; (4) to provide for those an outside place of evolution; (5) to assist in strengthening their self-support.

We welcome our Delegate friends from around the world as we join together to assure that help will always be available for the sick alcoholic wherever he is or whatever language he speaks.

*The story of AA around the world begins above with the sick and suffering alcoholic. In whatever foreign place he finds AA, his personal recovery builds AA in that place. On the following pages the Congress presents personal AA experiences from some of these foreign places.*

26 Delegates From Overseas, Central America And North American Conference

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## First World Service Meeting - October 9-11, 1969

The first World Service Meeting was held from October 9-11, 1969. Twenty-six Delegates from overseas, Central America and the North American Conference joined with the Trustees of the General Service Board and staff from AAWS and Grapevine in New York City.

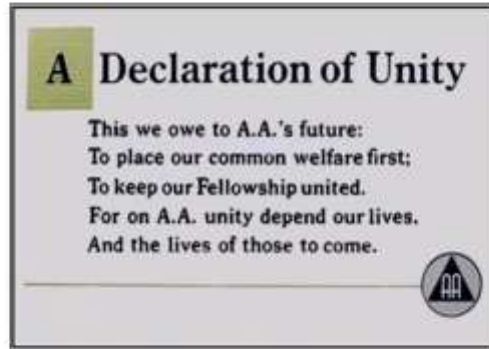


Theme: Unity

### 35th Anniversary - 5th International - Miami Beach, FL - July 1970

Over 10,000 attendees from 50 states and 27 countries met in the Miami, FL Convention Hall in July 1970 for AA's 5th International Convention and 35th Anniversary. Attendance was around the same as Toronto. The convention theme was "Unity."

Despite his severely ill health, Bill flew to Miami with his wife Lois a few days before the convention. His health had steadily weakened due to emphysema. He was confined to a wheel-chair and required the administration of oxygen. It became clear that he would not be able to keep his scheduled appearances. Bernard B Smith, filled in for Bill W at the last moment.



Bill W's Last Public Appearance

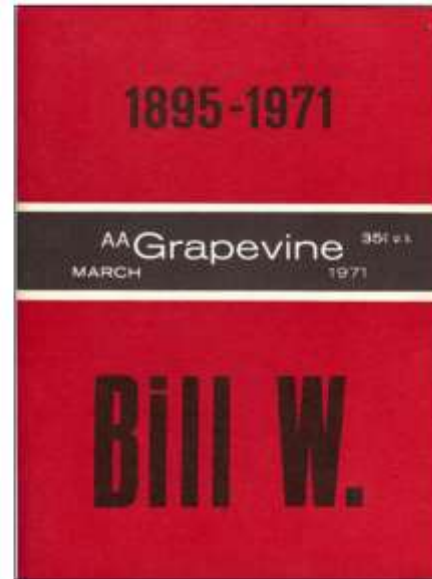
### 35th Anniversary - 5th International - Miami Beach, FL - July 1970

Two dances started the 1970 festivities on Thursday night. By 8am Friday crowds were thronging into 7 large AA meeting rooms and 5 Al-Anon rooms for simultaneous programs. Over the next two-and-a-half days there were 75 sessions including a Spanish-language alkathon.

The film, "Bill Discusses the Twelve Traditions" was introduced. A luncheon was held for Conference Delegates from Panel 1 thru 20 and has become a feature of every Convention since.

In an effort to emulate the Toronto experience, the Saturday night meeting ended with the attendees reciting the Declaration of Unity: "This we owe to AA's future: to place our common welfare first; To keep our fellowship united. For on AA unity depend our lives, And the lives of those to come."

It was a moving moment, but without Bill to lead the ceremony, it had neither the impact nor the enduring quality of the "I Am Responsible" Declaration. To those who attended the Miami Convention, all other memories pale beside the emotional moment when Bill W appeared on Sunday morning and made what proved to be his last brief talk.



One Of Life Magazine's 100 Most Important Figures Of The 20<sup>th</sup> Century

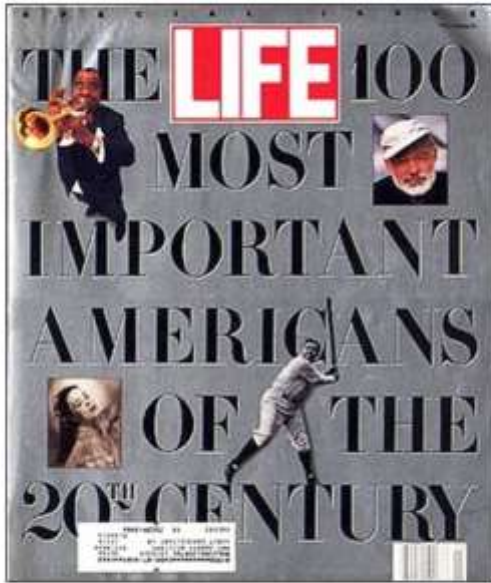
William Griffith Wilson - RIP January 24, 1971

On January 24, 1971 William Griffith Wilson (age 75) co-founder of AA, 36 years sober, died at 11:30PM at the Miami Heart Institute in Miami Beach, FL.

The date was also Bill and Lois' 53rd wedding anniversary.

Bill W was the architect and author of AA's 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service, and all the written works that explained them. This was an amazing achievement. He had no training at all as a writer.





Life and Time Magazine - 20<sup>th</sup> Century Notables

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William Griffith Wilson - RIP January 24, 1971

In 1990, Life Magazine named Bill W as one of the 100 most important Americans of the 20th century. Similarly, in 1999, Time Magazine named Bill W as one of the 100 international heroes and icons of the 20th century.

# Short Form of the Twelve Concepts - April 1971

**Delegate's Report to Area-I**

Knowing that I could count on the full support of my committee I was able to generate a schedule of activities throughout the week for the reports. In this manner, a time-consuming and sometimes arduous task was eliminated. In the same time I requested that the term "Working Member" be employed and that time be allocated for a general and active period. In this way I hoped to have a lot of the "working" character to delegate's report as "A.A. action."

On the return from the 1970 conference I was contacted by the Board of the District conference to be assigned the following year only with the business as reported for with the conference staff. I felt that depending on my plans to take the Oregon membership with me on the forthcoming journey, I could depend on my old services as being in compliance, if necessary to assist, however not under A.A. and the staff, the various, the delegates to meet in their minds the true image of the conference conference, also composed of different men and women, scientific and reasonable, and are working together for the common good.

A great honor in giving the report to the board/heads which members of the conference presenting to the Conference I would have been within it. I realize with my report, I thought to add more full/working thoughts and ideas of me, as the members of the board/heads give a welcome hand with me.

**Delegate's Report to Area-II**

In giving the delegate's report to area meetings I tried to be forthwith in that of what a delegate's duties are, how to be heard in on the subject of general Conference and attend of what is report. This I described the nature of the Conference, stating the fact that one delegate only the heavy influence which is felt in the hour they make up/Conference Conference, covering past events of kinds of A.A. activities, and all delegates had the same in the Conference program for discussion of all activities following the conference.

Following this, I described the role that U.S. office and/region highlights from successful, including Eric R. Johnson speech and Richard Smith's description of the early history and development of the General Service Conference, as well as his description of why it is needed. Then I gave brief outline of major reports to business and staff as well as information regarding the status of A.A. - that A.A. can never become so great as to mean that we cannot afford to use what is around the hand of technology in activities wherever they may be. We must be flexible without becoming so loose that our methods and our message get scattered items. We must maintain stability without becoming so rigid that we cannot find to meet the changing needs of a shifting population.

A delegate's effectiveness depends on how well he is able to transmit the information to his committee members and how well he can report them to give on the information and the new information to G.S.C., group and social affairs and organization. -John E.

**Delegates Host Delegates**

A was selected and successful group/organized meeting by delegates was held on Monday afternoon, April 19, at the hotel New York.

Panel 10 played host to the meeting Panel 11 delegates. Many of them present had been in the night before, but the Monday evening was so late in holding the Panel 10, where the group/organized meeting was held. The delegates were invited with the keynote still to be given. Delegates, via, with drinks and other were served. The delegates plan, passed on their budget as executive was on a discussion held in an hour.

