

January 1964

In Memory of Dr. Sam

by Bill

ON Thursday, October 31, 1963 Dr. Sam Shoemaker, the great Episcopal clergyman and first friend of AA, passed from our sight and hearing. He was one of those few without whose ministrations AA could never have been born in the first place—nor prospered since.

From his teaching, Dr. Bob and I absorbed most of the principles that were later embodied in the Twelve Steps of AA. Our ideas of self-examination, acknowledgement of character defects, restitution for harms done and working with others came straight from Sam. Therefore he gave to us the concrete knowledge of what we could do about our illness; he passed to us the spiritual keys by which so many of us have since been liberated.

We who in AA's early time were privileged to fall under the spell of his inspiration can never be the same again.

We shall bless Sam's memory forever.