The chairman, delegate C. also receiving a short welcome to all, asked for a moment of silence in memory of Bill and then turned the meeting over to Betty B., the delegate from Atlanta. Betty called upon many delegates from their seats to support their A.A. activities from delegates. The time limit, for the most part, was observed to end the afternoon, the filled with more meeting and meeting events.

Later some of the members joined the gathering and some of them also gave their A.A. stories. Dr. Green also personally meeting, expressing his thanks to the delegates for their kind thought to be shared from their other day. Some death.

There seemed to be an opinion in the minds of all who attended that this group/organized meeting was very successful and should become a part of the Conference. It was being reported to the members of Panel 22 using the Panel 11 delegates/committee report and it was observed that a great A.A. meeting was reported to all - and finished.

**NEW MEETING PLACE FOR 1972 CONFERENCE**

On the basis of action taken by the delegates' this meeting that the 1972 Conference be held at another hotel, regional level have been completed with the Board/heads and we will action them next year.

**SHORT FORM OF THE TWELVE CONCEPTS**

The 1971 General Service Conference approved the short form of the Twelve Concepts. They will be available from U.S.C.

## Short Form of the Twelve Concepts - April 1971

Three months after Bill W's death, the 1971 General Service Conference approved the "short form" of the Twelve Concepts for World Service.



AA's 1<sup>st</sup> Archivist



GSO Archives

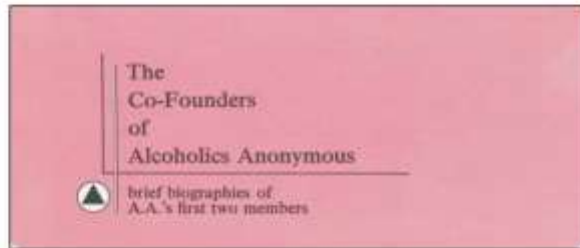
### Nell Wing - 1972

The 1972 Conference recommended that GSO prepare a clear-cut statement of what AA is and what it is not and unanimously agreed that “alcohol and pill” groups not be listed in AA directories and meeting lists.

In 1972, Nell Wing was appointed AA’s first Archivist. AA Archives opened at the General Service Office in 1973. The Trustees of the General Service Board formed an Archives Committee. Their first meeting was on October 24, 1973.

## The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous - 1972

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### The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous - 1972

Nell Wing submitted brief biographies of AA's co-founders in leaflet form to the Literature Committee for Conference approval. Two years later, she submitted a companion leaflet consisting of the co-founders' last talks. In 1978 the two were combined into a the Conference-approved pamphlet "The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous."



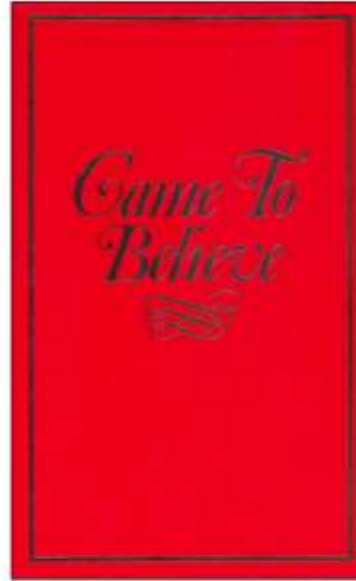
President Nixon and Dr Jack

1,000,000th Big Book (2nd Edition) - April 1973

Distribution of the Big Book reached the 1-million mark in 1973 during the span of the 2nd edition. The millionth copy was presented to President Richard Nixon in the Whitehouse by Dr John L Norris, Chair of the General Service Board of AA who was affectionately known in AA as "Dr Jack."

Came To Believe - April 1973

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1<sup>st</sup> Conference-approved Book Not Written By Bill W

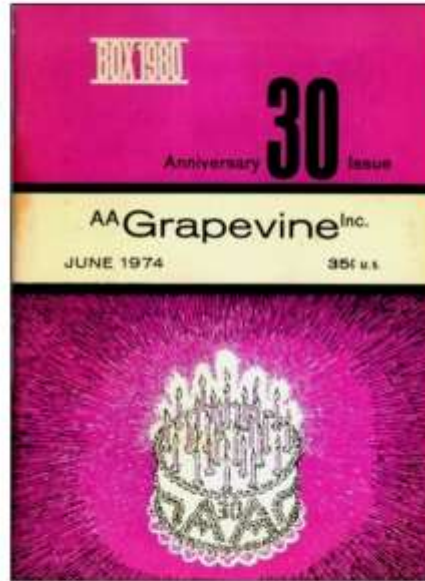
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Came To Believe - April 1973

The 1973 Conference approved publication of "Came To Believe." It was the first Conference-approved book that was not written by Bill W. The booklet is a collection of stories by AA members who tell in their own words what the phrase "spiritual awakening" means to them.

Box 1980 - June 1974

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Protection Of Member Anonymity

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Box 1980 - June 1974

In order to maintain subscriber's anonymity, the legal name of "The AA Grapevine" was changed in 1974 to "Box 1980." This was done to comply with postal regulations that required the corporate name of an organization be placed on official mailing envelopes and on the magazine itself.



Theme: Let It Begin With Me

#### 40th Anniversary - 6th International - Denver, CO - July 1975

Denver's Currigan Hall was chosen as the meeting site of AA's 40th Anniversary and 6th International Convention in July 1975. Its theme was "Let It Begin With Me." Attendance was around 20,000, almost twice that of the 1970 Miami Beach Convention. A replica of the Big Book dominated the stage and gave new meaning to the word "big." It was 28 feet tall. Pictures of Bill and Dr Bob were on each side of the Big Book.

For the first time, Friday night began with a flag ceremony. GSO office manager, Kleina J, conceived of the idea. It was such a success that it has become a tradition for intentional conventions ever since.

The 1975 International also had its difficulties. Workshop and panel meeting rooms were jammed-packed and the big meeting crowds overflowed Currigan Hall into a sports arena across the street where the talks were carried on closed-circuit TV. Thousands in Denver had paid registrations only to be unable to attend sessions because of the crowds.

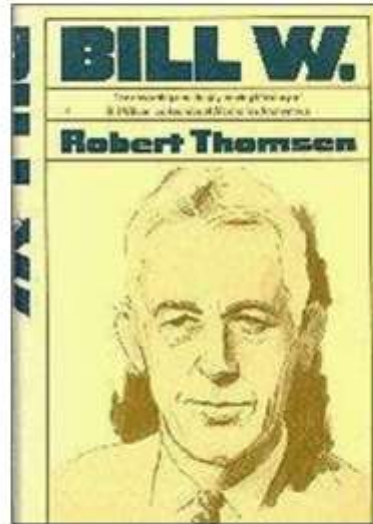


## Bill W Biography - 1974-1975

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Nell Wing



Biography of Bill W

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### Bill W Biography - 1974-1975

Nell Wing was at the International to tape oral histories from the many old-timers present. Nell attended the 1975 International as AA's first Archivist.

A reminder of the origins of AA (and the passing of Bill W) was provided by GSO's sale of the book "Bill W" by Robert Thomsen. It was sold out by Friday noon. The book was not Conference-approved and distribution by GSO was later stopped by Conference advisory action.



Crowds, Crowds, Crowds

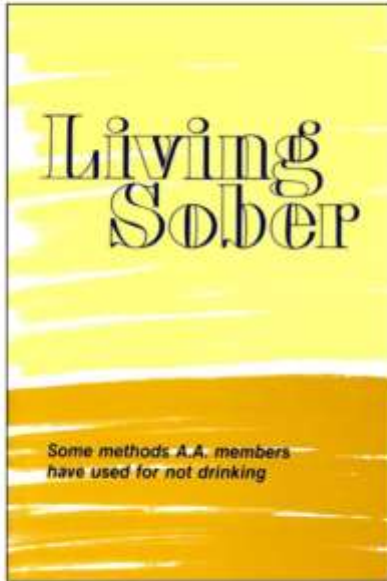
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#### 40th Anniversary - 6th International - Denver, CO - July 1975

Anticipating great demand for coffee, a local "entrepreneur" rigged the world's largest coffee maker. Nell Wing reported that "It had a capacity of 50,000 cups a day, brewed in huge tanks and piped to a bank of dozens of spigots. It was the talk of the convention but the main attitude on flavor was "I've had better!"

The 1975 International had its difficulties. Workshop and panel meeting rooms were jammed-packed and the big meeting crowds overflowed Currigan Hall into a sports arena across the street where the talks were carried on closed-circuit TV.

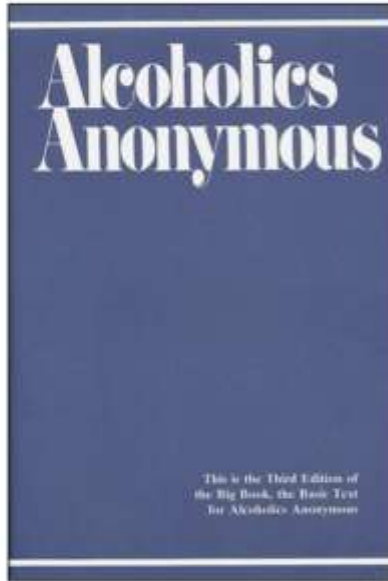
Nell Wing remembered that the fire department was a bit alarmed at the overcrowding of the halls. Thousands in Denver had paid registrations only to be unable to attend sessions because of the crowds.



### Living Sober - 1974-1975

The booklet "Living Sober" was published in 1975 (AACOA xi). It was written by AA member Barry L (Leach). When Conference-approved in 1974 it was originally titled "Staying Sober." Barry is shown in the center of the photograph to the right of Lois W.

# 1976 General Service Conference



3rd Edition Big Book Approved

Be noted will be referred to one for each region in the U.S. and two for each region in Canada. A maximum of six candidates for general service trustee (G.S.T.) and a maximum of four for general service trustee-at-large will be presented at the spring meeting of the Conference. The nature of the candidates will be given in the secretary of the member Nominating Conference following the election.

34. In the revised Step 8 regional forms, the presence of a separate category on "Employment in the Field of Alcoholism" seems to suggest that such employment is an appropriate recommendation in its general form. This category seems to have too much weight, and the committee suggests that before making any changes in the field of alcoholism for inclusion or removal in "Business Expenses," with a question such as "Are you a salaried employee in the field of alcoholism?"

**Conference Report and Changes**

**Chairman - Ann Smith (Florida)**

35. The "Index of Aged and Patients" was included in the Conference Charter at the time, but this is hereby deleted on page 113 of "The A.A. Service Manual" (1973) with the understanding that any form of the Twelve Concepts appears, stating: "The Twelve Concepts for world service (long form) should be studied to avoid."

36. Alcoholism is included by the 1976 General Service Conference that three committees suggesting content of these quarters of the respective groups for change or amendment would include the Twelve Steps of A.A. should any such change or amendment ever be proposed.

37. There is one change included in the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Steps, or the Six Warranties of Article 11, whereas the "Incorporated A.A. groups of the world" would be "Incorporated groups" appear in "The A.A. Service Manual" and "Twelve Concepts for World Service," a handbook written by several people. This would include all A.A. groups known to the general service offices around the world.

38. This all groups be presented to members in the A.A. A further suggestion: include in "The Bulletin Board" of the G.S.T.'s submission form every submission in the one group and hold one.

39. The committee reported from the Conference Committee on Finance and approved a number of changes to be made in "The A.A. Service Manual."

Meeting during the Conference, eight committees checked a new document and discussed changes from among its Panel 26 members, as follows:

Chairman	Members	Alternate Members
Agony	Steve Fuchs (Mich. 1971)	John Sullivan (Ill. 1971)
Conference Report and Charter	Ann Smith (Fla. 1971)	Paul Wright (Ill. 1971)
Finance	John Smith (Fla. 1971)	John Stappert (Fla. 1971)
Insurance	Bill Leonard (Ill. 1971)	John Kim (Ill. 1971)
Lawyer	"Tom" Green (Fla. 1971)	High Christensen (Fla. 1971)
Lawyer	Joe Lyle (Fla. 1971)	Kenneth Smith (Ill. 1971)
Conference Report and Charter	Magnum King (Fla. 1971)	Shelley Wray (Ill. 1971)
Public Information	Alan Baker (Fla. 1971)	Mary Lyle (Ill. 1971)
Cooperation with the Professional	Alan Baker (Fla. 1971)	Quentin Melvin (Ill. 1971)
On Finance	Stanley Green (Fla. 1971)	Clayton Ross (Fl. 1971)

**Delegates' Meeting**

At the meeting on Thursday evening, Steve Rosen (Illinois) presented a motion regarding changes in 1976, provided one a document that led to the following resolutions:

1. None of the meeting, Big G.S.T.'s attention to new needs and concerns raised by the regional problems with meetings and records, with G.S.T. or all delegates meeting, who they might do to cooperate with G.S.T. and when G.S.T. might do to cooperate with them.
2. None of the meeting, do so consent as strongly, using the format of the Conference for changes so that the Conference committee reports will be in Conference members' hands Thursday evening at Thursday afternoon, in simple form in those three before meeting on Friday morning.
3. It was the sense of the meeting that the delegates' meeting there to be conducted on any subject the delegates meet to discuss.
4. It was the sense of the meeting that the regional conferences meet first, and then to be joined out of each region and that process to be complete for delegates' election, Panel 27.
5. The delegates wanted to put in the minutes a note of appreciation to Ann Smith for the five job to lead them.
6. The delegates wanted to put in the minutes their appreciation for the five job that Mary Ellen Wirth, as Conference secretary, and other members of the General Service Office performed in putting on the Conference.
7. The Panel 26 delegates wanted to put in the minutes their note of appreciation for the Panel 27 delegates' organization and help.
8. Paul Fuchs (Illinois) of Columbia made a report outlining the book used and the areas where he had gone to reach the goal of 1000 (all groups) in conducting to G.S.T.
9. Joe Smith (Arizona) reported on delegates' chairman: Shelley Green (Illinois) alternate chairman.

Changes To Steps, Traditions And Warranties

## 1976 General Service Conference

The 1976 Conference approved publication of the 3rd edition Big Book. The Conference also expanded the provisions of Article 3 of the Permanent Conference Charter so that any change to the Steps, Traditions or Warranties would require written approval of 75% of the registered AA Groups known to General Service Offices around the world. This Conference advisory action effectively makes any proposed change to the Steps, Traditions and Warranties a virtual impossibility (even so much as adding or removing a comma).

Some members erroneously believe this restriction also applies to making changes to the basic text of the Big Book - it does not.

## Regional Forums - 1976

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Also Called "Mini-Conferences"

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## Regional Forums - 1976

The 1976 Conference recommended going forward with mini-conferences and providing them as often as possible. The sense of the meeting was for the time being the regional meetings should be known as "AA Regional Forums."



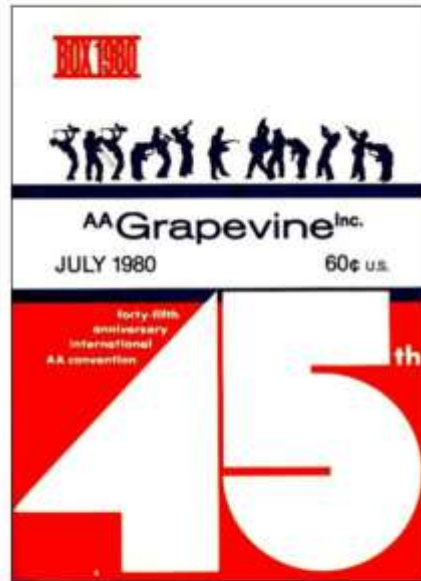
Theme: The Joy of Living

#### 45th Anniversary - 7th International - New Orleans, LA - July 1980

The New Orleans Superdome was the main site of the 45th Anniversary and 7th International Convention on July 3-6, 1980. The convention theme was "The Joy of Living."

The memory of the overcrowding with 20,000 attendees in Denver caused the GSO planning committee to budget New Orleans for 25,000 attendees. Unfortunately, the economy took a major downturn and a deadly heat-wave swept thru the south-central US. As a result, registrations fell short by 10% causing a deficit of over \$200,000 (equivalent to a half-million dollars today).

33 countries took part in the flag ceremony on Friday evening and simultaneous translation of the Big Meetings was provided in Spanish, French and German. A record 180 sessions were planned.



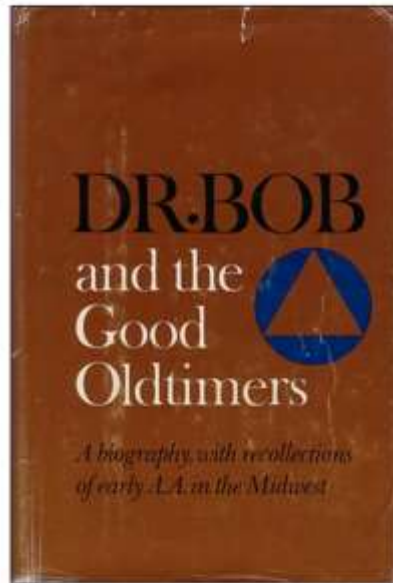
1<sup>st</sup> Genuine Marathon Meeting

263

#### 45th Anniversary - 7th International - New Orleans, LA - July 1980

The memory of the overcrowding with 20,000 attendees in Denver caused the GSO planning committee to budget New Orleans for 25,000 attendees. Unfortunately, the economy took a major downturn and a deadly heat-wave swept thru the south-central US. As a result, registrations fell short by 10% causing a deficit of over \$200,000 (equivalent to a half-million dollars today).

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Colorful And Detailed History

### Biography Of Dr Bob - 1980

The 1980 Conference approved publication of "Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers" which, in addition to being a biography of Dr Bob, gives a very colorful and detailed history of early AA in Akron and the mid-west. The book was distributed at the Convention.

As the throngs streamed into the Superdome on Friday and Saturday evening, they were greeted with New Orleans jazz by live bands. Famed Bourbon Street turned into "ice cream and coffee" street as mobs of AA's overran it - with signs in the windows of the jazz spots and strip joints proclaiming the change! The hotels also set up ice cream bars in their lobbies.





Lois W



Bob S - Smitty

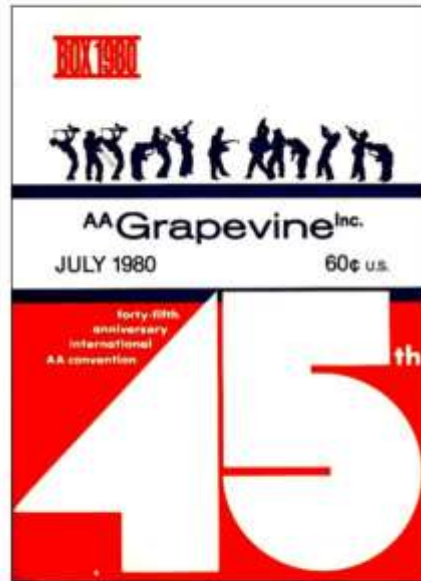
265

#### 45th Anniversary - 7th International - New Orleans, LA - July 1980

An archives workshop was presented for the first time. The films "Bill's Own Story" and "Bill Discusses the Traditions" were shown throughout the convention along with a new GSO Archives film called "Markings on the Journey."

Other surprises, at the Big Meeting Sunday, were even more memorable. Lois W made an appearance to the crowd's delight. Roberto C, from Italy, presented her with the first copy of the Big Book in Italian.

A speaker not on the program stepped to the microphone and said "My name is Bob S and I'm in Al-Anon." He continued saying "I am probably the only person here today who was present when Bill met Dr Bob. I am Dr Bob's only son!" The crowd burst into wild applause.



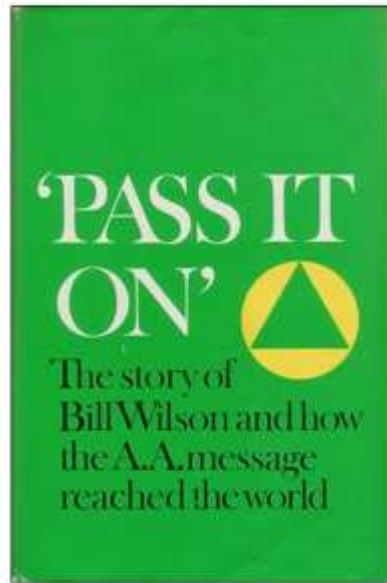
1<sup>st</sup> Genuine Marathon Meeting

266

#### 45th Anniversary - 7th International - New Orleans, LA - July 1980

The New Orleans Convention was the first to have a genuine "Marathon Meeting." It started at midnight on Thursday with the lighting of a candle which burned continuously. The meeting continued non-stop until Sunday morning. The meeting room was usually filled and overflowing no matter what the hour.

On the final day, Keith C, Chairman of the Marathon Meeting, carried the meeting candle to the stage where it was blown out by "Pete" who was sober just two days. Pete had stopped a convention attendee to ask what the badge meant and was 12th Stepped on the spot and led to the Marathon Meeting. The Superdome crowd gave Pete a deafening ovation.



Original Title Was "Bill W And His Friends"

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#### Biographies of the Co-founders - 1980 and 1984

The 1984 Conference approved publication of a biography of Bill W titled "Pass It On." Two draft manuscripts of this book are in the Northeast Texas Area (NETA) archives. The original title proposed for the book was "Bill W and His Friends."

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - 8<sup>th</sup> International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

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Theme: Fifty Years With Gratitude

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### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - 8<sup>th</sup> International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

AA's 8<sup>th</sup> International Convention and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was held in Montreal, Canada in July 1985. The theme was "Fifty Years with Gratitude."

The local Montreal planning committee estimated 50,000 attendees (double the number in New Orleans) but no one took them seriously and the budget was initially based on 28,000 registrations. However, even before registration began in September 1984, it became apparent that AA members in unprecedented numbers were planning to attend. The final count was 45,000 registrations (35,000 AA and 10,000 Al-Anon) plus family members and other guests.

Several hundred AA members and their families were not able to find rooms. Every hotel room within 80 miles of Montreal was booked. Some members were housed as far away as Burlington, Vermont.



Sold Out Within 24 Hours



Seagram House

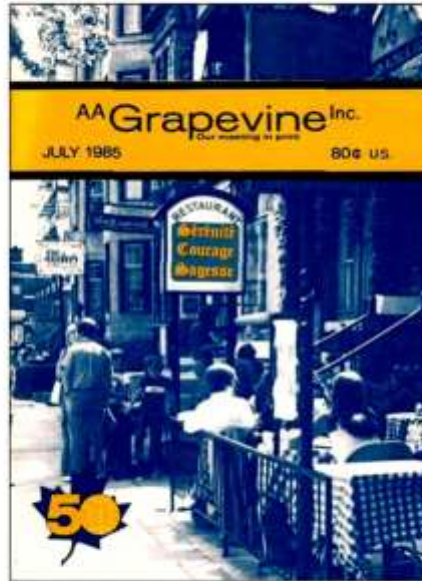
#### 50th Anniversary - 8th International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

When the on-stage group was seated in Montreal's Olympic Park Stadium, the flag ceremony began. The flags of 53 nations represented at the Convention were paraded as a band played their national tunes. When all the flags were massed on the field, they represented nearly half the 114 countries around the world where AA was to be found in 1985.

16,000 copies of the souvenir book "Fifty Years With Gratitude" sold out within 24 hours.

16,000 copies of the souvenir book "Fifty Years With Gratitude" sold out within 24 hours.

The House of Seagram paid a bit of an unusual but good-natured tribute to AA. For the duration of the International Convention the 3 flags at their Montreal headquarters were lowered to to half-staff.



Emphasis On AA's Origins

### 50th Anniversary - 8th International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

In over 90 sessions the Montreal Convention had an endless flow of people in and out of workshops, panel meetings, alkathons and special meetings at 5 hotels on every conceivable subject and for every conceivable AA interest.

One aspect that distinguished the Montreal Convention program from others was the consistent emphasis on AA's origins, history and early days. Panels related how AA began in the US, Canada, Europe, Latin America and elsewhere. There were meetings called "Pioneers" and "Golden Oldies."



Saturday Evening Post Re-print



Lois W

50th Anniversary - 8th International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

The Saturday Evening Post, which played such a prominent role in AA Growth in 1941, carried a 50th anniversary commemorative article about AA.

On the final day, Lois W, Bill's widow and First Lady of Al-Anon, was escorted to the podium. The entire stadium stood as one and the ovation was deafening. A diminutive white-haired figure at age 93, Lois' speaking voice was strong and she completely charmed the huge audience. Sadly, this was to be her last International Convention.



5-Millionth Copy of the Big Book To Ruth Hock

50th Anniversary - 8th International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

Ruth Hock, Bill's first secretary who typed the original manuscript of the Big Book in 1938, was at the Montreal Convention and was presented with the 5-millionth copy of the Big Book.

Ruth's daughter later revealed that the 5 millionth copy was actually not given to her that night since it had not been returned from the binders with its special leather cover. A book was borrowed from an attendee for the presentation. Ruth thought it was quite funny and she signed the borrowed book and returned it to its owner.





Stepping Stones

Dr Bob's House

273

50th Anniversary - 8th International - Montreal, Canada - July 1985

As part of the festivities surrounding AA's golden anniversary, Stepping Stones, the Wilson's home since 1941, was declared a NY State Historic Site.

Also in 1985, the Akron house where Dr. Bob and his wife Anne lived and raised their children - 855 Ardmore Avenue - was opened to visitors. Much of the furniture is original and many of Dr Bob and Anne's books line the shelves.

Both homes are favored visiting sights for AA members and function as museums to preserve AA history.

## Bill W's Grapevine Essays Are Preserved - 1988



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Bill W's Essays From The 1940s On The Traditions And More

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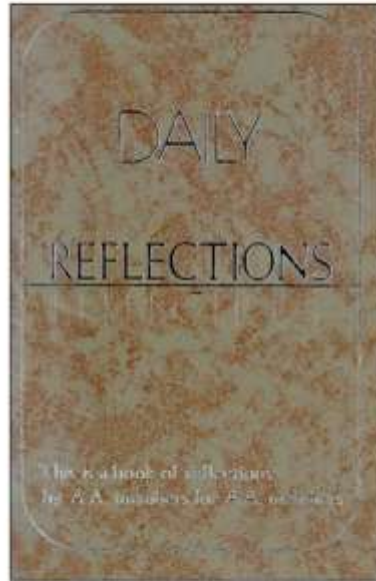
### Bill W's Grapevine Essays Are Preserved - 1988

The 1988 General Service Conference approved the AA Grapevine publication of "The Language of the Heart." The book contains the essays that Bill W wrote for the Grapevine to explain the AA Traditions to the membership. It also contains many memorial and historical articles, as does the books published by the AA Grapevine under "The Best of the Grapevine" series.

The AA Grapevine is probably the most under-appreciated source of AA history. It is in fact a treasure house of historical material ranging from old-timer testimonials to summaries of each of the General Service Conferences.

Daily Reflections - 1988

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Daily Reflections - 1988

The 1988 General Service Conference also approved the publication of the "Daily Reflections" book.



Historically Entitled To Be Considered A Co-founder Of AA As Well As AFG

276

#### Lois Burnham Wilson - October 5, 1988

On October 5, 1988 Lois Burnham Wilson (age 97) co-founder of Al-Anon Family Groups, passed away. Her contributions to the AA and Al-Anon Fellowships entitle her to be considered a co-founder of both. In his eulogy, Michael Alexander, past Board Chairman, commented that "many AAs today feel their lives are owed to Lois as well as Bill, Dr Bob and Anne."

55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - 9<sup>th</sup> International - Seattle, WA - July 1990

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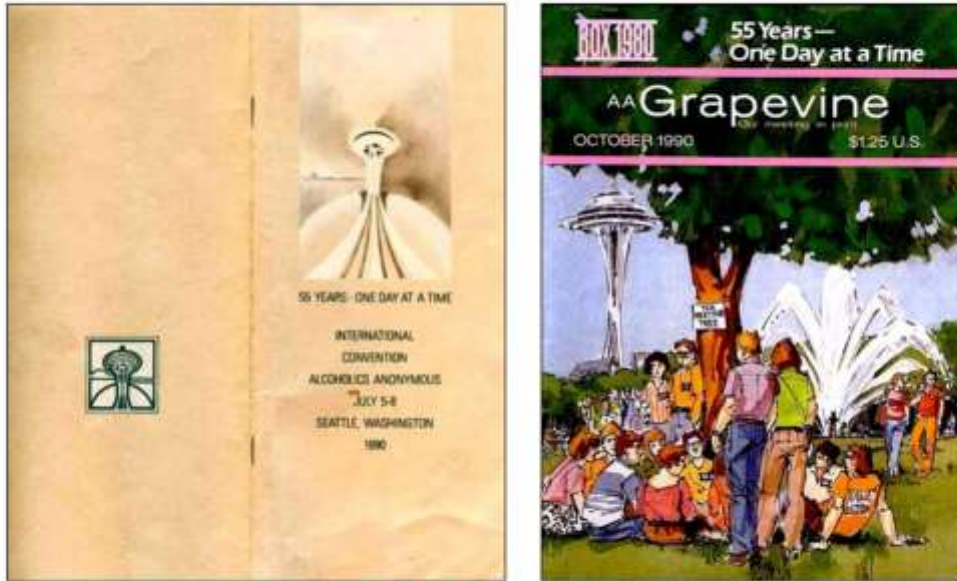
Theme: Fifty-five Years - One Day at a Time

277

55th Anniversary - 9th International - Seattle, WA - July 1990

AA's 55th Anniversary and 9th International Convention was held in Seattle, Washington. 48,000 attendees from 75 countries virtually took over the city to celebrate AA's birthday from July 5 - 8, 1990. The theme was "Fifty-five Years - One Day at a Time."

At the time it was the largest convention ever hosted in Seattle.



On-Site Registration Doubled

278

#### 55th Anniversary - 9th International - Seattle, WA - July 1990

More than 12,000 registered on site instead of the anticipated 6,000,

On July 4, when new citizens were scheduled to be sworn in at the Flag Pavilion at Seattle Center, one of the citizens-to-be (a man from China) turned up in the Convention registration line by mistake. He paid his \$55 registration but was bewildered when asked whether he needed an AA or an AI-Anon badge. His money was cheerfully refunded, of course, and 2 host committee volunteers walked him over to the Flag Pavilion to become a US citizen.

On Friday night the flag ceremony began in the Kingdome, with AAs from 75 countries, some in their national costumes, marching one by one to plant their flags in front of the dais.



10-Millionth Copy of the Big Book to Nell Wing

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55th Anniversary - 9th International - Seattle, WA - July 1990

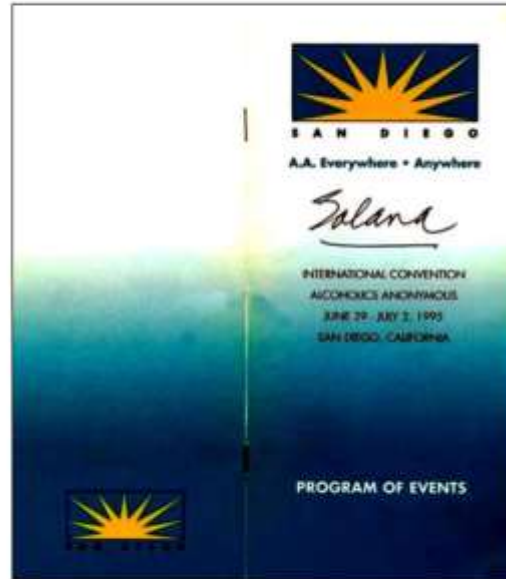
The 19-millionth copy of the Big Book was presented to Nell Wing, who for many years was Bill W's secretary and later the first GSO Archivist.

Nell later related that it was also a homecoming of sorts for her. In her words

"I had spent 1944-46 in Seattle (the 13th naval district) as a member of SPARS, the Women's Coast Guard Reserve, in the basement of the Olympic Hotel. There was a large bar and dining room which we called the "snake pit" and where many of us, along with the Coast Guard and Navy guys, did a bit of off-duty drinking.

One night I got involved in an all-night drinking spree and next morning, up before my executive officer, was "awarded" a captain's mast and sentenced to a brief confinement in my quarters (the "brig" was full). I was allowed out once a day, accompanied by a shore patrol

Now, 44 years later, here I was in Seattle again and the recipient of the 10 millionth copy of the Big Book. No words can adequately express my deep gratitude to this beloved Fellowship and my cherished friends therein."



Theme: AA Everywhere-Anywhere

280

#### 60th Anniversary - 10th International - San Diego, CA - July 1995

The theme of the 60th Anniversary and 10th International Convention - "AA Everywhere-Anywhere" - was borne out as nearly 56,000 people from the US, Canada and 85 other countries gathered in San Diego, California in July 1995. At the time it was the largest AA Anniversary Convention ever held and the largest convention of any kind that San Diego had ever hosted.

Nowhere was the Convention theme, "AA Everywhere - Anywhere," more evident than in the opening flag ceremony in Jack Murphy Stadium. Flags from 87 countries were paraded Olympics-style and 2 huge screens broadcast the speakers.

Flag bearers, some in national costumes, marched into the stadium and lined up in front of the dais. From Antigua to Chile, Ireland and Poland, through South Africa and Western Samoa, every country was cheered loud and long. In San Diego, attendance at this opening meeting was estimated at 54,000, giving it claim to the biggest AA meeting ever.





ATMs Ran Out of Cash

281

60th Anniversary - 10th International - San Diego, CA - July 1995

Warned that at a past Convention some hotels had run out of coffee, the San Diego hotels came through beautifully. The ice cream lasted as well but ATMs ran out of cash!

Hospitality suites were set up at the Marriott and Hyatt Hotels for a variety of groups from young people to old-timers. A Convention first was the Living Cyber hospitality suite where AAs who had been corresponding on the Internet had a chance to meet face-to-face.

The Convention opened officially on Thursday night, with a "block party" in the city's harbor area, along with dances at the Convention Center and at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. All day Friday and Saturday, panels and workshops on every conceivable AA topic were held. Among the most popular meetings were those that involved old-timers, the Steps and Traditions and the daily challenges of working the program in the real world.

Many meetings were so crowded that people had to be turned away at the door. The first-ever Convention Old-Timers Meeting on Saturday night featured 129 members with 40 or more years of sobriety, 15 of whom told their stories



Proof Of An Honest Program

60th Anniversary - 10th International - San Diego, CA - July 1995

Grapevine controller Bob S was in charge of the souvenir book and Grapevine sales booth and remarked that it really is an honest program.

On Saturday afternoon the sales booths stayed open late to accommodate AAs who still wanted souvenir books or the Grapevine's new Spanish translation of *The Language of the Heart* - but not late enough.

Returning Sunday morning to pack boxes to ship home, Bob realized that a large number of books had disappeared overnight. Dismayed at first, he found a box of cash - \$826, to be exact - on one of the counters. AA members had bought their books on the honor system.

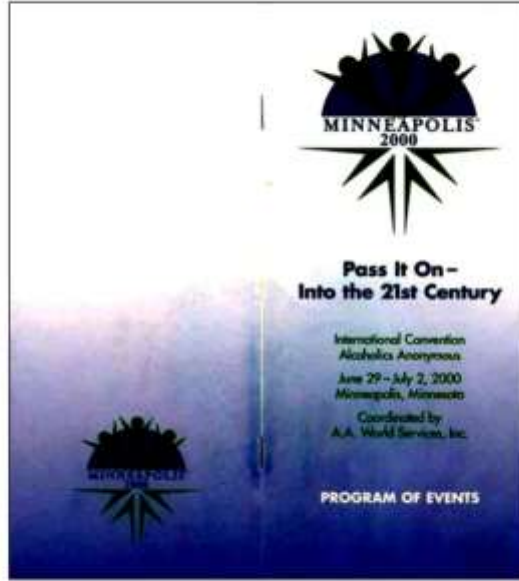


Theme: Pass It On-Into the 21st Century

#### 65th Anniversary - 11th International - Minneapolis, MN - July 2000

Some 48,000 people celebrated AA's 11th International Convention and 65th Anniversary held in Minneapolis, Minnesota from June 29 - July 2, 2000. The theme was "Pass It On-Into the 21st Century. The "big meetings" were held in the Hubert H Humphrey Metrodome under 10 acres of teflon-coated fiberglass held up only by air like a giant balloon.

One memorable feature of the Convention was to "Walk-the-Walk" each day, in which a stream of attendees walked a "Big Book blue" line laid down from the Convention Center to the Hubert H Humphrey Metrodome on their way to and from the meetings. Attendees were also able to Dance-the-Dance in the Metrodome on Friday and Saturday nights.

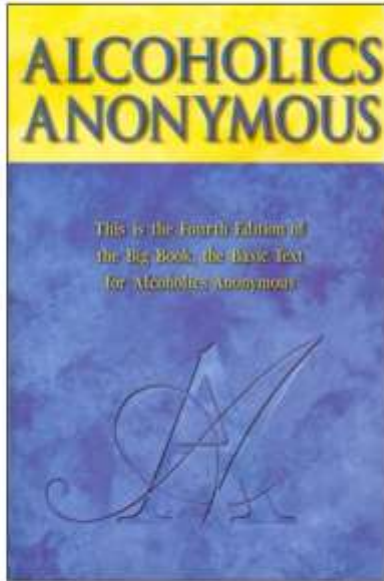


20-Millionth Copy of the Big Book to Al-Anon Family Groups

### 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - 11<sup>th</sup> International - Minneapolis, MN - July 2000

The 20-millionth Big Book was presented to Al-Anon Family Groups in a special ceremony.

As the new millennium began, AA worldwide membership was estimated at approximately 2,100,000. Another membership milestone in the year 2000 was the number of groups, which for the first time surpassed the 100,000 mark.

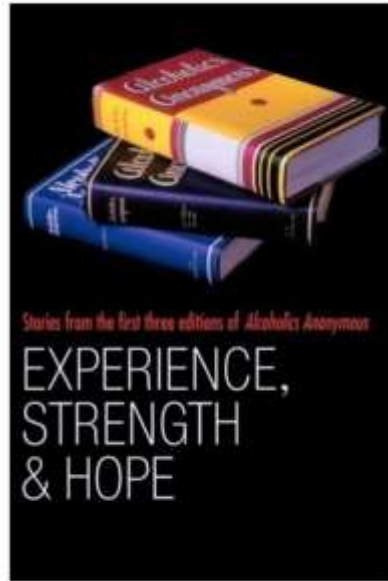


24 New Stories

### Fourth Edition Big Book- April 2001

The major historical milestone for AA in the first decade of the 21st century was the 2001 Conference approval and publication of the 4th edition Big Book. It includes 42 personal stories - 24 new stories were introduced - 16 were retained from the 3rd edition and 27 were dropped.

A copy of the book was sent to every registered group and Intergroup Central Office.



56 Stories

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#### Personal Stories of Experience, Strength & Hope - April 2002

The book "Experience, Strength & Hope" was Conference-approved and published in 2002. It allows members to revisit 56 stories that were previously printed in the first three editions of the Big Book and later replaced.



Theme: I am Responsible

287

#### 70th Anniversary - 12th International - Toronto, CA - July 2005

Around 44,000 AA members congregated in Toronto from June 30 to July 2, 2005 for AA's 12th International Convention and 70th Anniversary. Attendance was around 10% less than that at Minneapolis. One possible cause might have been that Canada implemented restrictions on entry for anyone with a felony conviction and in Canada all DUI convictions are considered felonies.

On Friday evening, attendees filed into the stadium for the flag ceremony. One by one, 90 AA members carried to the stage the flags of nations represented at the Convention. When the flags from Mongolia, Cuba and People's Republic of China took the stage, the crowd went wild. It was the first time these countries were represented. As each flag bearer appeared on stage, the title Alcoholics Anonymous on the large Big Book model changed to one of 52 languages.



Meetings In: Portuguese, Finnish, German, Polish, Swedish, Farsi, French, Japanese and Italian

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#### 70th Anniversary - 13th International - Toronto, CA - July 2005

Over 200 meetings and workshops were held at the Convention Center and at hotels around the city covering every conceivable subject an AA could think of. Meetings were held in Portuguese, Finnish, German, Polish, Swedish, Farsi, French, Japanese, and Italian. Some meetings were interpreted in American Sign Language. Marathon meetings, in English, French and Spanish, began at midnight June 30 and ran the entire length of the Convention.





Oldest Old-Timer 63 Years Sober

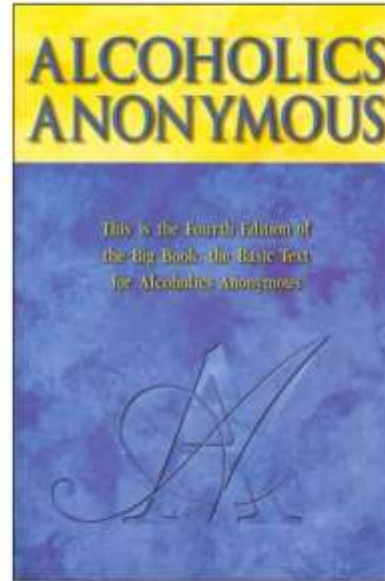
70th Anniversary - 13th International - Toronto, CA - July 2005

The Saturday night big meeting began with a sobriety count-up; AA members were asked to stand until their sobriety length was announced - under 1 year, under 2 years, etc. As the count got higher, the cheering grew louder until one gentleman from Michigan with 63 years of sobriety was left standing.

Old-Timers (who were defined as 40 or more years of continuous sobriety) dropped their names into an oversized Mountie's hat. 12 young people (under 20 years of age and sober from 1 day to 4 years) drew the name of an old-timer out of the hat to share his or her story for 5 minutes.



Warden Clinton Duffy



25 Millionth Big Book

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70th Anniversary - 13th International - Toronto, CA - July 2005

Class A (nonalcoholic) trustee Allen Ault, in appreciation of Warden Clinton Duffy, presented the 25 millionth copy of the Big Book to Warden Jill Brown of San Quentin "on behalf of all the correctional facilities and their inmate populations where the AA message of hope is welcomed."

In 1942, Warden Clinton Duffy of San Quentin prison pioneered the first AA group behind prison walls.

The 2005 International Convention also commemorated the 50th anniversary of Bill W. turning over the operation of the Fellowship to the General Service Conference in 1955.

**I am responsible...**

When anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help, I want  
the hand of A.A. always to be there.  
And for that: I am responsible.

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70th Anniversary - 13th International - Toronto, CA - July 2005

The theme for the 2005 Convention in Toronto was "I am Responsible" repeating the theme of the 1965 Convention also held in Toronto. However, the total of 44,000 attendee at the 2005 Convention was 4 times that of the 1965 Convention.



**box**  
**459**  
News and Photos from the General Services Office of A.A.A.  
Vol. 33, No. 3 / April - June 2010

### Come and Celebrate A.A.A.'s 75th Birthday in San Antonio, Texas

Step in the shoes of those who did it first... it's time to celebrate the 75th anniversary of A.A.A. in San Antonio, Texas. The 13th International Convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, a modern hotel with a prominent tower. The convention will be held from July 1-4, 2010. The theme of the convention is "A Vision For You". The convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, a modern hotel with a prominent tower. The convention will be held from July 1-4, 2010. The theme of the convention is "A Vision For You".

...to be held in San Antonio, Texas. The 13th International Convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, a modern hotel with a prominent tower. The convention will be held from July 1-4, 2010. The theme of the convention is "A Vision For You".

Theme: A Vision For You

75th Anniversary - 14th International - San Antonio, TX - July 2010

The next chapter in the history of International Conventions will take place from July 1-4 in San Antonio, Texas who will host AA's 13th International Convention and 75th Anniversary. It's theme will be "A Vision For You."

## The Three Legacies of AA

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Kiel Auditorium, St Louis, MO - July 1-3, 1955

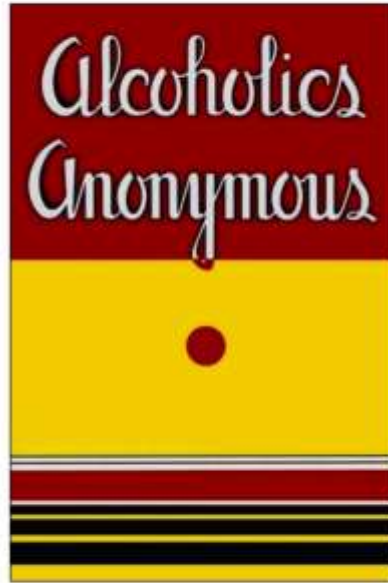
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### Kiel Auditorium, St Louis, MO - The Three Legacies of AA - July 1955

The year 2010 was also the 70th anniversary of the Big Book. In the remaining few slides I will try to sum up the key role of the Big Book in AA history and why the book enjoys so much respect from the AA membership.

AA's historic 1955 International Convention in St Louis introduced a new circle and triangle symbol that was prominently displayed on a large banner draping the back of the stage. The symbol later found its way on to chips and medallions which unfortunately caused AA to eventually discontinue its use in 1993 and release legal rights to the circle and triangle symbol to the public domain.

In "AA Comes of Age" (pg 139) Bill W, described the circle as representing the whole of AA. The triangle represented AA's 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. Each of AA's 3 Legacies has a foundation of 12 spiritual principles. They are The 12 Steps for the Legacy of Recovery - The 12 Traditions for the Legacy of Unity and The 12 Concepts for the Legacy of Service



20/20 Hindsight

294

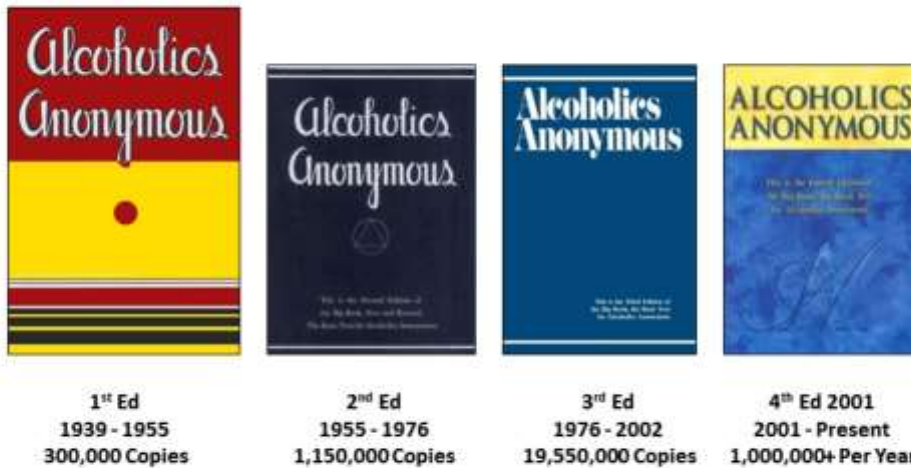
### The Common Root Of The Three Legacies Of AA

There is an old saying that "hindsight is 20/20." History is hindsight, particularly in searching for cause and effect. The common root action that caused the written evolution of the Three Legacies of AA very likely took place in October 1937. It was a group conscience decision by the Akron and NY groups to permit the writing of a book of experience that later came to be fondly known in AA as the "Big Book."

The book's contents explain the 12 Steps and AA's Legacy of Recovery. The "Foreword to the First Edition" defines many of the key principles that were later absorbed into the 12 Traditions and AA's Legacy of Unity. Finally, the service structure that was needed to produce and distribute the book and manage the public relations and funds related to book sales, provided much of the experience and organization that later helped shape the 12 Concepts and AA's Legacy of Service.

## Four Editions of the Big Book

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### Four Editions of the Big Book

The origin and development of the Big Book is singularly unique. As AA's first piece of literature, every AA member at the time of its writing had an opportunity to individually and directly contribute to its wording and probably did. This is true of no other piece of AA literature. The Big Book also has a remarkable history of carrying the message of recovery throughout the world in the 20th and 21st centuries:

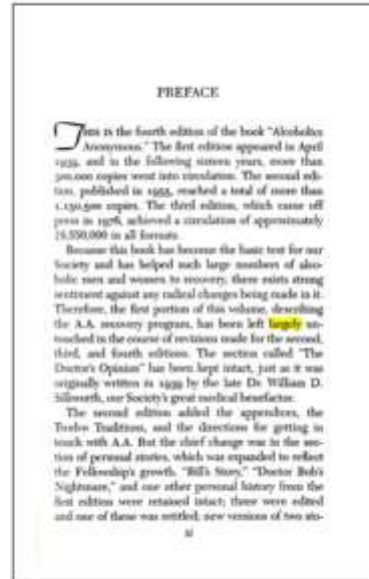
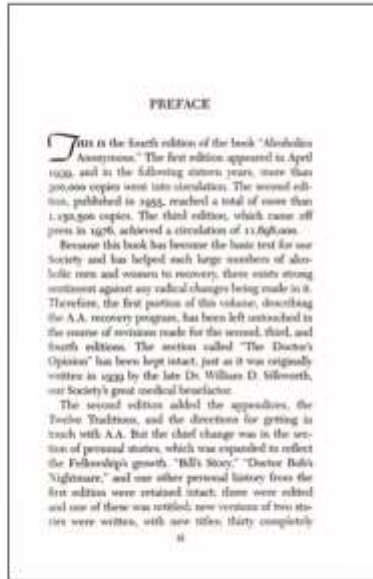
300,000 copies of the 1st edition were distributed from 1939-1955;

1,150,000 copies of the 2nd edition were distributed from 1955-1976; and

19,550,000 copies of the 3rd edition were distributed from 1976-2002

By 2007, Big Book distribution reached the 28 million mark and is now well exceeding the 30 million mark (and that's just the English language version). The 4th edition introduced a new appendix containing the short form of the 12 Concepts for World Service. The Big Book now contains all the spiritual principles of AA's 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

## Change To Preface of 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Big Book- April 2006



**Many Wording Changes Have Occurred To The Basic Text**

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### Change To Preface of 4th Edition Big Book- April 2006

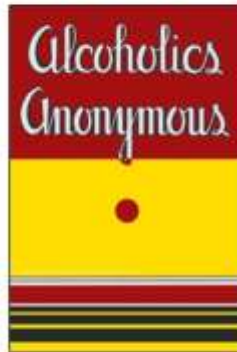
Contrary to popular belief, a number of wording changes have been made to the basic text of the Big Book over the years. The 2006 General Service Conference approved a change to the Preface of the 4th edition so that it reads "Therefore the first part of this volume, describing the AA recovery program, has been left largely untouched in the course of revisions made for the second, third and fourth editions."

The word "largely" was added to correct the erroneous impression that the basic text had not been changed over the prior editions.

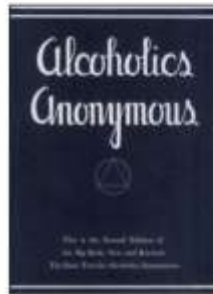


## Big Book Editions And Number Of Personal Stories

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**1<sup>st</sup> Edition**  
**1939**  
**29 Stories**



**2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**  
**1955**  
**37 Stories**



**3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**  
**1976**  
**43 Stories**



**4<sup>th</sup> Edition**  
**2001**  
**42 Stories**

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### Big Book Editions and Number of Personal Stories

The major changes to the Big Book editions have been in the selection of personal stories so that they represent a good cross-section of the AA membership. In "AA Comes of Age" (164) Bill W wrote "We had not gone much farther with the text of the book when it was evident that something more was needed. There would have to be a story or case history section ... [to] identify us with the distant reader in a way that the text itself might not."

29 stories were included in the 1st edition to reflect a 1939 US membership of around 100. 37 stories were included in the 2nd edition to reflect a 1955 world-wide membership of around 136,000. 43 stories were included in the 3rd edition to reflect a 1976 world-wide membership of around 321,000. 42 stories were included in the 4th edition to reflect a 2001 world-wide membership of over 2 million.

## The Gift Of The Three Legacies Of AA

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Dr Bob, Anne S, Lois W and Bill W

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### The Gift Of The Three Legacies Of AA

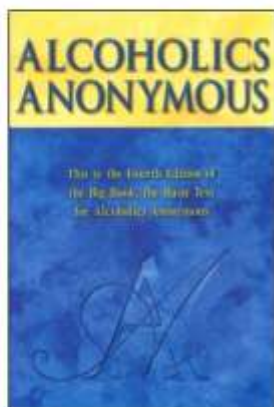
AA's story began with a 5-month sober and still shaky stock broker from NY who had his last drink (a beer) in December 1934. While on a failed business trip to Akron, OH, he met an alcoholic surgeon who desperately wanted to stop drinking. He had his last drink (also a beer) in June 1935.

It's probably safe to say that when AA's co-founders met they had no idea at all of the Fellowship of alcoholics that would evolve from their humble meeting and how that Fellowship would save the lives of millions of alcoholics over the next 7 decades. Their legacies are today described as Recovery, Unity and Service. They were our gifts to freely receive and it is our duty to freely give them away. It's been a remarkable journey down the Road of Happy Destiny.

If you would like to have a history presentation at your group please see me, or any member of the NETA Area Archives Committee. We have a number of presentations that can fit in the time period of a speaker meeting and will be happy to be of service. That concludes the presentation. I hope you found it both informative and enjoyable. Thank you for the privilege of being able to present it.

## The Gift Of The Three Legacies Of AA

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**Recovery**  
**12 Steps**



**Unity**  
**12 Traditions**



**Service**  
**12 Concepts**

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### The Gift Of The Three Legacies Of AA

AA's story began with a 5-month sober and still shaky stock broker from NY. He had his last drink in December 1934. Later, while on a failed business trip to Akron, OH, he met an alcoholic surgeon who desperately wanted to stop drinking. He had his last drink in June 1935.

It's probably safe to say that when AA's co-founders Bill W and Dr Bob met they had no idea at all of the Fellowship of alcoholics that would evolve from their humble meeting and how it would go on to save the lives of millions of alcoholics over the decades that followed.

Their legacies are today described as Recovery, Unity and Service. They were our gifts to freely receive and it is our duty to freely give them away. It's been a remarkable journey down the Road of Happy Destiny. That brings us to our conclusion. I hope you found this history presentation both informative and enjoyable. Thank you for the privilege and opportunity to present it.

## The Gift Of The Three Legacies Of AA

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### The Gift Of The Three Legacies Of AA

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## Wrap-UP and Q&A - AA History Sources

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- AA Comes of Age
- Co-founder biographies
- Service Manual
- GSO Scrapbooks (news clippings)
- Box 459
- Markings (GSO Archives Newsletter)
- Pamphlets
- Videos (by Bill W and GSO Archives)
- Audio Cassettes
- The Language of the Heart
- The Best of the Grapevine Book Series
- Grapevine archives articles
- On-line Grapevine archives
- There are many scholarly histories of AA

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### Sources For The History of AA

That brings us to our conclusion. I hope you found the presentation both informative and enjoyable.

We're going to open it up for questions. Before doing so I'd like to mention that I've been through a number of history presentation and follow-on question and answer periods. Based on that experience I'd like to ask your indulgence on the questions that you may pose:

First off I don't, and will not, engage in discussions that are better classified as tabloid items as opposed to AA history.

I'm not the least bit interested in scandals and personal short-comings and would like to steer clear of those types of questions.

Second, in consideration to others who may have questions, please be brief and if your question turns into a long statement I'll try to nudge you to get to the question.

Finally please do challenge anything you've heard that you disagree with and demand proof of its validity. History is supposed to be a product of research, analysis and independent corroboration.

So let's begin the questions..